

AILA CHICAGO CHAPTER
USCIS DISTRICT DIRECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE
CHICAGO FIELD OFFICE
March 1, 2017 MEETING

SUPPLEMENTAL MINUTES

1. Update from Tom Cioppa

- a. Lori Sciallaba continues to be acting Director of USCIS.
- b. Deputy Director of the Chicago District Office: The incoming Deputy Director, Brian Christian, is expected to begin work in the Chicago Office on April 3, 2017. He comes to us from the New York City office.
- c. Changes to USCIS Districts: Two of the twenty-six Districts, Houston and Dallas, are being combined into a single District. The Chicago Office is under the Central Region, which includes Districts 12 to 19.
- d. Meeting of Senior USCIS leadership in Memphis:Deputy District Director: On March 13th, Tom Cioppa will attend this meeting. He expects to be brought up to date on issues including the Executive Orders and the latest on electronic filing.
- e. Popsicle Stick Man: Fidencio Sanchez, the Little Village 89 year old “Popsicle Stick Man”, who received a large payout through GoFundMe, recently naturalized through the Chicago Office. An announcement of this appeared in the agency newsletter.
- f. Special Events: The Office held a special Presidents’ Day Naturalization Ceremony with 25 new citizens taking the oath. The Office also recently participated in an African American History and Town Hall event with Congressman Danny Davis.
- g. Awards given to Chicago District Office: The Chicago Office recently received three out of thirteen awards given at the Field Operations Directorate Annual Event. Officer Anita Goss-Fields received the Customer Service Award, Officer Rodriguez received the Engagement Award, and Officer Kowalski received the Quality Control Award.

- h. Exemptions from Hiring Freeze: 75 immigration service officer positions are on track to be filled as these have been deemed exempt from the hiring freeze.

2. Follow up to question 1

As to whether officers are trained to look at changed country conditions, it depends on the case. It is proper for the officer to look at how the individual adjusted status. Officers have senior officers, resource officers and legal counsel at their disposal for any questions about eligibility.

3. Follow up to question 2

The list of long pending cases recently provided by the Chapter is still being worked on. After an initial inquiry with Pauline Woodson, members are asked to wait at least 30 days to follow up with her.

4. Follow up to question 3

At InfoPass, applicants will need to present identification and proof of the grant of Parole-in-Place.

5. Follow up to question 4

As to whether the I-131 fee must be repaid, it is not required if an I-131 has already been filed and is currently pending.

6. Follow up to question 5

If the individual does not have and is not able to obtain a passport, the ADIT stamp can be issued with an I-94 card. Note that the Office tries to limit issuance of I-94 card stamps and applicants should make every attempt to obtain a passport.

7. Follow up to question 6

An ADIT stamp will be issued once an I-90 is filed.

8. Follow up to question 7

As to how members can know which Branch Chief is responsible for a particular case, any inquiries will be shared and directed to the proper person. There has been an increase in the number of N-400s being processed.

9. Follow up to question 8:

In the event members become aware of instances of unauthorized practice of law, the FTC has an anonymous complaint form on their website. If the individual is a notary, it is also possible to have the notary's license revoked.

10. Follow up to question 9:

Throughout USCIS cycle times are up for N-400 applications. The electronic system did experience some hiccups and the Office is trying to maintain parity between the electronic and paper systems. In Chicago, beginning in March, Fridays will be dedicated to N-400 which will hopefully improve process times.

The following processing times currently apply to the Chicago Office:

- I-485: 6-7 months
- N-400: a bit over 5 months
- I-751: 70 days from the date the file is received in Chicago. Note it may take some time for the file to arrive from the Service Center.
- I-290B: 30 days

11. Follow up to question 10:

The Office has not received any information to share regarding the Executive Orders at this time. When they have something he can share with us, be assured that he will do so.

There has been no guidance regarding how to handle cases with outstanding orders of removal. However, they have received requests for information about current procedures. They have not been directed to notify ICE of any particular cases though.

12. Miscellaneous

Tom Cioppa will be unable to attend the Midwest Regional Conference of AILA, but Martha Medina, Nick Melissus, and Amany Ezeldin from the Chicago Office will attend. In addition, Don Neufeld will be there.

13. Next District Director Liaison meeting will take place on April 18th and it is an OPEN meeting.