



U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Immigrant and Employee Rights Section

Information for Refugees and Asylees About the Form I-9

Everyone starting a job as an employee in the United States completes the [Form I-9](#), a government form that employers use to verify your identity and permission to work.

This document is intended to help you, asylees and refugees, complete the Form I-9 and know your rights in this process. Employers that discriminate against you based on your citizenship, immigration status or national origin during the Form I-9 process may violate part of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). This anti-discrimination law is found at [8 U.S.C § 1324b](#).

For Section 1 of the Form I-9, provide information about yourself.

Put your name and other information about yourself in Section 1 of the Form I-9. You may ask someone to help you fill out this section. You must mark a box showing the status that gives you permission to work. Refugees and asylees are considered “aliens authorized to work,” so check this box. There is a space for an expiration date next to this box. Because your right to work doesn’t expire, write “N/A” (which means “not applicable”) in the space for the expiration date.

For Section 2 of the Form I-9, show your employer documentation that demonstrates your identity and permission to work.

The Form I-9 has three lists of documents you can show for Section 2 of the Form I-9: [List A](#) (documents showing your identity and permission to work), [List B](#) (documents showing your identity), and [List C](#) (documents showing your permission to work). You must show your employer your choice of either one List A document or a combination of one List B document and one List C document. Under the [Form I-9 instructions](#), some documents, known as [receipts](#), are also acceptable for the Form I-9 for varying lengths of time.

You have the right to choose the acceptable documentation you want to show from the [Form I-9 Lists of Acceptable Documents](#). Your employer is not allowed to require you to show specific documents based on your status as an asylee or refugee or based on your national origin. An employer that requires specific documents may be discriminating in violation of the law. For example, although you may have an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), you can decide to show other documentation instead, such as a state identification (a List B document) and an unrestricted Social Security card (a List C document).

You may have several kinds of acceptable Form I-9 documents.

You may show an I-94 for the Form I-9. You will either get your I-94 card, or you can print your I-94 from the [Customs and Border Protection](#) website.

If you are a refugee, [your I-94 is a receipt](#) for a List A document that is valid for 90 days from your first day of work. After 90 days, you must show your employer either an EAD or a combination of a [List B](#) document and an [unrestricted Social Security card](#).

If you are an asylee, you can use your I-94 as a [permanent List C document](#) that does not expire.

Asylees and refugees are eligible for EADs. If your EAD has expired but you have applied to renew your EAD, you may be able to keep working with your existing EAD. For up to 540 days after your EAD expiration date, you can continue working by showing your employer your EAD with the I-797C receipt notice (showing that the government received your EAD renewal application). Call IER for more information on EAD automatic extensions.

You may also show receipts for [lost, damaged, or stolen](#) documents.

Once you show your documentation to complete the Form I-9, your employer is only allowed to ask you for documents again in limited circumstances. The rules for when an employer must ask for documents again are discussed in the [Handbook for Employers M-274](#).

If you showed your EAD for Section 2, your employer will ask to see another document by the time your EAD expires to complete Section 3 of the Form I-9. At this step, you may choose to show either one [List A](#) document or one [List C](#) document, such as an unrestricted Social Security card. You can choose to show a new EAD, but you don't have to.

If you showed an unrestricted Social Security card for Section 2 as proof of your permission to work and entered "N/A" for the expiration date next to "alien authorized to work" in Section 1, your employer is not allowed to ask you for more documents. Employers that ask for documents based on your asylee or refugee status or based on your national origin when not required to may violate the law. Call IER for more information on when your employer is allowed to ask you for more documents.

You can work while you wait for your Social Security number.

If you get a job but do not have your Social Security number (SSN) yet, the [Social Security Administration](#) instructs employers that workers are allowed to work while waiting for their SSN.

Your employer must always pay you for any work completed, even if you are still waiting for your SSN.

If you don't have your SSN by the time you start your job, leave the SSN box in the Form I-9 Section 1 blank.

If your employer uses E-Verify, E-Verify instructs employers to [delay creating the E-Verify case](#) until you receive your SSN. You may work during this time if you have completed the Form I-9. [E-Verify rules](#) specifically allow for this exception and provide employers with instructions for creating the case. More information is available at www.e-verify.gov.

IER Employer Hotline 1-800-255-8155

IER Worker Hotline 1-800-255-7688

Mon-Fri 9am-5pm ET

Calls can be anonymous and language services are available.

www.justice.gov/ier | www.justice.gov/crt-espanol/ier

TTY 1-800-237-2515