

Fact Sheet

The President's Fiscal 2003 Immigration Budget

02/04/02

Immigration Services

INS is committed to building and maintaining an immigration services system that provides information and benefits in a timely, accurate, consistent, courteous, and professional manner nationwide. INS is committed to eliminating the backlogs of applications for immigration benefits and naturalization and achieving and maintaining a six-month processing time standard for all applications.

The FY 2003 budget includes a total of **\$1.5 billion** for Immigration Services. These resources will allow INS to complete processing of an anticipated 9.4 million applications and petitions in FY 2003, an increase in productivity of 34 percent over FY 2001.

Backlog Elimination: A Comprehensive, Aggressive Approach

In FY 2002, the President announced a five-year, \$500-million initiative to achieve and maintain a universal six-month processing-time standard for immigration benefit applications while providing quality service to all INS customers. To achieve this goal, INS is finalizing a comprehensive backlog elimination plan. Under this plan, INS will achieve a national average processing time of six months or less for all applications by the end of FY 2003, with continued emphasis on performance standards and decision-making integrity.

To achieve a six-month processing time standard for all applications, INS plans to devote \$100 million toward backlog elimination efforts in FY 2003. These funds represent the second installment of the President's five-year, \$500-million initiative to achieve and maintain a universal six-month processing time standard for all immigration benefit applications while providing quality service to all INS customers. **(\$100 million)**

Improved Customer Services

INS has identified certain business practice and information technology initiatives that will support the backlog elimination effort and improve overall customer service. These initiatives will streamline application processes and allow employees to focus on the provision of information and benefits. This includes continuing the online filing efforts for benefit applications begun in FY 2002, and the development, testing and piloting of a customer-based application management system for all benefits. INS will also build upon FY 2002 improvements to offer case status information and address changes via the INS Internet website and the National Customer Service Center in FY 2003.