

Questions for Change of Address and Mailing Issues Teleconference

1. Please describe the best method for an individual to change his or her address with USCIS. If an individual has multiple applications pending at USCIS, does that method change?

USCIS Response: We recommend that all customers utilize the “USCIS Online Change of Address” system whenever possible. Customers can use “USCIS Online Change of Address” to 1) file Form AR-11, Alien’s Change of Address Card and 2) update the address on most applications and petitions pending with USCIS. Additionally, “USCIS Online Change of Address” provides customers with a confirmation number.

2. What happens if a notice of interview mailed to applicant is returned to USCIS as undeliverable? What happens if the notice is not returned to USCIS, but was delivered to the wrong address?

USCIS Response: A request for interview mailed to the applicant or petitioner shall contain the notation "Your application or petition will be deemed abandoned and action thereon will be terminated if you fail to respond to this request." If an interview appointment notice is returned to USCIS as undeliverable, our systems would be updated to show non-delivery. Besides updating the systems, USCIS personnel are tasked with researching available databases for more recent addresses than the returned mail address and, if found, attempting a second delivery of the mail. If the applicant or petitioner fails to appear or otherwise respond within 10 working days after the call-in date, the application or petition shall be deemed abandoned.

If an interview appointment notice was delivered to the wrong address, the customer would need to demonstrate that s/he made a timely and proper request to change her/his address with USCIS. Otherwise, the application or petition may be denied.

3. Please describe the origin and purpose of the AR-11 change of address process. If an applicant submits an AR-11, are USCIS databases updated based on the submission?

USCIS Response: Section 265 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) requires that most non-U.S. citizens report a change of address within 10 days of moving. Customers notify USCIS of their move by completing Form AR-11, Alien’s Change of Address Card.

Completing this legal requirement and submitting the necessary form, however, does not update an address for any application or petition pending with USCIS. The filing of Form AR-11 will only update the AR-11 database. Customers with pending applications or petitions can complete Form AR-11 and update their address for any pending application or petition by using the “USCIS Online Change of Address” system. Please note that this is a two-step process. The customer will first complete Form AR-11 online. The customer will then enter the receipt numbers for any pending applications or petitions.

Note: Customers with T, U, or VAWA-related filings cannot change their address online. Change of address requests for these filers must be made to the Vermont Service Center (VSC).

4. Please describe how an applicant's or representative's address is maintained in USCIS databases (AR 11, Claims, etc). Do these different databases interface with each other?

Which one is used to send notices to applicants and representatives about a pending case? Should an individual seek to change his or her address in each one? How?

USCIS Response: CLAIMS 3 and CLAIMS 4 are the two primary databases used to store customer and representative information, including addresses, for pending applications and petitions. USCIS uses the CLAIMS databases to send notices to customers about pending cases. The AR-11 database is used solely to record address changes for customers who have a legal obligation, per section 265 of the INA, to notify USCIS of the address change. The CLAIMS databases and the AR-11 databases do not interface; however, ISOs should review this screen before mailing a notice to an applicant or petitioner.

Most non-citizens have a legal obligation to update their address with USCIS by filing Form AR-11. All customers (citizens and non-citizens) who have a pending application or petition must update their addresses with USCIS. While it is not a legal obligation to notify USCIS of an address change for a pending application or petition, failure to do so may result in the denial of the case. As noted above, USCIS recommends that customers utilize the “USCIS Online Change of Address” system whenever possible.

5. Do you have advice for applicants on how best to ensure that they are providing an address that complies with current requirements?

USCIS Response: USPS strongly recommends that all address fields be fully completed and also highly recommends that the customer include the ZIP+4 to allow USPS to obtain the exact match of the delivery point. Although USPS completes an address verification scan of each mail piece prior to mailing, having the correct standardized address that is fully spelled will allow the USPS to provide accurate and timely delivery with Priority Mail.

The USPS standardized address format is referenced in Publication 28, Postal Addressing Standards. Customers can use the USPS ZIP+4 lookup tool at <https://tools.usps.com/go/ZipLookup>

6. How are online changes of address requests processed? Who enters the information into the USCIS databases? Where does this take place?

USCIS Response: For most non-citizens with pending applications or petitions, notifying USCIS of a change of address is a two-step process: the filing of Form AR-11 and the updating of an address for a pending application or petition. After completing Form AR-11 online, the “USCIS Online Change of Address” system will allow customers to enter the receipt numbers for any pending applications or petitions. If receipt numbers are entered, the system creates a “service request” through the Service Request Management Tool (SRMT). The “service request” is routed to the appropriate office where an Immigration Services Officer (ISO) responds to the customer and updates the case file with the new address for the pending application or petition.

7. What parts of USCIS now use e-mail notifications for attorneys and BIA representatives? How can one sign up to receive such notifications? (i.e., My Case Status updates)

USCIS Response: Customers or representatives who wish to receive electronic notification (e-Notification) that their application has been accepted can file Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance concurrently with their filing.

Please note that only those forms that are currently accepted at one of the three USCIS Lockbox facilities located in Chicago, Phoenix, and Lewisville, TX., provide customers with the option to receive an email and/or text message informing them that USCIS has accepted their application or petition.

Filing a Form G-1145 only provides a customer with the option to receive an email or text alert that a filed form has been accepted; it does not register a customer for further case status updates via "My Case Status." To receive email or text notification about the progress of a case, customers will need to create an account on the USCIS website at the following link: <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/jsps/selectusertype.jsp>. After creating the account, customers can then choose to receive automatic case status updates, which will be sent via email or text.

8. Please describe the best way for attorneys or BIA representatives to change the address of their office in USCIS databases. When an office moves, must the address be changed for each individual that is represented by that office? What is the best way to send such notification?

USCIS Response: USCIS recommends that attorneys submit a new fully completed and updated, signed Form G-28 for each pending case. Attorneys should use the new version of the Form G-28 (revised on April 22, 2009) and should submit the form to the office where the case is pending. The Form G-28 should reference the case's receipt number. In the alternative, the attorney may submit a letter on office stationery that clearly specifies the new address and change in firm, if applicable. The letter should include a list of cases to which the address change applies. Please include the Form Type, Receipt Number, A Number, and the applicant or petitioner's name in a spreadsheet format similar to that below.

Form Type	Receipt Number	A-Number	Applicant/Petitioner's Name
I-140	LIN 99-999-99999	A012-345-678	Suzy Smith

9. Please describe the best way for attorneys or BIA representatives to notify USCIS that former counsel is no longer with their office, and that the individual has a new representative within the same office.

USCIS Response: The new attorney or representative must submit a Form G-28 for each pending application or petition.

10. Can an applicant/representative elect to be notified by overnight mail if s/he submits an application to USCIS with a pre-paid mailing envelope?

USCIS Response: Generally, USCIS will not be able to send documents to customers even if a pre-paid mailing envelope is included. Many notices are automatically generated once an action (e.g., approval, request for evidence, etc.) is made in the system. Additionally, most cards (e.g., green cards, employment authorization documents) are not produced in the office that adjudicated the application. The ISO does not print and mail individual notices or cards from his or her desk.

Because travel documents are printed and mailed individually, USCIS may be able to send those documents to a customer or representative via overnight mail if a pre-paid mailing envelope is included.



The Ombudsman's Public Teleconference Series

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The Ombudsman's Office hosts public teleconferences to share information on specific topics and to hear your comments and suggestions regarding your interactions with the [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#).

Upcoming Teleconferences

USCIS Change of Address and Mailing Procedures: How Are They Working for You?

Thursday, November 28, 2011

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. EDT

This teleconference is an opportunity to learn how applicants and their representatives report changes of address to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). The Ombudsman's Office will interview stakeholders from Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services of DC and Pisgah Legal Services of Asheville, NC to learn about their experiences with these processes. A USPS representative will also share information about the requirements for proper mailing addresses and the processing of changes of address with USPS. There will be an opportunity for listeners to ask questions and/or share comments.

To register, please RSVP to cisombudsman.publicaffairs@dhs.gov and reference "USCIS Change of Address and Mailing Issues" in the subject line of your email.

Participation in these teleconferences is anonymous for callers.

Recaps from Recent Teleconferences

- [Survivor Benefits under INA §204\(l\): A Conversation with USCIS](#)
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- [Application Processing Times: A Conversation with USCIS Office of Performance and Quality](#)
- [Export Controls Requirements on Form I-129: A Conversation with the Commerce Department](#)
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