



**Homeland
Security**

Questions and Answers

Joint Engagement on USCIS Customer Experience (CX) Enhancements

If you have additional questions or feedback regarding the joint engagement on USCIS CX enhancements, please email us at CISOmbudsman.publicaffairs@hq.dhs.gov.

Questions regarding myUSCIS

Q1. How can I provide USCIS feedback regarding the online account user experience and design?

A1. The USCIS online account offers a survey that asks specific questions for the user to answer. The online account also offers an exit survey that has a free text field for customer feedback. And there is a survey on uscis.gov that has a free text field.

Q2. How can I receive technical support with my USCIS online account?

A2. For technical support with your online account, you can send USCIS a secure message through your online account. If you did not file your case online but have a receipt number that begins with "IOE," you can create a USCIS online account to send secure messages. You can also go to the [Contact Us](#) page and open the "Password Resets and Technical Support" section for more information.

Q3. Is an in-person appointment the only way to unlock online accounts? Can I receive assistance by calling the Contact Center?

A3. Information on unlocking your online account is on the [How do I unlock My Online Account?](#) page. If you enter your password incorrectly multiple times when trying to log into your online account, you will get a notification saying you are locked out of your account. You should then follow these steps:

1. Wait 20 minutes for the system to reset, and then try logging in again.
2. If you still cannot access your USCIS online account, send USCIS' Technical Help Desk a message using this link: my.uscis.gov/account/v1/needhelp.
 - After filling out a short form you will see a drop-down menu of technical support options.

- Please select “I need help with unlocking my account.” Then click “Send Message.”
3. USCIS’ Technical Help Desk will email you, usually within 10 business days, with instructions on how to access your account.

Questions regarding the text-ahead feature

Q1. Currently, USCIS makes two attempts to contact customers and will leave a message stating that the officer will call back in 60 to 90 minutes. How much notice will customers have with the text-ahead feature?

A1. The first text message is generally sent approximately one hour in advance. If the customer is unavailable the first time, USCIS will try again the same day, within about an hour.

Q2. Can customers request a specific time or time range for USCIS to call them back?

A2. Customers agree to receive a text ahead message, but they cannot request a specific time frame. Due to fluctuations in caseload, USCIS can’t guarantee a specific call back time.

Q3. Attorneys may not be available for several hours at a time. What happens if the two attempts to text the attorney happen during one of these periods?

A3. If a G-28 attorney or accredited representative is unavailable the first time, USCIS texts the representative at their designated contact number. If the attorney or accredited representative responds as not available or does not respond to the two text ahead messages, they will be required to begin the inquiry process again with the USCIS Contact Center.

Q4. Is the text-ahead feature enabled for everyone who contacts USCIS, or do I have to request a text-ahead notification? Is the text-ahead feature used for all callbacks or only certain callbacks from the Contact Center?

A4. Inquiries by Phone

When a customer calls the [USCIS Contact Center](#), the customer can reach a live assistant at the Tier 1 level. If a customer has a question that cannot be answered initially by the USCIS Tier I representative, USCIS will escalate the inquiry to the Tier 2 level. The Tier 2 level is staffed by USCIS Immigration Services Officers (ISO).

Before the call is elevated to a Tier 2 ISO, the Tier 1 representative will ask you if you wish to receive a text-ahead notification if a USCIS ISO needs to contact you by phone. You must verbally agree to receive this text-ahead notification.

Not all calls that are elevated to the Tier 2 level require a call back and the applicant’s case may be resolved without a call. If a Tier 2 ISO calls the customer, the customer will receive a text message indicating that USCIS will be calling within a 30-minute timeframe. The

customer can opt to accept the call during that timeframe or request that the call be rescheduled.

Inquiries by Secure Message

When a customer uses their [USCIS online account](#) to submit a question via a secure message, the customer can indicate in the secure message whether they would like advance notification via text message if a USCIS representative needs to call them about their inquiry. Not all cases require a callback, and your case may be resolved without a call.

Q5. Some people do not have a phone that accepts text messages, particularly law office phones. Will callers be able to request they be notified via email?

A5. Email is not an option as it is a text-ahead/SMS service. If law offices would like to receive text ahead, an attorney or other staff member of the firm can provide a cell phone number.

Questions regarding online appointment requests

Q1. Do all field offices use the same standard for emergency appointments?

A1. Although the policy and process are consistent throughout USCIS and all offices follow the same guidelines, it is up to the field office's discretion and hours of operation and availability to determine whether an emergency appointment can be made available.

Q2. Can I reschedule my appointment online if it is not for biometrics (such as an interview or InfoPass appointment)?

A2. No, you cannot reschedule non-biometric appointments online. You can however request an appointment for services other than biometrics online. You must provide a reason for your request, and USCIS will determine if an appointment is necessary. You will receive either an appointment confirmation, or a message with information about your request.

Q3. How did USCIS determine which issues and form types are acceptable reasons to schedule an appointment online? For example, Form I-730, *Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition*, is not in the "Other" category for online appointments even though the Contact Center will not provide information about these matters by phone.

A3. [USCIS online appointment](#) processes are designed to address the most common reasons individuals and legal representatives seek an in-person appointment at a USCIS field office, which include emergency advance parole, ADIT stamps, and Immigration Judge grants. Customers can still call the USCIS Contact Center to schedule an in-person appointment at a local USCIS office for other reasons beyond those listed in the online scheduling tool.

Q4. What can I do if my online appointment request is denied even though the reason is one of the listed reasons for appointment requests, such as an immigration judge grant?

A4. Online appointments are handled the same as appointments requested by phone. Customers requesting an in-person appointment must meet the criteria established by field offices to be scheduled for an appointment. In some circumstances, new processes have been established that do not require a customer to visit a field office to resolve their issue. This includes immigration judge grants and ADIT stamps, where USCIS can mail evidence of status directly to the customer, thereby removing the need to schedule the customer for an in-person appointment. If an individual requests, but is not scheduled for, an in-person appointment because they are eligible for a different process, USCIS will inform the requestor of the alternative process when responding to the request.

Q5. After making an online appointment request, how will USCIS contact me to set up the appointment? How many times will USCIS try to contact me?

A5. The Contact Center may not need to contact you by phone to schedule an in-person appointment at a USCIS field office. In some instances, USCIS can schedule the appointment and notify you by email. If you need to review the details of the appointment or want to cancel, you can visit uscis.gov/appointment. If USCIS needs to contact you by phone for additional information, USCIS will make at least two attempts to reach you by phone. If USCIS is unable to reach you after two attempts, you will receive an email notification advising that your request has been closed and to contact us again if you still have an issue that needs resolution.

Questions regarding online access codes

Q1. How can we request an online access code if the attorney received one, but the applicant did not?

A1. Online access codes are specific to each account. Therefore, it is best if the applicant requests a new online access code. They can do this from their own account if their code has expired. They can also request a new code by filling out this [short web form](#).

Q2. How can I request an online access code if I do not have an online account login?

A2. If you filed a paper form and the receipt number begins with IOE, USCIS mailed you an Account Notice that explains how you can link your paper case to the online account. The notice has an Online Access Code you use to link your case. The code is valid for 90 days. If you need a new code, you can request one using [this web form](#).

Questions regarding biometrics rescheduling

Q1. Are there some biometrics appointments that cannot be scheduled online?

A1. Yes. A biometric services appointment that has already been rescheduled twice, that has already been missed entirely, or is within 12 hours of the request to reschedule cannot be rescheduled online.

Q2. If I have already rescheduled twice, can I reschedule again by calling the Contact Center?

A2. Yes.

Q3. What are some of the good cause reasons to reschedule a biometrics appointment?

A3. Please see the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) and announcement of July 6, 2023, [USCIS Launches Online Rescheduling of Biometrics Appointments](#). Sufficient reasons may include:

- Illness, medical appointment, or hospitalization
- Previously planned travel
- Significant life events such as a wedding, funeral, or graduation ceremony
- Inability to obtain transportation to the appointment location
- Inability to obtain leave from employment or caregiver responsibilities
- Late delivered or undelivered biometric services appointment notice

Q4. How do I reschedule a biometrics appointment that was missed because of an emergency?

A4. USCIS only accepts untimely rescheduling requests made to the Contact Center and does not accept untimely requests to reschedule by mail or in person at a USCIS office or through the myUSCIS online rescheduling tool.

Q5. If there is conflicting information in myUSCIS and the paper confirmation of a biometrics appointment rescheduled online, what should I do?

A5. The applicant should call the [USCIS Contact Center](#).

Questions regarding myProgress

Q1. What are the differences between the processing times in myProgress and the Check Case Processing Times webpage?

A1. myProgress gives an estimated timeline tailored to the applicant's case. The Case Processing Times webpage provides estimates for the aggregate work of case processing.

Q2. How accurate are the personalized processing times in myProgress?

A2. They have been shown to have a high degree of accuracy and will continue to improve as the system layers more data in its predictive model.

Questions regarding attorneys and accredited representatives

Q1. For paper-filed petitions, we often receive a USCIS Online Account Access Notice issuing us a new USCIS Online Account Number, despite providing our firm’s existing online account number in the paper filing. This requires us to create a new account for each new client. This is not feasible. How is USCIS improving the online account and its technology to better link paper filed petitions/applications to existing accounts?

A1. USCIS is aware of this issue and is currently working on a solution.

Q2. Can USCIS host training sessions for attorneys and accredited representatives regarding the online accounts and online filing?

A2. In the last three years, USCIS has hosted several engagements for legal representatives on the USCIS online account. In the last two years, USCIS has participated in more than 20 local stakeholder meetings (to include legal representatives) hosted by District and Field Offices and provided updates on the online account, linking paper cases, and other topics of interest. Also, on an ad hoc basis, USCIS’ Digital Services Division has reached out to many attorneys one on one to help resolve issues they are having.

Beginning January 23, USCIS will host about 20 national engagements for both legal representatives and petitioning companies to support outreach on [organizational accounts](#) and online filing of H-1B petitions. These engagements will be advertised on our [national engagements](#) web page and in [stakeholder alerts](#).

At least eight of these engagements will employ a new engagement format USCIS is calling “[Tech Talks](#).” For these sessions, USCIS will prepare a short update to respond to questions coming in through various channels (Webmaster, feedback box, contact center, etc.), and then will take questions from attendees. Depending on how these Tech Talks go, USCIS is considering the feasibility of expanding them beyond H-1B cap season to include other common technical topics on a monthly or biweekly basis. USCIS cannot make a firm commitment now but thinks that these hold promise because they offer a less formal, recurring forum for people to raise issues.

Q3. Can Form G-28, *Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative*, be uploaded or filed online?

A3. Form G-28 is with the related application, petition, or appeal, so it depends on the type of application, petition, and appeal, as well as the stage of the filing. If a client asks you to represent them on a case they previously filed online for themselves, you can also file a separate Form G-28 online for that case. For more information, see USCIS’ [Filing Your Form G-28](#) page and the [Online Filing for Attorneys and Accredited Representatives](#) page.

Questions regarding the USCIS Contact Center

Q1. How is the Contact Center phone tree and auto-prompt system designed? It is very difficult to speak with a live representative.

A1. The interactive voice response (IVR) is speech-enabled so that customers can ask questions in natural language. In most instances, the IVR is designed to direct callers to online tools and resources, providing access by sending links via text or email. If the question being asked cannot be resolved through an online tool, a customer may be transferred to live assistance.

The Contact Center receives an average of 60,000 calls to the 1-800 number per day. Of those, USCIS escalates approximately 15,000 to 20,000 calls (25 to 30 percent of all calls) to live assistance based on caller-stated reasons. In May 2020, USCIS transitioned to a speech enabled IVR that requires callers seeking live assistance to provide information about their inquiry before the system can connect them to live assistance. For those who do not need live assistance, the IVR provides email and text responses with links to information on the USCIS website. The average time that it takes for a caller to connect with Tier 1 is 6 minutes.

Q2. How do I get through to a representative when calling the Contact Center?

A2. The CIS Ombudsman has worked with USCIS to create the [USCIS Contact Center Tip Sheet](#) on how best to use the USCIS Contact Center. You can also find more information on the [USCIS Contact Center](#) page.

Other CX questions

Q1. What is the best way for beneficiaries, applicants, and their representatives to give feedback on their customer experience to USCIS?

A1. The USCIS online account offers a survey that asks specific questions for the user to answer. The online account also offers an exit survey that has a free text field for customer feedback. And there is a survey on uscis.gov that has a free text field.

Q2. How does USCIS balance making more self-service tools available online with customers with limited internet access, technology literacy, or limited English proficiency?

A2. USCIS continues to expand and enhance the online filing experience for all customers. Additionally, USCIS offers in-person informational sessions. USCIS incorporates customer feedback and suggestions when it develops applications and online tools. The agency also has many webpages available in Spanish. As more customers are able pivot to online or self-help tools, the capacity to better serve those who need it through other means, including live help, will be more readily available.

Q3. How is USCIS tracking its progress on improving the customer experience?

A3. In addition to user testing and reviewing the comments from the online survey, USCIS reviews various metrics to show how much the new features are being used, how many people are using online filing, how many applications are being submitted online versus on paper, and what percentage of increase USCIS is seeing in the use of online services.

Other questions

Q1. There is a “Non-Delivery of Card” e-request option on the USCIS website. We frequently field questions from OPT applicants who receive a status update that their Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card was sent back to USCIS and to submit a USCIS e-Request to have the EAD card re-sent, even though the applicant provided a correct mailing address. Our observation is that this online USCIS feature results in a message telling the student to wait 30 days for a response, and on the 30th day they receive a message to apply for a replacement EAD card instead of a replacement EAD being resent. Is there an effort to make this process more efficient? For example, if the solution is filing for a replacement EAD, could that be added as an FAQ rather than having OPT applicants wait 30 days for instructions?

A1. This question was answered live. For more information, please go to the CIS Ombudsman’s [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page and see question 3 in the [Employment Authorization Documents \(EADs\)](#) section.

What should I do if the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) returned my EAD to USCIS as undeliverable?

If USCIS’ [Case Status Online](#) tool shows that your EAD was returned to USCIS as undeliverable, please:

- 1. First, verify with USPS that you are registered to [receive mail](#) at the address that is on file for you with USCIS. If you live in an apartment, put your name on your mailbox to ensure delivery. If you are living with someone, make sure the address on file with USCIS includes “in care of” or “c/o” and the person’s name you are living with (for example: “Jane Doe, c/o John Smith, 123 Main Street, Anytown, MD 25555”). If you are not registered to receive mail at the address USCIS has on file for you, your EAD will continue to be returned to USCIS as undeliverable.*

If you are not sure if your address is up to date with USCIS or have moved after filing your Form I-765 application, you will need to [change your address](#) with USCIS. Please allow USCIS at least 5 business days to update their systems with your new address for your I-765 receipt number.

- 2. You may then submit a [case inquiry](#) to USCIS to request that it mail your EAD to your current address. If you recently updated your address with USCIS, please allow at least 5 business days for USCIS to update their systems with*

your new address before submitting the case inquiry to USCIS.

3. *Since USCIS' policy is to destroy EADs 60 days after USPS returns them to USCIS as undeliverable, you may then choose to [request case assistance](#) from the CIS Ombudsman. Please include the date and service inquiry number for your inquiry to USCIS. If you recently updated your address with USCIS, please allow at least 5 business days for USCIS to update their systems with your new address before submitting a request for case assistance with our office.*

You may also register for "Informed Delivery" through USPS to get previews of mail in transit. Please visit USPS' [Informed Delivery](#) page for additional information.

Q2. Sometimes the time difference between the time I can submit a service request and the average processing time for a specific application is as long as 8-12 months. How can I contact USCIS to determine why a case has been delayed so long after the posted processing time?

A2. The [posted processing time](#) is based on the time to complete 80% of adjudicated cases for the specific form type over the past six months. The case inquiry date, however, is based on the time to complete 93% of cases over the past six months. To help us use our limited resources wisely, USCIS only allows inquiries for cases that are beyond the 93rd percentile for cases completed in the past six months. USCIS is continuing to look at ways to improve reporting on case processing times and status in 2024.

Q3. For cases filed online, is the default for USCIS to send paper notices to the applicant and attorney of record or will notices only be uploaded to the online account? If notices are uploaded to the online account, do the applicant and/or attorney receive an email notification that the notice is now available in their online accounts?

A3. USCIS Electronic Immigration System (ELIS) cases will get both paper notices sent by mail and notices uploaded to the online account.

Q4. What is the current wait time for sponsors filing Form I-134A, *Online Request to be a Supporter and Declaration of Financial Support*, associated with the Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans? I do not see the processing time online.

A4. Processing times for this form type are not currently available online. You can learn more about on the [Form I-134A](#) page on USCIS' website. For information about the Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans, go to: <https://www.uscis.gov/CHNV>.