

AILA CHICAGO CHAPTER
USCIS DISTRICT DIRECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE
CHICAGO FIELD OFFICE
June 29, 2017 MEETING

SUPPLEMENTAL MINUTES

District Director, Tom Cioppa, made the following six announcements:

a) Processing delays

The backlog for processing all cases, in particular N-400s, has grown. Currently, the office is taking over 8 months for N-400s, up from 5.6 months. Contributing factors include the implementation of electronic filing, officer vacancies as well as increased numbers of applicants. Approximately 12,000 applications were filed electronically when the ELIS was turned on a month ago. The Chicago District Office will be a lead office in the testing of the ELIS system. To attempt to reduce the backlog, in August the office will have designated days to process only ELIS cases.

b) Continuation rates

Deputy District Director Bryan Christian is bringing his experience from the New York office to attempt to reduce continuation rates (the amount of time it takes an officer to make a decision on a case). The office reports some progress in this area.

c) Officer vacancies

There are currently 16 vacant officer positions in the office. The office is recruiting aggressively and has reached out to veterans' groups and the Peace Corps as former volunteers are eligible for noncompetitive eligibility hiring. He asks members to keep in mind that even after hiring new officers, it will take time for their training to be completed.

d) Saturday N-400 interviews

Beginning July 8th, there will be Saturday N-400 interviews scheduled. These are scheduled by the Chicago office in batches without regard as to whether there is a G-28 on file. They will also be continuing with Friday interviews.

e) July 3rd Naturalization Oath Ceremony

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel will no longer be able to appear at the Oath Ceremony scheduled for July 3rd. In his place, Michael Valverde, Deputy Associate Director for the Field Office Directorate, will appear.

f) Trump nominee for USCIS Director:

Nominee Lee Francis Cissna is currently being interviewed by the Senate for confirmation. He previously worked for Senator Grassley.

Follow up to submitted questions

1. Follow up to Question 1

Question 1a: As to whether the office would consider tracking processing times for I-212 waivers, it is not clearly known why these are not tracked. Chicago is not the only office that does not track these and it may be due to the data system in use.

Question 1d: As to the question of when is ICE notified, the decision is on a case by case basis. The decision is made by the officer after reviewing the application.

2. Follow up to Question 6b: A separate email to request rescheduling of a naturalization case exists. It is CHI400RESCHEDED@uscis.dhs.gov.

3. Miscellaneous

List of supervisors: An updated list of supervisors is being provided.

Long pending case list: As to whether the office will consider accepting another long pending case list, they will take a look at the current list and see where they are at.

Currently, every two weeks officers are pulled out of interviewing so they can focus on issuing decisions in pending cases.