

# Get a Green Card for Family

A complete guide for U.S. citizens and permanent residents that want to help relatives immigrate to the United States



IMMIGRATION INSIDER SERIES

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<sup>1</sup> [USCIS Lockbox Intake Processing](#)



## What's in the Guide

This ebook covers the important immigration steps and procedures that must be taken to help a foreign national family member immigrate to the United States and obtain a green card. This ebook will cover:

- ✓ Family Members Eligible for a Green Card
- ✓ Immediate Relative and Family Preference Categories
- ✓ Adjustment of Status (AOS)
- ✓ What to Expect After Filing the AOS Packet
- ✓ Consular Processing (CP)
- ✓ What to Expect After Filing a Petition
- ✓ Permanent Residence
- ✓ Upgrading After Naturalization

It's worth mentioning at this point that there are several different names for the same immigration status. The terms *green card holder*, *lawful permanent resident* and *permanent resident* can be used interchangeably. They are all terms to describe someone that has an immigrant visa, a visa that allows the person to permanently live and work in the United States.



## Family Members Eligible for a Green Card

U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents (green card holders) can petition other family members to permanently immigrate to the United States. But not any family member can be petitioned. Only certain types of family relationships are eligible.

A U.S. citizen may petition the following relatives for a green card:

- ✓ Spouse
- ✓ Son or daughter
- ✓ Brother or sister (U.S. citizen petitioner must be age 21 or older)
- ✓ Parent (U.S. citizen petitioner must be age 21 or older)

Even widows or widowers of U.S. citizens may be eligible if the U.S. citizen filed a petition before his or her death or the widow(er) files a petition within two years of the citizen's death. Children include biological, adopted and step children. If you petition your parent or sibling, you must be 21 years or older.

A lawful permanent resident of the United States may petition the following relatives for a green card:

- ✓ Spouse
- ✓ Unmarried sons and daughters

The list of eligible relatives for permanent residents is more restrictive. If a permanent resident wants to petition a sibling or parent, generally the best strategy is to become a U.S. citizen. Then he or she may petition the relative.

## PETITIONING A RELATIVE

Regardless of the relationship type, the process to help a relative immigration starts in the same way. The U.S. citizen or permanent resident must file Form I-130, *Petition for Alien Relative*, with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

Form I-130, also referred to as an immigrant petition, establishes a valid relationship between the petitioner (U.S. citizen or permanent resident) and the beneficiary (intending immigrant family member). For many people, the date an I-130 petition is filed also marks the immigrant's place in line for an immigrant visa number. (More to be explained on this ahead.)

## PETITIONING A FIANCÉ

Fiancés also have a path to permanent resident status in the United States. A U.S. citizen may petition his or her fiancé to come to the United States for the purposes of getting married. Upon marrying, the new spouse is generally eligible for a green card.

The fiancé path begins with the U.S. citizen filing Form I-129F, *Petition for Alien Fiancé*. If approved, the foreign fiancé is issued a K-1 nonimmigrant visa – also known as a fiancé visa. The K-1 visa holder may enter the United States for 90 days so that a marriage ceremony can take place with the U.S. citizen.

The K-1 is a nonimmigrant visa. So it does not permit the immigrant to stay in the U.S. permanently. Its sole purpose is to allow the fiancé to lawfully enter the United States for marriage to a U.S. citizen. Although it includes several steps that overlap with the content of this ebook, the K-1 path is unique. We recommend you read our ebook [Life After K-1](#).



# Immediate Relative and Family Preference Categories

USCIS wants to determine the type of family relationship that you have because it affects how your petition will be processed and the priority that your relative has to obtain a green card. There are two basic categories: **Immediate Relative** and **Family Preference**. Before you help a relative get a green card, it's important to understand the difference between the immediate relative and family preference categories.

## IMMEDIATE RELATIVES

The term "immediate relative(s)" is used to define certain immigrant relatives of U.S. citizens. Immediate relatives (IR) include spouses, children and parents of U.S. citizens. They are further categorized as follows:

- ✓ IR-1: Spouse of a U.S. citizen
- ✓ IR-2: Unmarried child (under 21 years of age) of a U.S. citizen
- ✓ IR-3: Orphan adopted abroad by a U.S. citizen
- ✓ IR-4: Orphan to be adopted in the U.S. by a U.S. citizen
- ✓ IR-5: Parent of a U.S. citizen (who is at least 21 years old)

Belonging to the immediate relative category is significant. For immediate relatives of U.S. citizens, visas are always available. There is no limit. To put it another way, your relative does not need to wait in line for a visa.

## FAMILY PREFERENCE

The family preference categories are for all other family-based immigration. In other words, if you don't qualify as an immediate relative, you'll be categorized in the family-preference category. The visas allotted for these categories are subject to annual numerical limits. There is a limit of visas that may not be surpassed each year.

The family preference categories are grouped as follows:

- ✓ F1: Unmarried, adult sons and daughters (age 21 or over) of U.S. citizens
- ✓ F2A: Spouses and unmarried children (under 21) of permanent residents
- ✓ F2B: Unmarried adult sons and daughters of permanent residents
- ✓ F3: Married sons and daughters (any age) of U.S. citizens
- ✓ F4: Brothers and sisters of adult U.S. citizens

## NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS AND WAIT TIMES

Because the number of intending immigrants generally exceeds the available immigrant visas, there is virtually always a wait for preference categories. In this situation, the available immigrant visas (green cards) will be issued in the chronological order in which the petitions were filed using their priority date.

If you are in a family preference category, it's important to understand that an approved I-130 petition does not mean you may come to the United States. The approved I-130 petition means that you've established your place in line for a visa, but it is not yet available.

Immigrant visas cannot be issued until an applicant's priority date is reached. In certain categories with many approved petitions compared to available visas, there may be a waiting period of several years before a priority date is reached.

## PRIORITY DATE

The numerical limitation for family preference immigrant visas creates a wait list. The applicant's "place in line" is designated with a priority date. The filing date of the I-130 petition becomes the applicant's priority date. Therefore, it is important to file Form I-130 as soon as possible. Immigrant visas cannot be issued until an I-130 petition is approved and the applicant's priority date is reached. Once you have an approved I-130 petition, you'll want to monitor the visa bulletin to find out when your priority date will be reached.

## VISA BULLETIN

The U.S. Department of State publishes a monthly Visa Bulletin that lists the priority dates that have become "current." In other words, these are the priority dates that now have a visa available to be claimed. Please view CitizenPath's website for a more detailed discussion on [How to Read the Visa Bulletin](#).



## BEFORE YOU CONTINUE

Before you proceed through this ebook, it is extremely helpful that you understand the type of relationship you have with your relative and how that relationship will be categorized. In other words, know if you will be in the immediate relative or family-preference category before continuing.

## APPLYING FOR THE GREEN CARD

There are two basic paths for acquiring a family-based green card in the United States: **consular processing** and **adjustment of status**. If the applicant is currently outside the United States, the most likely path for immigrating to the U.S. is consular processing.



Consular processing refers to the process of applying for an immigrant visa (green card) through the U.S. embassy or consular office in a foreign country. However, if the applicant is in the U.S., he or she may be able to adjust status to permanent resident without returning to the home country.

Immediate relatives that are currently in the U.S. will generally use the adjustment of status process. Immediate relatives outside the U.S. as well as family preference relatives will most likely use consular processing. This is due to the wait time associated with family preference visas. It is only under rare circumstances that a family preference applicant is lawfully present in the U.S. when the visa becomes available.



## Adjustment of Status

“Adjustment of status” is the term used to describe a change in U.S. immigration status to permanent residence (green card holder). U.S. immigration law allows a temporary visitor (e.g. student, tourist, etc.) to change status to a permanent immigrant if the individual lawfully entered the United States and meets certain requirements. The temporary visitor must be in the United States after being lawfully inspected and admitted or paroled.

Only a very limited group of people can adjust status. The most common scenarios include K-1 fiancés (who came to the U.S. and married a U.S. citizen), asylees, refugees, or those who arrived on an employment visa (e.g. H-1B) and the employer sponsored them for a green card. All green card applicants that don't qualify for adjustment of status must use the consular processing path. If you are not in the United States, you can skip this section and proceed to consular processing on page 21 of this ebook.

### LAWFUL ENTRY & CURRENT STATUS

To be eligible to adjust status, applicants generally must have a lawful entry and remain in a lawful immigration status. Lawful entry means that the immigrant was admitted or paroled into the United States. For most people, this means that they entered the United States with valid documentation and made face to face contact with a U.S. immigration officer and that officer acknowledged entry to the United States. Typically, this happens at a port of entry (airports, seaports, etc.) when you share your passport and visa with the Customs and Border Protection officer. However, at some border entries, visitors may be “waved” across while in their cars. This also counts as a lawful entry as long as the visitor had the proper documentation (e.g. Visa Waiver Program). If the individual entered with a valid visa, but that visa has since expired, he or she still had a lawful entry.

Certain people that initially entered the U.S. without inspection (unlawful entry) can obtain a lawful entry by using advance parole. For example, persons with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) or TPS (Temporary Protected Status) that more recently entered the U.S. with advance parole have lawfully entered the United States. There are additional exceptions and waivers made for certain individuals that have an unlawful entry. However, CitizenPath cannot support these cases. We recommend the guidance of an immigration attorney.

It's also important that the applicant currently be in a lawful immigration status. The applicant is most likely in a lawful immigration status if he or she has documentation that grants permission to be in the United States and that documentation is current and valid. Examples of documentation include a valid visa, parole, deferred action or visa waiver program. Generally, a foreign national is barred from adjustment of status if the foreign national is in an unlawful immigration status on the date of filing the adjustment application. But a provision in the law exempts the immediate relatives of U.S. citizens from the visa overstay. So in many cases an immediate relative may adjust status if he or she has overstayed a visa. But family preference relatives cannot. Regardless, it's always best to seek the advice of an attorney if you have a visa overstay.

## PETITIONING YOUR RELATIVE

As explained previously, the entire green card process begins with a U.S. citizen or permanent resident petitioning the family member with Form I-130, *Petition for Alien Relative*. If the applicant is eligible, the adjustment of status application packet may be filed if either of the following is true:




- ✔ Form I-130 has already been approved and a visa number is available; or
- ✔ Form I-130 is filed concurrently with the AOS packet and the applicant is an immediate relative that will have a visa number immediately available.

It is rare that a family preference applicant will adjust status. It is extraordinarily unusual for a family preference applicant to file the adjustment of status application concurrently with the I-130 petition.

## ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS PACKET

The AOS packet includes several mandatory USCIS forms and some optional forms. It may seem overwhelming, but it can be accomplished by yourself if you have a straightforward case.

By accurately preparing these forms and concurrently filing them (submitting them together), you will greatly increase your chances of having your case processed quickly. CitizenPath's service can help you through this process. Our software will combine each of the mandatory forms into a single, streamlined process.


-  Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status  
This is a required form used to claim the immigrant visa and adjust status to that of a permanent resident (green card holder).
  
-  Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative  
This is a required form if it has not already been filed and approved. In the case of an immediate relative, it will establish that a visa number will be immediately available.
  
-  Form I-130A, Biographic Information  
This is a required form if the intending immigrant is a spouse of the petitioner. It provides additional information about the applicant.

 Form I-864, Affidavit of Support

This is a required form for fiancé- and family-based applications. It's used to show that the AOS applicant has adequate means of financial support and is not likely to rely on the U.S. government for financial support.

 Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record

This is a required form used to establish that the AOS applicant is not inadmissible to the United States on public health grounds. You do not prepare this form. Your USCIS doctor will provide it.

 Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization

This is an optional form used to request permission to work in the United States. An Adjustment of Status applicant is eligible to request work authorization.

 Form I-131, Application for Travel Document

This is an optional form used to request an Advance Parole travel document for re-entry to the United States after travel abroad. The Advance Parole is required if you plan to travel outside the U.S. before you get your green card.

The descriptions above only provide a brief overview. The remainder of this section provides a more detailed discussion about each form.

## ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS

Form I-485, *Application to Adjust Status*, is the primary application in this packet. The Adjustment of Status application is a request to USCIS to change the immigrant's visa

status from that of a temporary immigrant to that of a permanent immigrant (lawful permanent resident).

In most cases the USCIS fee for Form I-485 is \$1,140 (at the time of writing this ebook). The fee for children under 14 years of age is \$750, provided the Form I-485 is filed at the same time as a parent's application. Additionally, a biometrics fee is due for applicants age 14 to 78.



## BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

This simple form provides supplemental information about the applicant for review by USCIS. Form I-130A, *Biographic Information*, is only used by the applicant when he or she is the spouse of the petitioner.

There are no USCIS fees associated with Form I-130A.

## AFFIDAVIT OF SUPPORT

The Form I-864, *Affidavit of Support*, is required for most family-based immigrants to show that they have adequate means of financial support and are not likely to rely on the U.S. government for financial support.

The law requires a sponsor to prove an income level at or above 125 percent of the Federal poverty level. Generally, the petitioner named on Form I-130 is also the sponsor. However, additional family members can share the obligation. For a family of two, that generally means that the sponsor must have an income of at least \$20,300<sup>2</sup> in the year 2017.

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<sup>2</sup> [HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2017](#)

If the income requirement is not met, the sponsor's assets can also be used to make a determination. Or another individual may apply as a joint sponsor.

There are no USCIS fees associated with Form I-864.

## MEDICAL EXAMINATION

The exam and the Form I-693, *Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record*, must be done by a civil surgeon designated by USCIS. You can find a list of designated [civil surgeons on the USCIS website](#). The civil surgeon is required to give you the completed Form I-693 in a sealed envelope for you to submit to USCIS.



There are no USCIS fees associated with Form I-693.

## EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

If the applicant wants to work during the AOS period, he/she will need to file Form I-765, *Application for Employment Authorization*. This is an optional form.

However, an EAD is not necessary after the Form I-485 is approved. Once the Form I-485 is approved and the immigrant becomes a permanent resident with the right to work in the United States, an EAD is no longer needed.

If working during the AOS period (which can last up to 8-14 months) is important, the EAD is an absolute must. Possession of the EAD will also enable the AOS applicant to apply for a Social Security Number.

If you file Form I-765 concurrently with Form I-485, there is no additional USCIS fee.

## ADVANCE PAROLE

The Adjustment of Status process can take several months. During this waiting period, many AOS applicants want to travel outside the United States to visit family or simply take a vacation. In these cases, most applicants will need to obtain a travel document known as Advance Parole.

**Travel outside the U.S. without Advance Parole will likely destroy one's immigration case<sup>3</sup>.** If the AOS applicant does not apply for and receive an Advance Parole document before leaving the United States, USCIS will assume the immigrant is no longer interested in the green card – and the application to adjust status will be abandoned. Advance Parole allows the AOS applicant to preserve the application.

There are a few important things the applicant should know about Advance Parole:

- ✔ Having Advance Parole approved does not mean you are guaranteed permission to re-enter the U.S. It means that you haven't abandoned your Adjustment of Status application. If you have an arrest history or previous immigration violations, speak to an experienced immigration attorney before applying for Advance Parole.
- ✔ USCIS will not grant Advance Parole to an individual who is in removal or rescission proceedings. If you've ever been in removal or rescission proceedings, speak to an experienced immigration attorney before applying for Advance Parole.
- ✔ If you depart the United States after accruing certain periods of unlawful presence in the U.S. (time spent in the United States illegally) you may be barred from admission<sup>4</sup>. Unlawful presence for the overwhelming majority of cases starts when an immigrant does one of two things:
  - ✘ Enters the United States without inspection (illegal border crossing)
  - ✘ Overstays a visa

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<sup>3</sup>[Application for Travel Document Instructions](#)

<sup>4</sup>[Emergency Travel](#)



If you believe that you've had any period of unlawful presence, speak to an experienced immigration attorney before applying for Advance Parole.

To apply for the Advance Parole authorization, file Form I-131, *Application for Travel Document*, together with Form I-485. If you file Form I-131 concurrently with Form I-485, there is no additional USCIS fee.

Generally, the Advance Parole authorization will be valid for a period which coincides with the time normally required for the completion of the AOS application, not to exceed one year.

## DUAL EAD AND ADVANCE PAROLE CARD

USCIS will issue employment and Advance Parole authorization on a single card for certain AOS applicants. An applicant may receive this card when he or she files a Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization) and a Form I-131 (Application for Travel Document) concurrently with Form I-485. If USCIS approves both the Form I-765 and the Form I-131, the applicant may receive one card that will serve as both an employment authorization document and an Advance Parole document.



## FILING THE AOS PACKET

In addition to the forms listed above, several other items and supporting documentation must be submitted. This list varies based on your specific situation and answers on the forms. Please refer to the directions for each USCIS form.

After you've prepared your AOS packet through CitizenPath, we also provide you with a simplified set of filing instructions. Our step-by-step instructions will explain exactly how to file the multiple forms and which supporting documents so that USCIS accepts them the first time.



If any documents (provided as a part of the AOS application package) are in a foreign language, they will need to be translated to English.



## What to Expect after Filing the AOS Packet

Within a couple weeks of successfully filing the adjustment of status packet, you'll receive a Form I-797, Notice of Action, from USCIS that confirms receipt of the application. This receipt letter is the applicant's proof that an AOS packet has been properly filed and that he or she is now an "adjustment of status" applicant. The letter will also include a receipt number. Use the receipt number on the USCIS website to track the status of your case.

### BIOMETRICS APPOINTMENT

Soon after, you'll receive an appointment notice for a biometrics screening. USCIS will take your photograph, collect your fingerprints and have you sign your name at the biometrics appointment. This process confirms your identity so that USCIS provides benefits to the correct person and facilitates the necessary criminal background check.



The biometrics appointment is a standard part of most applications. USCIS will schedule the biometrics appointment for the applicant and mail a letter informing you of the location.

The letter will arrive as an "Application Support Center (ASC) Appointment Notice" (Form I-797C, Notice of Action) and will include information about the date, time and location for

your ASC appointment. The appointment is generally very short (approximately 30 minutes).

## INTERVIEW

In most cases, USCIS will interview you and the petitioner at the end of the adjustment of status process. However, it's possible that your interview could be waived. Or USCIS may not require your petitioner to attend. Interviews should not be feared; they are a normal part of the process. But it is important that you prepare.

The interview is a chance for USCIS to re-verify information in your application. They will also want to know if life changes since the application was filed affect your eligibility. Depending on the basis of your petition, the USCIS officer may ask additional questions. For example, a foreign spouse may receive some additional scrutiny to determine the validity of the marriage. A few possible examples include:

- ✔ How and where did you meet?
- ✔ How kind of music was played at your wedding reception?
- ✔ What type of food was served at the wedding reception?
- ✔ Who does the cooking?
- ✔ How did you celebrate your spouse's last birthday?
- ✔ What form of birth control do you use?

As you can see, some of the questions can become personal and detailed. But you are living together with your spouse and share responsibilities like a normal couple, these questions are generally very easy to answer.

The interview will be scheduled at a USCIS facility near you, and it probably will last less than 30 minutes. Review the adjustment of status application before attending the interview. There are several items that you should be prepared to take to the interview:

- ✔ A complete copy of your visa petition and adjustment of status application. The USCIS officer will be reviewing these documents, so be familiar with your answers.

- ✔ Originals of any documents that you submitted copies to USCIS, such as birth and marriage certificates.
- ✔ If you have an Advance Parole document, take it.
- ✔ Your passport, which contains the nonimmigrant visa with which you entered the U.S.

## RECEIVING PERMANENT RESIDENCE

It's possible that the USCIS officer will approve your application at the end of the meeting. You may ask to have an "I-551" stamp placed in your passport. This is temporary proof that you are a permanent resident and is valid for re-entry at a U.S. port of entry.

USCIS will produce the physical green card and mail it to you. This will take a few more weeks.

The entire AOS process can take 8-14 months. The time frame depends on your specific case but is also largely determined by the workload at your local USCIS office. In some areas, the offices are more severely impacted than others. Although this wait period can make you anxious and worried, it is very typical.



# Consular Processing

If the applicant is currently outside the United States, the only path for immigrating to the U.S. is consular processing. (The applicant must be lawfully present in the U.S. to use adjustment of status.) Consular processing refers to the process of applying for an immigrant visa (green card) through the U.S. embassy or consular office in a foreign country. Before the intending immigrant can apply, a visa must be available. Consular processing is the most common path to obtain a green card.

## NATIONAL VISA CENTER

After USCIS approves the I-130 petition, they will send the petition to the National Visa Center (NVC). Once received, the NVC will assign a case number for the petition. For immediate relatives, an immigrant visa is immediately available and the process can continue. Due to the numerical limitations for family preference cases, the case will likely be “on hold” for several months waiting for a visa to become available. In certain categories with many approved petitions compared to available visas, there may be a waiting period of several years before a priority date is reached.

## VISA BULLETIN

Once you know your priority date and your preference category, proceed to the [U.S. State Department's monthly visa bulletin](#). Select the “Current Visa Bulletin.” Forward to “Family-Sponsored Preferences.” Find your family preference category and compare your priority date to the date listed. If your priority date comes before the date listed, your immigrant

visa is current. Visit [CitizenPath.com](https://www.citizenpath.com) for more information on [How to Read the Visa Bulletin](#).

## NVC PROCESSING

For family preference immigrant visa cases, when an applicant's priority date meets the most recent qualifying date, the NVC will begin putting items in motion.

The NVC will begin pre-processing the applicant's case by having the applicant complete a Form DS-261, Choice of Address and Agent, and providing the applicant and petitioner with instructions to submit the appropriate fees. After the appropriate fees are paid, the NVC will request that the applicant submit the necessary immigrant visa documents, including the Affidavit of Support, application forms, civil documents, and more.

The U.S. Department of State may terminate the petition if the intending immigrant does not apply for an immigrant visa within one year of notice of visa availability. The petition may be reinstated if, within two years of notice of visa availability, the foreign national establishes that the failure to apply was for reasons beyond his or her control.

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULING

The National Visa Center will coordinate with the U.S. embassy or consulate in your country to schedule an interview. They typically set appointments within 60 days of NVC receiving of all requested documentation.

An interview appointment letter is sent to the applicant and the petitioner with the specific date, time, and location of the interview. The actual interview date could be several weeks after the notification.

Once your interview appointment is scheduled, NVC sends the immigrant visa petition, visa application, and all related forms and documents which were submitted to NVC to the appropriate U.S. embassy or consulate.

## VISA INTERVIEW

It's very important that you prepare for your visa interview. In particular, you'll need to bring several items to the interview. If you have questions, review your interview appointment letter, review the [State Department Website](#), or contact the U.S. embassy or consulate where your interview will take place.

Bring the following items to your visa interview:

- 📄 Interview appointment letter from the National Visa Center.
- 📄 Unexpired passport valid for six months beyond your intended date of entry into the United States and a photocopy of the biographic page (where your name and photo are located).
- 📄 Two color passport photographs measuring 2 inches by 2 inches (5 cm by 5 cm) with a white background.
- 📄 All relevant civil documents such as birth certificate, marriage certificates, marriage termination record (divorce decree or death certificate), police certificate, court records (if you have a criminal record), military records (if applicable). Depending on your situation, other documents may be necessary. Take an original document and a photocopy.
- 📄 Medical exam results if the physician gives you these results. An embassy-approved physician must perform a medical exam before you attend the interview. Do not open the seal envelope that your medical office provides you.
- 📄 Confirmation page from Form DS-260, Immigrant Visa and Alien Registration Application, that you submitted on [ceac.state.gov](http://ceac.state.gov).
- 📄 A signed Affidavit of Support from your petitioner and any additional financial sponsors who submitted a Form I-864 on behalf of your visa application. Applicants may bring photocopies and scanned versions of signed Forms I-864 and associated documents. The form must be signed.



- 📄 Financial evidence showing your petitioner's income, such as federal tax returns or forms W-2. If you have any additional financial sponsors, you must bring the same type of financial evidence for them, along with proof of their legal status in the United States.
- 📄 Proof of the U.S. petitioner's status and domicile in the United States (photocopy of a U.S. passport, naturalization certificate, or legal permanent resident card).

All documents not written in English or in the official language of the country in which the interview takes place must be accompanied by a translation in English. A competent translator must certify each translation.

Most immigrant visa cases get approved, but some do not. You should not make permanent financial commitments, such as selling your house, car or property, resigning from your job or making non-refundable flight or other travel arrangements until you have received your immigrant visa.



## Upgrading After Naturalization

When a permanent resident petitions a spouse or child, the wait can be long. The separation can be extremely difficult for families. But it is possible to expedite the process if the petitioner becomes a U.S. citizen.

### HOW IT WORKS

When you are a U.S. citizen, your spouse, parent, and any unmarried children under age 21 will have green cards immediately available to them. They no longer need to wait. So even if you already filed a petition for your relative(s), your status as a U.S. citizen will streamline the green card process.



## Preparing USCIS Forms

Every day, CitizenPath helps people like you prepare USCIS immigration forms. Our website was designed by immigration attorneys to make it easy, fast and reliable. We even guarantee that USCIS will accept your applications and petitions. When you prepare your forms on CitizenPath.com, you get:

- ✓ Easy, step-by-step instructions to help you
- ✓ Alerts if there's a problem with your answers
- ✓ A money-back guarantee that USCIS will accept your form

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