

Recommendation #4
Fee Instructions

On June 29, 2004, the Ombudsman submitted the following recommendation:
Recommend the deletion of any reference within USCIS forms (“I” & “N” forms) that indicates a specific fee amount applies to an action, and replacing such language with the statement (or equivalent), “A fee is required to process this action. Information on the current fee for this action is available on the Internet at www.uscis.gov and by telephone from the National Customer Service Center at (800)375-5283. If the correct fee is not included, the action will not be accepted by USCIS.”

USCIS responded to this recommendation on December 17, 2004 and again on May 25, 2005. We agreed that changes were needed in order to better serve the public. However, rather than incorporating the language as suggested by the Ombudsman, and thereby incurring additional costs for providing the information by the National Customer Service Center, USCIS prefers to incorporate language on the form that suggests an applicant verify the fee by checking the website or the Federal Register. In addition, USCIS makes timely changes to the forms available on the website. The Forms Centers send out a list of fees when they send out a form to a customer. We are also considering “just-in-time” printing instead of bulk printing so that the forms given to an applicant are the most current available. Transformation should also assist with this problem as we switch to an e-filing environment. If we can switch to an entirely e-based system, we will eliminate the need for paper forms.

The Ombudsman did not have any follow-up to the USCIS response and we consider this recommendation closed.