

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

May 29, 2003

Fact Sheet:
E-Filing and other BCIS Services Online

Each year the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) receives approximately seven million applications for immigration benefits. BCIS has now developed the technology to accept electronic filing of certain applications for immigration benefits. This technology improves both customer service and BCIS' ability to verify the identity of individuals in the future. E-filing, combined with the collection and storage of an applicant's digital photograph, signature, and fingerprint, allow the BCIS to produce a high quality immigration document with special security features. Applications soon to be available for online filing are forms I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization) and I-90 (Application for Replacement of Green Card). These two forms represent approximately 30% of the total number of benefit applications filed with BCIS annually.

E-filing Applications

- E-filing is quick, easy and convenient for applicants because it allows them, or their representatives, to complete and submit applications at any time, from any computer with Internet access. Upon completion of the e-filing session, customers will receive instant electronic confirmation that the application was received. Customers can then schedule themselves for an appointment to visit an Application Support Center for collection of a digital photograph, signature, and fingerprint.
- For those who file electronically, BCIS confirms the identity of the customer early in the application process. BCIS also electronically collects a photograph, signature, and fingerprint for the individual. These biometrics are stored and can be used later for verification of the person's identity.
- Customers, whose applications are approved, receive high quality immigration documents with special security features produced from BCIS' centralized card production facility.
- BCIS intends to add electronic filing capabilities for additional forms in the Fall of 2003. Additional forms include: Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker; Form I-131, Application for Travel Document; Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker; Form I-539, Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status; Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status; and Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing.
- Filing instructions and eligibility information for e-filing are available at www.bcis.gov.

Online Status Check

- Last year, the BCIS expanded its e-services by introducing “Case Status Online”. Customers who have a receipt number for an e-filed application or an application or petition filed at a Service Center can check the status of their pending case online through the website www.bcis.gov and avoid prolonged waits on the phone or at a local office.
- It is estimated that more than 30,000 customers take advantage of this service every day. Those filing electronically will also be able to take advantage of this remarkable service.

Forms Online

- The website also provides information and forms online for users to download free of charge. Customers are able to print out the forms, complete them and mail them to the appropriate office for adjudication.
- Today, the online form catalog is the most used feature of the BCIS Website, with almost 1 million of the nearly 2.8 million visitors per month downloading forms.

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