

**AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
USCIS CHICAGO FIELD OFFICE
QUESTIONS FOR OCTOBER 29, 2015 MEETING
101 W. CONGRESS PARKWAY
CHICAGO, IL 60605**

1. Requesting Biometrics by Mail or Email for Applicants in EOIR Removal Proceedings

At the June 24, 2015 AILA District Director Liaison Committee meeting, the Chicago District Office agreed to consider the suggestion to allow attorneys/representatives to communicate by email or mail in order to request updated biometrics appointments for applicants in EOIR removal proceedings. Is there any update on this?

There is no update to report at this time.

2. Biometrics Appointments

- a. For what types of cases is the Chicago District Office authorized to issue biometrics appointments?

Our office can request biometric appointments for any application that is pending in our office.

- b. For case types in which the Chicago District Office is not authorized to issue biometrics appointments locally, can InfoPass officers provide any assistance in expediting the issuance of a biometrics appointment by a Service Center, for example by forwarding a Service Request to the Service Center?

If a Service Center has jurisdiction over the application, please send an email to the appropriate Service Center, or contact the National Customer Service Center to generate a service request.

3. Parole in Place (PIP) Requests for Family Members of Active Duty Military or Military Veterans

- a. Who is the updated contact person in charge of military-based PIP requests?

Any inquiries related to military-based PIP requests may be sent to SISO Alejandra Dominguez at Alejandra.Dominguez@uscis.dhs.gov

- b. What is the current processing time for these requests?

Currently, processing of most military-based PIP requests is completed within 3 months.

4. **Passport Stamps Before Expiration of I-751 Receipt Notice**

Is it possible for an I-751 applicant to obtain an I-551 passport stamp as temporary proof of status *before* the I-751 Receipt Notice has expired? Obtaining a passport stamp is sometimes necessary even though the I-751 Receipt Notice has not yet expired, since some employers and driver's license offices are unwilling to accept the I-751 Receipt Notice as evidence of lawful status, or an applicant may need to travel shortly before the one-year period on the I-751 Receipt Notice has expired. Members report that InfoPass officers have refused to issue a stamp in these circumstances.

We generally will not issue an I-551 stamp if the applicant has a valid one year extension letter and the green card. If circumstances warrant, we may issue a stamp valid for a period of six months while a Form I-751 is pending even if the receipt notice is still valid.

5. **Processing Time for Stand Alone I-130 Petitions**

What is the current processing time for stand-alone I-130s after the file has been transferred to the Chicago District Office?

The Chicago Field Office does not track processing times for stand-alone Form I-130s.

6. **Officer Interview Notes**

How can applicants obtain copies of notes taken by adjudicating officers during interviews? These notes can provide important insight into the reasons behind a particular decision. However, most responses to FOIA requests do not include such notes.

The decision itself will describe in sufficient detail the facts that were considered. Copies of the officers' notes will not be provided.

7. **Long-Pending Cases Awaiting Interview at the Chicago Field Office**

In some cases, members report lengthy waits for interview scheduling for certain stand-alone I-130, I-751, N-400 and I-485 cases that have been transferred to the Chicago District Office (as confirmed by Notices of Action received or inquiries to the USCIS National Customer Service Center).

- a. What is currently the normal time period for the Chicago District Office to schedule an interview for stand-alone I-130s, I-751s, N-400s, and I-485s after the file has been transferred to the Chicago Office?

Form I-751s are scheduled within 60 days.

Form I-485s are scheduled within 120 days after the NBC transfers them to this office.

The Field Office does not track the time period within which we schedule an interview for stand-alone Form I-130s.

The scheduling of Form N-400 interviews depends on available staff.

Who is the best contact person at the Chicago District Office to inquire regarding cases that appear to be beyond normal times for interview scheduling?

Effective October 26, 2015, please contact SISO Paul Phillips at Paul.H.Phillips@uscis.dhs.gov for stand-alone Form I-130s in proceedings.

Inquiries relating to Form N-400s should be directed to Rose Cavazos.

Inquiries relating to Form I-751s should be directed to Stacey Summers.

- b. For Interview-Waiver Eligible cases, how long after the Chicago District Office receives the file should it normally take for the case to be scheduled for interview or, if the Chicago District Office waives the interview, for adjudication?

The Field Office generally schedules any Form I-485s that are transferred to the Chicago Field Office within 60-120 days.

8. Holiday Hours and Weather-Related Closures for Chicago District Office

- a. Please provide the Chicago District Office's anticipated early closure and full-day closures for the upcoming holiday season.

We are closed on November 26, December 25 and January 1, 2016. We anticipate one-hour early closures on Nov 25, Dec 24 and Dec 31.

- b. Please clarify how applicants and representatives can best verify the Chicago District Office's hours during times of inclement weather.

We have created a public telephone line to inform our customers and representatives of any office closures. It is 312-239-5555.

9. Field Office Procedures Regarding Early Filings of I-485 Applications

As of October 1, 2015, certain applicants are now able to file I-485 Applications in advance of their priority dates being current, in accordance with the Visa Bulletin's charts

for “Dates for Filing Family-Sponsored Visa Applications” and “Dates for Filing of Employment-Based Visa Applications”. Please provide any updates about the Chicago District Office’s procedures for interviewing and adjudicating such early-filed I-485 applications. For example, will there be changes in the way these cases are processed by the Service Center before being forwarded to the Field Office for interview? Will the Chicago District Office be holding files in abeyance before or after interview?

The NBC will be housing all pre-adjudicated Form I-485 cases and will disburse to the Field Office only when the “Application Final Action Date” will be current on the Visa Bulletin. The Field Office will not need to hold any cases in abeyance prior to or subsequent to interview as the Form I-485 will not be transferred to the Field Office from the NBC until the “Application Final Action Date” date is current on the Visa Bulletin.