



January 30, 2020

PA-2020-02

## Policy Alert

SUBJECT: Biometrics Services Updates

### Purpose

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is issuing policy guidance in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to 1) address the availability of mobile biometrics services and 2) clarify guidance on the validity period for fingerprint waivers.

### Background

USCIS collects biometrics from applicants, petitioners, beneficiaries, sponsors, derivatives, and other benefit requestors seeking immigration or naturalization benefits in order to verify identity, produce secure documents, and facilitate required criminal and national security background checks. USCIS typically collects biometrics at its [Application Support Centers \(ASCs\)](#).

USCIS provides mobile biometrics services for those with a disability or health reason that renders them unable to appear in person. In other very limited circumstances, USCIS may, in its sole discretion, provide mobile biometrics services for those who are unable to attend scheduled ASC appointments in person.

Biometrics often includes fingerprint collection, which may be waived under certain circumstances, including, but not limited to, disabilities, birth defects, physical deformities, and skin conditions.

This guidance, contained in Volume 1 of the Policy Manual, is effective immediately and replaces the guidance found in Chapter 16 of the Adjudicator's Field Manual (AFM). The guidance contained in the Policy Manual is controlling and supersedes any related prior USCIS guidance.

### Policy Highlights

- Clarifies that USCIS does not grant requests to collect biometrics from persons in custody at non-DHS correctional institutions.
- Clarifies that fingerprint waivers are only valid for the particular application(s), petition(s), or benefit request(s) listed on the corresponding ASC notice.

### Citation

Volume 1: General Policies and Procedures, Part C, Biometrics Collection and Security Checks, Chapter 2, Biometrics Collection [[1 USCIS-PM C.2](#)].