

# The CIS Ombudsman's Webinar Series: Overview of USCIS Online Accounts for Attorneys and Accredited Representatives

On August 16, 2022, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) [Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman \(CIS Ombudsman\)](#) hosted a public webinar to provide an Overview of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) Online Accounts for Attorneys and Accredited Representatives.

[CIS Ombudsman Phyllis A. Coven](#) and her staff engaged with USCIS subject matter experts to provide an overview of USCIS' online accounts, with a focus on the features and benefits for attorneys and accredited representatives.

During the webinar, USCIS provided a demonstration of how attorneys and accredited representatives can create and use their online accounts and provided tips on completing electronic forms and submitting them online. USCIS also demonstrated how attorneys and accredited representatives can:

- Link and view paper-filed cases to an online account;
- Receive receipt notices, requests for evidence (RFEs) and other notices;
- Submit additional evidence and respond to RFEs;
- Send secure messages directly to USCIS; and
- Use available case management tools specific to a client's case.

A total of 681 stakeholders joined this webinar (attorneys/legal representatives – 84%, government employees – 3%, employers – 3%, advocacy groups – 2%, and others – 8%).

The webinar closed with a question-and-answer session. Participants submitted 419 written questions touching on the following topics: how to link paper cases to online accounts, how to address account lockouts, whether USCIS continues to send paper-based communications to account users via U.S. mail, and a variety of issues surrounding the need to share account access and client data among and between attorneys and legal assistants who work within the same office.

Below is a sampling of the questions received:

- *How do you add a paper-filed case to your existing USCIS account? The instructions on the USCIS notice we get in the mail only have an online code on how to add a paper-filed case to a new USCIS account.*
- *I created an online account several years ago. I have changed jobs and updated my company information but whenever I file online, my receipt notices are issued with my old firm's name. I have called USCIS several times to get this fixed and have only received emails back that are not helpful. How can I get this fixed?*
- *If a legal representative leaves a firm/ organization, how does that representative's account get deleted or can it be transferred to someone else from the firm/organization?*
- *How can we get automated email notifications for the status just like our clients get? It is very frustrating for our clients to know what is going on with their case before their legal representative knows and provides a poor client-attorney experience.*

The CIS Ombudsman will share a complete list of questions and concerns we received with USCIS, and will follow-up with the agency to provide responses, including the recommended development of online FAQs.

Additionally, the CIS Ombudsman will soon post a full recording of the webinar, and the webinar presentation slide deck, on our website.

## Speakers

- Phyllis A. Coven, CIS Ombudsman, DHS
- Bertha Anderson, Chief of Public Engagement at the CIS Ombudsman, DHS
- Fred Troncone, Senior Policy Advisor at the CIS Ombudsman, DHS
- Janna Evans, Issue Resolution Lead at USCIS
- Leah Stewart, Issue Resolution Specialist at USCIS