

USCIS Announces Cancellation of all In-Person Appointments and Interviews to Combat COVID-19

On Tuesday March 17, 2020, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) released a statement indicating that the agency will be canceling all face-to-face appointments, interviews, and events, including asylum interviews and citizenship ceremonies, in an effort to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020, USCIS will close all of its field offices to the public and will no longer hold interviews at its field offices or conduct biometrics appointments at any of its Application Support Centers. USCIS noted that the suspension will last until at least April 1, 2020. Everyone should be prepared for these closures and cancellation of services to extend beyond April 1, 2020.

Despite the temporary closures, USCIS will continue to provide emergency services for limited situations. In addition, the agency indicated that staff will continue to perform their regular duties that do not involve contact with the public. When confronted with inquiries, a USCIS representative did not respond to requests for more information regarding which services are considered emergency services, or if the agency would continue to process requests to extend soon-expiring temporary visa statuses. The agency did not offer any guidance regarding the status of the upcoming H-1B visa lottery, which is scheduled to run during the last week of March following the three-week electronic preregistration period.

USCIS domestic field offices and application support centers will be sending notices to applicants and petitioners with scheduled biometrics appointments, visa and adjustment of status interviews, and naturalization ceremonies impacted by the closures. When USCIS again resumes normal operations, they will automatically reschedule all impacted interviews, biometrics appointments, and naturalization ceremonies. If applicants do not receive a new appointment notice by mail within 90 days, they are asked to reach out to the USCIS Contact Center.

We will keep clients advised of any additional updates as they are released by USCIS.



Frances Rayer

Member

frayer@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-3704
Fax: (215) 665-2013



Elizabeth A. Olivera

Associate

eolivera@cozen.com
Phone: (312) 382-3139
Fax: (612) 260-9080

Related Practice Areas

- Immigration Policy & Strategy