



## CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES OMBUDSMAN FY 2022-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

A strategic plan is one of three main elements required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 (P.L. 103-62) and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-352). This strategic plan defines our mission, goals and the means by which we will measure our progress in addressing specific initiatives over a four-year period.

### **Who We Are**

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CIS Ombudsman) is dedicated to improving the administration of immigration services and benefits delivered to the public by providing individual case assistance, identifying systemic issues and making recommendations to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

### **Statutory Authority**

Section 452 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 provides the legal authority for the CIS Ombudsman.

### **Mission**

To serve as a champion for the transparent and efficient administration of immigration benefits and services through casework, stakeholder engagement and policy recommendations.

### **Vision**

A reliable source of relevant, balanced and actionable recommendations informed by our office's conduit to the immigration community and a deep understanding of the work of USCIS.

### **Core Values**

- Integrity
- Reliability
- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Trustworthy
- Balanced
- Collaborative

### **Strategic Alignment**

The CIS Ombudsman advances the guiding principles and core values outlined in the [DHS Strategic Plan FY 2020-2024](#),<sup>1</sup> specifically:

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<sup>1</sup>The DHS Strategic Plan is currently being revised.

- Objective 2.4: Administer immigration benefits to advance the security and prosperity of the nation.
- Objective 6.1: Strengthen departmental governance and management.
- Objective 6.2: Develop and maintain a high performing workforce.

In addition, the goals of the Administration’s [Executive Order 14012, \*Restoring Faith in our Legal Immigration Systems and Strengthening Integration and Inclusion Efforts for New Americans\*](#), and the express commitment to identify barriers that impede access to immigration benefits—squarely align with our office’s mission.

Our work also aligns with two objectives in the [USCIS Strategic Plan FY 2019-2021](#).<sup>2</sup>

- Objective 3.1: Optimize the quality and timeliness of all aspects of the benefits adjudication process.
- Objective 4.3: Enhance organizational efficiency and unity of effort to achieve mission requirements.

### **Guiding Program Principles**

**Case Assistance:** Provide timely and effective assistance to individuals and employers in resolving problems with USCIS.

**Outcome:** Implement enhanced technology and case management best practices to effectively serve as an office of last resort.

**Public Engagement:** Serve as a trusted channel for stakeholder concerns and as a “go to” source for reliable information for all stakeholders with a vested interest in the U.S. immigration system.

**Outcome:** Gather feedback from stakeholders on issues impacting the administration of immigration benefits as well as disseminate timely information to the public using strategic channels of communication.

**Policy:** Produce timely, relevant and actionable recommendations to mitigate problems and improve the administration of immigration services and benefits, informed by our conduit to the community and deep understanding of the work of USCIS.

**Outcome:** Support USCIS by providing timely and actionable insights, proposals and recommendations to improve the administration of immigration benefits and services.

**Operations:** Support personnel management, budget, property and facilities and develop guidance for overall program operations and administrative policy.

**Outcome:** Comprehensively support human resources, programs and mission delivery by implementing fiscally responsible and innovative solutions.

**Strategy:** Cultivate strategic capabilities within the organization using data and analytics to inform planning and operational decisions.

**Outcome:** Develop and implement cross-cutting capabilities and effectively use data and analytics to support mission implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> The USCIS Strategic Plan is currently being revised.

## **Goals and Objectives**

### **Goal 1: Strengthen Our Identity and Customer Service**

We will use various channels to articulate our mission, capabilities and value to the public and to those with a vested interest in the U.S. immigration system.

#### **Impact:**

Enhanced awareness of the CIS Ombudsman's mission, available services and ability to make recommendations to improve the administration of immigration services and benefits.

#### **FY 2022 Outputs:**

- Eliminate the existing backlog and get current with receipts
- Apply analysis to identify the most pressing case types and trends
- Set clear expectations and enhance public communications
- Make CAADI and Form 7001 "fit for purpose"
- Use data to better understand trends and production
- Analyze and update customer contact materials and mechanisms
- Integrate and rationalize the customer inquiry process with USCIS
- Increase visibility of the CIS Ombudsman's mission through visual aids

### **Goal 2: Build and Develop Our Workforce**

We will recruit and retain diverse and dedicated employees and promote a culture of excellence by investing in the professional development and growth of our workforce and engaging employees at all levels of the organization.

#### **Impact:**

Increased staff productivity and an engaged workforce with a vested interest in the overall success of the office.

#### **FY 2022 Outputs:**

- Oversee human resources and personnel functions
- Enhance accountability and training
- Manage the office's training and professional development programs
- Coordinate employee engagement initiatives

### **Goal 3: Mature Our Organization**

We will enhance processes, systems and capabilities to manage growth and optimize our ability to meet evolving mission needs.

#### **Impact:**

Improved capacity to plan, work and communicate across the organization.

#### **FY 2022 Outputs:**

- Manage the office's budget and financial operations

- Develop administrative policies, procedures and protocols
- Maintain facilities
- Enhance the office's technological tools
- Lead business process reengineering initiatives
- Enhance internal systems to support mission needs
- Oversee strategic planning efforts
- Lead continuity of operations efforts

#### **Goal 4: Elevate Our Stature and Expand Our Reach**

We will target our engagement efforts to reach a broad array of stakeholders, explore opportunities to enlarge our footprint and support the Department's larger mission objectives.

##### Impact:

Increased awareness of our mission by stakeholders across the country and expanded opportunities to contribute to key Department-level immigration priorities.

##### FY 2022 Outputs:

- Produce the Annual Report to Congress and issue recommendations and proposals
- Analyze the Administration's policy and regulatory agenda, including Executive Order 14012
- Conduct systematic engagement with USCIS on policy and process issues
- Establish liaison with DHS partners and other relevant entities
- Expand access to the CIS Ombudsman, particularly for underserved populations
- Identify and coordinate appropriate communications based on policy or operational changes announced by USCIS
- Systematically analyze casework, press and public engagement trends to ensure relevance of our research
- Increase public education and awareness efforts by hosting large-scale public engagements