



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

HQPRD 70/6.2.8

Interoffice Memorandum

To: All Service Center Directors
Regional Directors

From: William R. Yates /S/
Associate Director
Operations

Date: January 19, 2005

Re: Establishment of an Investor and Regional Center Unit

PURPOSE

Effective the date of this memo, oversight for policy and regulation development, field guidance, form design, case auditing, and training regarding Regional Center adjudications and associated investor petitions within the EB-5 Investor Program, shall reside with PRD/Investor and Regional Center Unit (IRCU). Given the well documented past abuses in the alien investor program, and the complexity and sensitivity of the issues and factors relating to both Regional Centers as well as with individual alien investor cases, there is a need for effective oversight, coordination and uniform standards governing all aspects of EB-5 matters.

DISCUSSION

PRD/IRCU will maintain liaison and regularly consult with Headquarters Service Center Operations (SCOPS), Field Operations (OFO), Administrative Appeals Office (AAO), as well as with the Texas and California Service Centers with respect to the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program, Regional Centers, I-526 and I-829 alien investor petitions. In addition, PRD/IRCU will work directly with both SCOPS and the Office of Fraud Detection and National Security (FDNS) to enhance the integrity of the EB-5 program.

This action is a major step in CIS' establishment of a nationwide and coordinated adjudicative alien investor EB-5 program, which will strengthen and protect the integrity of the program while promoting the intent of Congress to encourage investment and increase employment within the United States. The IRCU's functions and responsibilities are as follows:

1. Sole adjudicative jurisdiction for Regional Center applications pursuant to the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program for purposes of approval, denial and Requests for Evidence (RFE's).
2. Monitor and follow up on the actions of approved Regional Centers to ensure compliance with the terms, scope, and conditions of their approval/designation relative to their approved business plans and indirect job creation methodologies.
3. Develop and propose EB-5 program policy and regulation changes/improvements to USCIS management.

4. Monitor and be responsible for the policy coordination relating to CIS wide I-526 and related I-829 Immigrant Investor cases.
5. In coordination with SCOPS, conduct quarterly evaluations and an annual analysis of Regional Center activities in terms of number of alien investors, aggregate investment capital, average value of investments per alien investor, aggregate total of direct and indirect jobs per each regional center, and review total number of alien investors petitioning through each regional center per year.
6. Coordinate with the SCOPS and FDNS, to develop program and process integrity improvements and assessments for purposes of strengthening fraud detection and preventing abuses of the program by mala fide promoters and investors.
7. In coordination with SCOPS, develop and update Executive Level Review Criteria (ELRC) for purposes of identifying and selecting I-526 and I-829 Regional Center affiliated cases to review and/or adjudicate for both audit and “special handling” to verify consistent application of applicable regulations and policies, and to provide oversight, guidance and provide priority adjudication of sensitive high visibility cases.
8. In coordination with SCOPS conduct random and focused audits and quality assurance reviews of individual and groups of both Regional Center affiliated I-526 and I-829 cases, and non-Regional Center affiliated cases, in accordance with ELRC procedures.
9. In coordination with SCOPS, conduct both Regional Center and EB-5 regulatory/policy training for CAO’s and DAO’s adjudicating individual EB-5 alien petitions as well as petitions affiliated with a regional center.
10. Maintains and updates the USCIS web content on the EB-5 program and Pilot Program information.

Attached is the mission and organizational structure for PRD/IRCU.

POINT OF CONTACT

For additional information and clarification of this action, please contact Thomas Cook, Director, HQPRD, through appropriate channels.

CC: Carlos Iturregui, HQOPS
Dominick Gentile, HQREC
Michael Aytes, HQIU
Robert Devine, HQOCC
Robert Wiemann, AAO
Terry O’Reilly, HQOFO
Don Crocetti, HQFDNS

Attachment

Investor and Regional Center Unit Mission and Organization

Mission:

The Investor and Regional Center Unit (IRCU) is a special project team within the Business and Trade Branch, Office of Program and Regulations Development. The new unit has oversight for all policy and regulatory development, form design and training regarding the EB-5 Program and Regional Center adjudications.

To carry out its mission, IRCU works closely with the Office of Service Center Operations (SCOPS), the California and Texas service centers, field offices, and the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs in the administration of the law, and clarifying processing procedures regarding the adjudication of I-526 and related I-829 alien investor petitions. IRCU maintains liaison and works closely with SCOPS and the Office of Fraud Detection and National Security related to EB-5 and regional center program integrity, fraud detection and prevention.

IRCU provides outreach to the business community, professional associations and coordinates with DHS and other federal agencies as directed, and participates on panels and public forums about the EB-5 program, regulations, and policies.

IRCU Organizational Structure Within PRD

