Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman
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• Submit written questions to us through the “Q&A box” that appears to the right of the slide deck on your screen.
• We will review every question submitted and determine if we can address concerns arising from the stakeholder community.
• Due to time constraints, we may not be able to answer every question.
• If you are a member of the media, please reach out to DHS Public Affairs with any inquiries.
The USCIS Contact Center

Mission Overview
www.uscis.gov/about-us/contact-us
• InfoMod Appointments – 168,000
• Calls received at the Contact Center—11 million
• Questions asked to Emma—12 million
• Live Chat—160,000
### Engaging with the USCIS Contact Center

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Inquiry Channel</th>
<th>Who Responds</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tier 4 Correspondence</td>
<td>USCIS Contact Center Washington, DC</td>
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<td>Tier 3 Online tools</td>
<td>USCIS Contact Centers (more complex cases &amp; issues)</td>
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<td>Tier 0 Online tools</td>
<td>Self-Help Channels</td>
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</table>
General Inquiry Flow

Applicant calls 800# ➔ Offered self-help tools ➔ Speaks to IVR

IVR analyzes caller speech

If escalation to live agent is appropriate, Tier 1 performs triage

If caller requests appointment

If caller needs something else

Escalate to Tier 2

Tier 1 resolves or escalates to Tier 2

If Tier 2 validates the need for appointment, Tier 2 schedules appt

Tier 2 resolves or escalates to Tier 3

If appointment not needed, Tier 2 resolves issue or escalates

Inquiry closed
Current Challenges

- Staffing
- Reduced contract capacity
- Callbacks
• Contractors use the same data systems as USCIS officers.
• USCIS officers go to the USCIS training academy and receive ongoing instruction on a wide variety of benefit types.
• We partner with operational directorates on new policy and procedures to ensure Contact Center content is accurate.
• Work closely with Field Operations on appointments and communicate daily on urgent situations.
Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System

- 2020—Replaced menu options with Intelligent Assistant (we call her MIA)
- Callers say what they need out loud in English or Spanish
- IVR gives case status, sends links via email and text
- IVR limits live service to certain scenarios
Callbacks

• Urgent inquiries—72-hour response time
• Non-urgent inquiries—14-day response time
• We make two callback attempts
  o If we don’t reach customer on first callback, we leave a message and try again in 60-90 minutes
• Callback hours: 7 a.m.– 6:30 p.m. Eastern
• Phone number in caller ID is 202 area code
• Representatives—we can take multiple phone numbers in case callback happens outside normal business hours
• Future options, possibly in FY 22, include text ahead and scheduled call backs
Requesting Expedited Processing

• Contact Center does not decide requests for expedited processing
• Expedite requests are decided by operational component (Field Ops or Service Center Ops)
• Expedite criteria
  • Severe financial loss;
  • Urgent humanitarian reasons;
  • Compelling U.S. government interests; or
  • Clear USCIS error

Documentation is required ***
Scheduling Appointments

• 3-4% of inquiries require an appointment
• Non-urgent appointments scheduled as slots are available
• Urgent appointment requests are reviewed individually and prioritized
• Reasons for urgent appointments:
  o Family emergency requiring travel
  o Medical emergency
  o Finance related issue including loss of employment or loss of aid/benefits
Question and Answer Session