



Protect Yourself from Immigration Document Fraud

1. Understand the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

A. USCIS services

1. Citizenship services (and related naturalization processes)
2. Immigration of family members
3. Working in the United States
4. Verifying an individual's right to work in the U.S. (E-Verify)
5. Humanitarian programs

B. USCIS paperwork/forms related to services **ARE FREE**. **DO NOT PAY FOR FORMS.** Most common:

1. Apply for Naturalization (Form N-400)
2. Employment Verification (Form I-9)
3. Apply for a Green Card (Form I-485)
4. Help My Relative Immigrant (Form I-130)
5. Affidavit of Support (Form I-864)
6. Renew or Replace My Green Card (Form I-90)
7. Remove Conditions on a Green Card through Marriage (Form I-751)
8. Apply for Employment Authorization (Form I-765)
9. Apply for Travel Document (Form I-131)

2. Understand Immigration Document Fraud

A. Only certain people can represent you before The USCIS.

1. You can be represented by a **licensed** attorney (abogado), **not** a Notary Public (Notario Publico).
2. You can be represented by a non-attorney representative who has been **certified** by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). Check credentials at <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/ra.htm>.
3. You can represent yourself and only get help with the paperwork from a licensed attorney or certified non-attorney representative:
 - a. Ask for a contract with a set fee for each service provided; and
 - b. Ask for references.



Protect Yourself from Immigration Document Fraud

B. **Beware** of the following:

1. When someone shows you a Notary Public license as proof of qualifications.
2. When someone says they have a special relationship with USCIS, guarantees results or faster processing, or says they can get you a green card quickly, even if you don't qualify.
3. Don't pay cash for services of an immigration consultant. Use a personal check, certified check, or credit card. Get a receipt with the person's or company's name on it.
4. Don't pay all at once before you see any work.
5. Never give the person your original documents (birth certificates, passports, etc.), only copies.
6. Never sign a blank form, application, or petition. Understand what you're signing.
7. Don't sign any forms, applications, or papers with false statements or inaccurate information.
8. When someone phones stating he or she is from USCIS and asks for money or personal information.
9. Websites or applications appearing to be an official USCIS website (www.uscis.gov is the only official USCIS website).

3. **Get help if you are a victim of immigration document fraud**

A. It is important to report immigration document fraud – regardless of your immigration status.

B. Where to go to report fraud and get help

1. Local Police Department
2. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE): 1-866-DHS-2-ICE
3. USCIS: 1-800-375-5283
4. United States Attorney's Office: 1-614-469-5715 (Columbus), 1-513-684-3711 (Cincinnati), 1-937-225-2910 (Dayton) and request Duty AUSA
5. Federal Trade Commission: 1-877-382-4357 or <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov>

More resources

- For information on avoiding common immigration scams, how to report an immigration services scam, advice on finding authorized legal help, and educational tools, please visit the USCIS Avoid Scams webpage at www.uscis.gov/avoidscams.
- For a list of free legal services visit www.justice.gov/eoir/probono/states.htm.
- For a roster of accredited organizations visit www.justice.gov/eoir/ra/roster.htm.
- To check your status online, visit www.uscis.gov. Put your receipt number into the "Case Status" box on the left-hand side of the webpage. If you don't have your receipt number, make an appointment with your local USCIS office by calling 1-800-375-5283 or visiting www.infopass.uscis.gov.
- For a list of lawyers who have been prohibited from practicing law visit www.justice.gov/eoir/discipline.htm.