

Tips to Help You Through the Affirmative Asylum Process with USCIS

GENERAL INFORMATION

USCIS' website has information about who is eligible to apply for affirmative asylum by filing Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, at uscis.gov/i-589. The website has a filing instruction tool with information about where to file the Form I-589, based on information you provide. To determine if you may file your Form I-589 for affirmative asylum online or by mailing a paper application, visit uscis.gov/humanitarian/form-i-589-filing-instructions-tool. The form and instructions to the form are also available on the website.

If you are in removal proceedings in immigration court, you may file a defensive asylum application to present your case for asylum to an immigration judge who will adjudicate your case. Visit the USCIS website for more information on affirmative and defensive asylum at uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-and-asylum/asylum/obtaining-asylum-in-the-united-states.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you change your address after filing Form I-589, follow the instructions on How to Change Your Address at uscis.gov/addresschange. Updating your address helps ensure you receive correspondence and benefits from us in a timely manner and avoid delays.

MAKE THE PROCESS FASTER

1. If you are filing a paper application, use the most recent version of Form I-589, available at uscis.gov/i-589.
2. If you already have an A-Number, include that A-Number on your Form I-589. If you do not include it and we cannot find you in our system, we may issue you a new A-Number, and it might take longer to process your application.
3. Ensure all biographic information on your asylum application is accurate, with a correct address and phone number. We often see errors in the spelling of names, dates of birth, and current addresses.
4. Ensure your paper application is complete, so we do not reject it. Confirm you signed your paper application and included all form pages.
5. Submit evidence to support your application when you file if you have the evidence.
6. If you need to provide additional documents after you submit your application, you must submit them at least seven to 10 business days before your interview. If you filed a paper application, submit them to your local asylum office. If you filed online, upload them to your application through your USCIS online account. Check with your local asylum office about their policy for submitting documents. Find your local office at egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/asy.

COMPLETE FORM I-589

1. List your spouse and **all** your children. This includes stepchildren, deceased or missing children, adopted children, and married or unmarried sons and daughters of any age, whether or not you want to include them in your asylum claim. List your spouse and children whether they are in the United States or outside the United States, and even if they are filing a separate asylum application of their own.
2. After USCIS accepts your Form I-589, you will need to provide fingerprints and photographs. Any family members included on your application also will need to provide fingerprints and photographs. We will send you a biometric collection appointment notice with written information about where and when to provide fingerprints and photographs. Each included family member will receive an appointment notice that includes their receipt number and biometric information. They must attend the appointment and take the biometric collection appointment notice to the biometric collection appointment. If you do not attend the appointment to provide fingerprints and photographs, this will delay processing of your case. This is an applicant-caused delay, and it will also delay when you can get an Employment Authorization Document.
3. In Part A.I., Question 8, of Form I-589 (“Residence in the U.S. (*where you physically reside*)”), provide the address where you physically live in the United States. If your physical address is different than the address where you receive mail, you must also provide your mailing address in Question 9 (“Mailing Address in the U.S. (*if different than the address in Item Number 8*)”).
4. If another person receives your mail for you at your mailing address, you may enter that person’s name in the “In Care Of (*if applicable*)” field in your response to Question 9.
5. If your mailing address is a post office box, include that address in Question 9 and include the address where you physically live in Question 8.
6. If your spouse, children, parents, or siblings are also applying for asylum, then note that in your asylum application in Part C.1, and include your family members’ names and A-Numbers.

PREPARE FOR THE ASYLUM INTERVIEW

1. We may notify you of your asylum interview date up to three weeks before the scheduled interview.
2. You may bring a copy of your submitted Form I-589 and all supporting documents to the interview if you wish.
3. Bring original documents to your interview: identity documents like birth or marriage certificates, national identification documents, passports, and other evidence.
4. You may submit additional evidence at least seven to 10 business days before the interview. If you have evidence for your asylum claim stored in your phone, you may submit such evidence by printing a screenshot and submitting it at least seven to 10 business days before your scheduled interview. If you submit evidence fewer than seven to 10 business days before your scheduled interview, it may take us longer to process your case. If you filed a paper application, submit any additional evidence to your

local asylum office. If you filed online, upload them to your existing USCIS online account. Check with your local asylum office about their policy for submitting documents. Find your local office at egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/asy.

5. If you wish to be interviewed on the same day as family members who also applied for asylum separately, please submit that request to your asylum office. The asylum office may schedule the interviews on the same day or with the same asylum officer, if possible. You may contact your assigned asylum office at the contact information below.
6. If you included spouses and children in your Form I-589 as dependents on your asylum application, they must come with you to your interview. If you have young children, please bring a quiet, non-electronic activity for your child, like a coloring book. Young children may not need to stay with you for the entire interview; if possible, please arrange for a caretaker to watch them when they do not need to be with you.

DECISION

An asylum officer will determine whether you are eligible for asylum. A supervisory asylum officer will review the decision to ensure that it is consistent with the law. For information on the types of decisions, visit uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-and-asylum/asylum/types-of-affirmative-asylum-decisions.

ASYLEE BENEFITS

If you are granted asylum, you may be eligible for benefits and services, such as cash assistance, medical assistance, employment preparation, job placement, English language training, and other services offered through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement. These services are available for a limited time after being granted asylum. For more information, visit acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/orr_asylee_fact_sheet.pdf.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions, e-mail your local asylum office. You can find their contact information at egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/asy.



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