

# Follow Up Questions and Answers

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

August 16, 2022

**Q1. How can someone ensure that all legal representatives at their firm or organization have access to the same cases without having to log in to multiple accounts?**

A1: As USCIS online accounts are currently configured, it is not possible for multiple users in a law firm to access all cases represented by that firm because each account is tied to an individual account holder. Account holders cannot share sign in information, passwords, or one-time PINS. Each legal representative must have their own online account to submit forms for clients and manage their cases. USCIS is in the process of exploring ways to enhance the USCIS online account user experience to include organizational accounts that will enable multiple users in a firm to file cases online, access cases filed online, and interact with the agency with regard to those cases.

**Q2. If someone files a paper form that gets a receipt number that begins with IOE, they receive a notice with an online code to link the form to their USCIS online account. However, sometimes the code has expired.**

A2. The Online Access Code is valid for 90 days. If 90 days have passed, please use this link to request a new Online Access Code: <https://my.uscis.gov/account/v1/needhelp>. [We posted this link in the links box.](#)

**Q2. For paper filed cases that are added to the USCIS online account, there seem to be two categories of cases: (1) cases that have all myUSCIS functionality, and (2) cases with minimal myUSCIS functionality. Can you explain this further?**

A2. The features available in the USCIS online account depend on whether the form was initially filed online or by paper, and which case management system is used to process it. Currently USCIS has 12 forms available for online filing, and nine of those can be filed on paper and later linked to the online account. Linking a paper case is only available for receipt numbers that begin with the letters IOE. If an applicant or legal representative links an IOE case to their account, they will have most of the benefits of the account as if they had filed online. They can see case status, case history, view notices, upload additional evidence, respond to a Request for Evidence, and send secure messages. The only thing they won't have is the receipt notice for that paper case. Currently, only receipt notices for paper I-90s are posted to the online account.

To sum it up, if you submitted a case directly online, you will have full access to all account functionalities. If you submitted a paper case and received a receipt number that begins with IOE, you will be able to access most account features except the initial receipt notice.

Now I will talk about what happens if an applicant adds a non-IOE case to their account. Applicants who paper-filed a case that has a receipt number that begins with LIN, ESC, MSC, SRC, WAC, or YSC, can add their case to their USCIS online account and they will receive case status, case history, and automatic case notifications. They will not be able to view notices,

upload unsolicited evidence, respond to an RFE, or send us secure message. That is because the case is not being processed electronically. For that reason, the full functionalities of the account—such as being able to access notices, upload evidence, and send secure messages—are not available.

Adding a non-IOE paper case is not currently an option in the representative account. Legal representatives who have a legacy Case Status Online account (before October 2020) can add those paper case receipt numbers to their legacy account to get case status and case notifications. However, legal representatives who did not have a Case Status Online account before October 2020 must track cases by entering individual receipt numbers into our Case Status Online tool. We are considering our options for adding this functionality to the account for representatives.

**Q3. Does USCIS have any plans to allow people to file Form I-912, *Request for Fee Waiver*, online through myUSCIS? If so, approximately when will the form be added? We assume that users will need to upload evidence of eligibility, but can you address this? Also, can you confirm that users will be able to file Form I-912 concurrently with the underlying benefit?**

A3. We do not have online Form I-912 in development at this time. If you are requesting a fee waiver, you must file a paper benefit form and a paper Form I-912. We will eventually have this form online, but we do not have any timeframe for when that will happen. In recent public engagements, USCIS has heard from multiple stakeholders about significant demand to make fee waivers available for online filing. While we work to integrate fee waivers into our online filing roadmap, USCIS is exploring ways to enhance messaging to educate the public about fee waivers, eligibility requirements, and how to request a fee waiver via paper filing.

Fee Waiver Requests			
USCIS is funded largely by application and petition fees. Recognizing that some applicants cannot pay the filing fees, USCIS established a fee waiver process for certain forms and benefit types. Demonstrated inability to pay is the only reason USCIS will approve a fee waiver. USCIS carefully considers the merits of each fee waiver request before making a decision.			
Fee Waiver Metric	FY22 Q3	FY22 YTD	FY21 Total
Requests reviewed	107,688	341,083	408,349
Requests approved	93,696	289,924	342,547
Requests denied	13,992	51,159	65,802
Approval rate	87.0%	85.0%	83.9%

**Q4. How do you reset a password if you do not have access to the email address that was used to create the myUSCIS account?**

A4. Accounts are intended for one person to use. When creating a new representative account, we highly recommend you save the backup code, and your password reset responses. If you lose access to the email address used to create your account, you can sign into the account using the old email address. And instead of entering the two-factor authentication PIN, enter the backup code we gave you when you created your account. This will give you access to your account and then you can go to your account profile and update your email address under settings. The same is true if you lose your cell phone and get a new one. You can sign into your account and use the

backup code instead of the one-time verification code. When you get into your account, go to settings, and update the cell phone number associated with your account.

**Q5. Currently, customers must call the Contact Center to resolve some access issues with myUSCIS, which can lead to long wait times. Are there any plans to change this process, such as establishing a separate phone line for technical support or a dedicated email box?**

A5. If you have a technical problem, you do not have to call us. In fact, we recommend you use our web form to request technical assistance. The link for that is posted in our links box. Technical support inquiries route to a special tech support team and are generally responded to within two to three days. Sometimes it can take a little longer because of resource limitations, and we hope to improve response times when our staffing increases.

Our online form is the quickest and most effective method to getting your inquiry resolved. Our technical team has a robust knowledge base which allows them to resolve most basic technical inquiries. Should you call and reach our Tier 1 line of service, they will route your inquiry to the tech support team who will resolve your issue within two to three days. Customers who filed online may submit a secure message via their account. In some rare cases, the inquiry goes beyond the scope of our technical team and requires escalation to Tier 2, who will call the person back. Please consider wait times for callback at Tier 2 are longer than those for our technical inquiries. You will receive notification that your inquiry has been escalated to Tier 2 for resolution. The best way to ensure there are no delays in responding to your inquiry is to be ready to answer the call back from 202-838-2104.

**Q6: How many people are currently assigned to provide tech support to myUSCIS users? Are there people assigned specifically to support legal representative accounts?**

A6: USCIS has a contact center that responds to messages sent from a user's online account. The Contact Center is staffed with several hundred contractors and about 200 Immigration Services Officers.

Requests for technical support are routed to our Technical Help Desk, which is a dedicated team of approximately 26 contractor agents that handles all technical inquiries, whether from applicants or legal representatives. We are in the process of ramping up this group to 50+ agents by the end of September. We do not have a team specifically assigned to support legal representatives. The technical team usually responds to inquiries in about two to three days. Most inquiries are resolved via email response with instructions and a link to rectify the customer's technical issue. If it is determined an urgent need for assistance outside of the technical realm is required, the interaction may be elevated to Tier 2 for a call back. As we said before, it is important that customers who need our help answer their phone. We will try to call twice, but after two attempts, the customer will need to start the process over. The number we call from is 202-838-2104.

**Q7. How should attorneys and accredited representatives inform USCIS about glitches and missing information in online forms? For example, the drop-down list of professions in the online Form N-400 is incomplete.**

A7. We value feedback from the public and we base all our system design decisions on direct user input. Anyone can sign up to attend our external webinars such as this one and provide us with feedback. You can also complete one of several surveys that pop up during a session in the online account. These surveys cover account creation, evidence upload, and other topics. We also have an exit survey which will pop up as you log out of your online account. This survey is particularly meaningful because it allows free text narratives of your experience. We receive about 3,000 exit surveys every month and we review every single response. Please be sure to specify which USCIS form you are commenting on and where in the form you would like to see changes.

**Q9. Does USCIS have any plans to add additional languages, besides English, to myUSCIS (in particular, the instructions provided online and the pop-ups on the forms themselves)?**

A9. We have no plans at this time to add additional languages to the USCIS online account. Our forms and instructions are only available in English. USCIS forms include an interpreter section requiring interpreters to certify that they are fluent in English and the language of the applicant, if not English. Also, Title 8 Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR) Part 103.3(b)(3) requires that any document containing foreign language submitted to USCIS shall be accompanied by a full English language translation which the translator has certified as complete and accurate, and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English. Our main website, [uscis.gov](https://uscis.gov), has a Spanish companion site where most content has been translated into Spanish. We also have a multilingual resource page:

<https://www.uscis.gov/tools/multilingual-resource-center>.

**Q10. Does USCIS have a “best practices” FAQ available for attorneys and accredited representatives? Would you consider creating one specifically for them?**

A10. This is great feedback and we are developing a best practice FAQ for attorneys and accredited representatives. Once we have that completed, we would like to share it with you and get your feedback.