



August 5, 2026

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Policy Alert

SUBJECT: Suggesting DNA Testing When Issuing a Request for Additional Evidence

Purpose

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is issuing policy guidance in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to require officers to suggest Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) testing as an optional form of evidence to establish a claimed genetic relationship in cases where primary evidence is unavailable, unreliable, or insufficient to establish a claimed genetic relationship, in situations where an officer determines additional evidence is necessary.

Background

USCIS requests and reviews evidence in connection with a benefit request to determine eligibility. Each benefit request has specific eligibility requirements that a requestor must meet to demonstrate the benefit sought should be approved.¹ In general, benefit requests must be filed with primary evidence to demonstrate eligibility for the benefit sought.² In cases where required primary evidence does not exist or cannot be obtained, requestors must provide secondary evidence.³

Certain immigration benefit requests require the benefit requestor to submit primary evidence to demonstrate the existence of a claimed qualifying genetic relationship. Previous USCIS policy indicated that officers may suggest DNA evidence after both primary and secondary evidence are deemed insufficient to establish the claimed genetic relationship. This guidance resulted in each directorate having varying guidance on suggesting DNA evidence, if at all.

This new guidance requires officers to suggest DNA evidence when a benefit requestor does not meet their burden to establish a claimed genetic relationship and additional evidence is needed. The new policy also aligns with section nine of Executive Order 14165, *Securing Our Borders*, which directs the Department of Homeland Security to utilize “any available technologies and procedures to determine the validity of any claimed familial relationship.”⁴

¹ See [8 CFR 103.2\(b\)\(1\)](#).

² See [8 CFR 103.2\(b\)\(1\)](#).

³ See [8 CFR 103.2\(b\)](#).

⁴ See Executive Order 14165, *Securing Our Borders*, [90 FR 8467](#) (Jan. 20, 2025).

This guidance, contained in Volume 1 of the Policy Manual, is effective immediately and applies to requests pending or filed on or after the publication date. The guidance contained in the Policy Manual is controlling and supersedes any related prior guidance.

Policy Highlights

- Provides that, when required primary evidence is unavailable, unreliable, or insufficient to establish the claimed genetic relationship, officers must suggest DNA testing in a request for additional evidence, in situations where a request for evidence is needed.
- Clarifies the circumstances under which primary evidence may be unreliable or insufficient to establish a claimed genetic relationship.
- Informs benefit requestors of the option to submit all available evidence at their disposal to establish a claimed genetic relationship.

Summary of Changes

Affected Section: Volume 1 > Part E > Chapter 6, Evidence

- In Section B (Primary Evidence, Secondary Evidence, and Affidavits), Subsection 2 (Secondary Evidence) adds new italicized subheading, “Optional Submission of DNA Testing.”

Affected Section: Volume 4 > Part C > Chapter 4, Documentation and Evidence

- Revises content in Section D (Evidence), Subsection 3 (Secondary Evidence).

Affected Section: Volume 5 > Part C > Chapter 7, Documentation and Evidence

- Revises content under Section B (Required Evidence), Subsection 3 (Proof of Orphan’s Identity and Age).

Affected Section: Volume 5 > Part D > Chapter 3, Identity and Age

- Revises first paragraph under italicized subheading “Sibling Exception” and revises content in footnote 5.

Affected Section: Volume 12 > Part H > Chapter 2, Definition of Child and Residence for Citizenship and Naturalization

- Revises content in Section A (Definition of Child) in the penultimate paragraph under italicized subheading “Definition of Child of a U.S. Citizen Father.”

USCIS may also make other minor technical, stylistic, and conforming changes consistent with this update.

Citation

Volume 1: General Policies and Procedures, Part E, Adjudications, Chapter 6, Evidence [[1 USCIS-PM E.6](#)].

Volume 4: Refugees and Asylees, Part C, Relative Petitions, Chapter 4, Documentation and Evidence [[4 USCIS-PM C.4](#)].

Volume 5: Adoptions, Part C, Child Eligibility Determinations (Orphan), Chapter 7, Documentation and Evidence [[5 USCIS-PM C.7](#)].

Volume 5: Adoptions, Part D, Child Eligibility Determinations (Hague), Chapter 3, Identity and Age [[5 USCIS-PM D.3](#)].

Volume 12: Citizenship and Naturalization, Part H, Children of U.S. Citizens, Chapter 2, Definition of Child and Residence for Citizenship and Naturalization [[12 USCIS-PM H.2](#)].