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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

[CIS No. 2457-08; DHS Docket No. USCIS-2008-0036]

RIN 1615-ZA74

Revision to Direct Mail Program for Submitting Form N-400,

Application for Naturalization, Implementation of Program

AGENCY: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is revising its Direct Mail Program so that certain filings of Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, will now be filed at a designated lockbox facility instead of a USCIS Service Center. Furthermore, if you are the spouse of a current member of the Armed Forces, this notice instructs you to now file your Form N-400 at the Nebraska Service Center (NSC), whether you are filing from within the U.S. or abroad. This notice does not change the filing location for Forms N-400 filed by members or certain veterans of the Armed Forces who are eligible to apply for naturalization under sections 328 or 329 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act). All naturalization applicants filing under the military provisions, sections 328 or 329 of the Act, should file their application at the NSC regardless of geographic location.

DATES: This notice becomes effective [insert date 30 days from the date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kathleen Stanley, Chief, Lockbox Operations Division, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration

Services, Department of Homeland Security, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW., 4th Floor,
Washington, DC 20529-2130, Telephone (202) 233-2385.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

What Is the Direct Mail Program?

The Direct Mail Program allows applicants for certain immigration benefits to send their application or petition directly to a USCIS service center or lockbox facility instead of submitting it to their local USCIS office.

The Direct Mail Program allows USCIS to:

- Standardize and more efficiently process applications by eliminating duplicative work;
- Increase staff productivity; and
- Introduce better information management tools.

The purpose and strategy of the Direct Mail Program has been discussed in detail in previous rulemaking and notices. (See 59 FR 33903, 59 FR 33985, 60 FR 22408, 61 FR 2266, 61 FR 56060, 62 FR 16607, 63 FR 891, 63 FR 892, 63 FR 13434, 63 FR 13878, 63 FR 16828, 63 FR 50584, 63 FR 8688, 63 FR 8689, 64 FR 67323, 69 FR 3380, 69 FR 4210, 70 FR 30768, 72 FR 3402, 73 FR 50336 and 73 FR 53034.)

Explanation of Changes

Will this notice change my eligibility for naturalization?

No. This notice will not affect your eligibility for naturalization. This notice only affects the filing instructions where certain Form N-400s must be mailed. Some Form N-400s that were previously filed at USCIS Service Centers must now be sent to a designated lockbox facility.

Please note that applicants filing under the military provision, sections 328 or 329 of the Act, as well as spouses of current members of the Armed Forces, have separate filing instructions. Filing changes will be discussed in detail in the following charts.

Where should I send my Form N-400 and all supporting documentation?

Please refer to the following charts for the filing location to send your completed Form N-400 and supporting documentation.

Armed Forces Applicants and Spouses of Current Members of the Armed Forces

| If... | Then Mail To... |
|---|---|
| <p>You are a member of the Armed Forces or a veteran, and you are eligible to apply for naturalization under sections 328 or 329 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act); or</p> <p>You are the spouse of a current member of the Armed Forces</p> | <p>Nebraska Service Center P.O. Box 87426 Lincoln, NE 68501-7426</p> <p>Courier and Express Mail Deliveries: Nebraska Service Center 850 S. Street Lincoln, NE 68508</p> |

Non-Armed Forces Applicants

| If . . . | Then Mail To . . . |
|---|--|
| <u>You reside in:</u> Alaska Kansas Oregon Arizona Michigan South Dakota California Minnesota Utah Colorado Missouri Washington Hawaii Montana Wisconsin Idaho Nebraska Wyoming Illinois Nevada Territory of Guam Indiana North Dakota Northern Marina Islands Iowa Ohio | <u>USCIS Lockbox Facility</u> USCIS P.O. Box 21251 Phoenix, AZ 85036 Courier and Express Mail Deliveries Attn: N400 1820 E Skyharbor Circle S Floor 1 Phoenix, AZ 85034 |
| <u>You reside in:</u> Alabama Maryland Puerto Rico Arkansas Massachusetts Rhode Island Connecticut Mississippi South Carolina Delaware New Hampshire Tennessee DC New Jersey Texas Florida New Mexico Vermont Georgia New York Virginia Kentucky North Carolina West Virginia Louisiana Oklahoma U.S. Virgin Islands Maine Pennsylvania | <u>USCIS Lockbox Facility</u> USCIS P.O. Box 299026 Lewisville, TX 75029 Courier and Express Mail Deliveries USCIS Attn: N400 2501 S State Hwy 121 Bldg. #4 Lewisville, TX 75067 |

What happens if I file a Form N-400 covered by this notice at the wrong location?

During the first 30 days after this notice takes affect, USCIS will forward incorrectly addressed Form N-400s to the proper address, rather than reject it. USCIS will forward any improperly addressed Form N-400s covered by this notice as follows:

- Any Form N-400 from non-Armed Forces applicants will be forwarded to either the Dallas or Phoenix lockbox facilities.
- Any Form N-400 from Armed Forces applicants and the spouses of current members of the Armed Forces will be forwarded to the Nebraska Service Center.

Any applications forwarded within this time period will be considered properly filed when received at either the Dallas or Phoenix lockbox facilities, or the Nebraska Service Center. After this 30-day transition period, any Form N-400 covered by this notice, which is received at a location other than the appropriate location as defined in the updated Form N-400 filing instructions provided in this notice, will be returned with an explanation directing the applicant to mail it to the appropriate processing facility.

Is USCIS amending the Form N-400 Instructions?

Yes. USCIS is currently amending the instructions to the Form N-400. The revisions will include the new filing addresses, the requirement for passport style photos and the revision will provide clarification of the grounds for rejection of an application. When available, the new form will be posted on the USCIS Web site (<http://www.uscis.gov>)

Where may I find information related to eligibility requirements for naturalization?

You may find general eligibility requirements for naturalization at our Web site (<http://www.uscis.gov>). You may also download “A Guide to Naturalization (Form M-476),” which provides information on the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship, an overview of the naturalization process, and eligibility requirements.

Paperwork Reduction Act

We will be amending the instructions to the Form N-400 to reflect the new filing instructions. Accordingly, we will provide the Office of Management and Budget with a copy of the amended form through the automated Regulatory Office Combined Information System (ROCIS). Changing the filing instructions will not have any effect on the reporting burden hours. The OMB control number for this collection is 1615-0052.

__December 17, 2008_____

Dated:

Michael Aytes,
Acting Deputy Director,
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration
Services

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