

USCIS Response to Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)



U.S. Citizenship
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USCIS has issued a [policy memorandum \(PDF, 277.32 KB\)](#) directing the phased expansion of in-person interviews for petitioners filing Form I-730, Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition. These additional interviews will provide an opportunity to evaluate a petitioner's credibility, supporting our mission to detect and prevent fraud and risks of harm to the United States and ensure the integrity of the immigration system. Eligibility requirements for Form I-730 benefits remain the same.

USCIS has historically required interviews of all Form I-730 beneficiaries residing outside the United States, and in 2018 we began requiring interviews for beneficiaries in the United States. However, until now we have only interviewed petitioners on a case-by-case basis when we could not resolve eligibility concerns by interviewing the beneficiary alone. The expansion of in-person interviews will provide an additional layer of screening to ensure the bona fides of the familial relationship.

USCIS will implement the expansion of in-person petitioner interviews in phases, depending on whether the petitioners and beneficiaries are located inside or outside the United States. USCIS will provide advance public notice before each phase is implemented. The first phase will affect petitioners and beneficiaries who are both located in the United States.

USCIS has regulatory authority to require an interview for any applicant, petitioner, sponsor or other individual in connection with an application or petition for immigration benefits. In 2017, we began to expand in-person interviews for all aliens requesting immigration benefits that would provide permanent resident status, nonimmigrant status or work authorization for an extended period.

An alien who has been admitted to the United States as a principal refugee or has been granted asylum as a principal asylee may file a Form I-730 petition on behalf of a spouse or child. Eligible spouses or unmarried children may receive asylee or refugee status as Form I-730 beneficiaries. Form I-730 beneficiaries do not have to qualify independently as asylees or refugees; they derive that status by virtue of their relationship to the petitioner.

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