



NEWS RELEASE

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INS Announces Premium Processing Service for Employers

WASHINGTON – The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) today announced the details of its Premium Processing Service. Beginning June 1, 2001, American businesses will have the opportunity to obtain faster processing of employment-based petitions and applications by taking advantage of the program.

In December 2000, legislation was passed and signed that authorized the Attorney General to collect a \$1,000 "premium processing" fee. Under this legislation, the authority to collect this fee applies only to employment-based petitions and applications. Businesses may request Premium Processing on pending and newly filed petitions and applications by filing a completed Form I-907 (Request for Premium Processing Service) and paying the \$1,000 fee.

The \$1,000 fee must be paid with a separate check or money order; it cannot be combined with the regular petition fee. Form I-907 (Request for Premium Processing Service) can be downloaded from the INS Web site, www.ins.gov, or can be obtained by calling the INS forms line, 1-800-870-3676 or the INS National Customer Service Center, 1-800-375-5283.

INS guarantees that within 15 calendar days the agency will issue either an approval notice, a notice of intent to deny, a request for evidence or a notice of investigation for fraud or misrepresentation. If INS fails to meet its 15-calendar-day guarantee, it will refund the \$1,000 to the company but will continue to process the petition expeditiously. In addition to expedited processing, companies that participate in the program may use a dedicated phone number and e-mail address to check on the status of their petition or ask any other questions concerning their petition. The dedicated phone number, e-mail and mailing address for each INS Service Center can be found in the instructions for Form I-907.

"The Premium Processing Service benefits INS, as well as its customers," said Bill Yates INS' Deputy Executive Associate Commissioner, Immigration Services Division. "With this program, businesses can rely on INS to meet the demands of today's fast paced workplaces. The enhanced revenue from the program will ensure faster service for these businesses without causing delays in the adjudication of other petitions. In fact, the revenue will allow INS to improve service and expand infrastructure to the benefit all of our customers."

INS estimates that beginning in FY 2002, it will collect approximately \$80 million annually from the program. The revenue generated from the program will be used to hire additional staff and make infrastructure improvements. These enhancements will improve INS processing of all petitions.

As of June 1, INS has designated the Form I-129, (Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker), for Premium Processing in the following categories:

- E-1 Treaty Trader;
- E-2 Treaty Investor;
- H-2A Agricultural Worker;
- H-2B Temporary Worker;
- H-3 Trainee;
- L-1 Intra-company Transferees;
- O-1 and O-2 Aliens of Extraordinary Ability or Achievement;
- P-1, P-2 and P-3 Athletes and Entertainers; and
- Q-1 International Cultural Exchange Aliens.

On July 30, 2001, INS will add the following categories to the Premium Processing program:

- H-1B Temporary Workers in Specialty Occupations;
- R-1 Temporary Workers in Religious Occupations; and
- TN NAFTA Professionals.

INS will continue to review the program and assess its ability to incorporate other employment -based petitions and applications into the program.