



Office of Communications
U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

USCIS Update

Feb. 24, 2009

USCIS TO ADJUDICATE PETITIONS FILED WITHIN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO CLASSIFY ORPHANS AS IMMEDIATE RELATIVES

WASHINGTON — U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today announced that beginning March 30, 2009, it will assume responsibility from the Department of State for adjudicating any Form I-600, *Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative*, filed within the Russian Federation.

While this will not affect the documentary evidence requirements for orphan immigrant visa cases, some document intake procedures for filing will change.

USCIS is requesting that prospective adoptive parents schedule an appointment to file Form I-600 with the Moscow USCIS field office once they know on which date they will have all the documents necessary to file their Form I-600 with USCIS Moscow. Appointments for filing a [Form I-600](#) with the Moscow USCIS field office will be available for scheduling via the internet at: www.infopass.uscis.gov. Appointments will be available no earlier than two weeks (14 calendar days) before the anticipated filing date.

USCIS will process each Form I-600 as expeditiously as possible and expects to be able to meet the current processing times for most cases. However, adoptive parents are urged to make their travel arrangements to Russia as flexible as possible in the event an issue arises that may take additional time to resolve.

In preparation for this change and to minimize the possibility of any delay while in Russia, USCIS recommends the following for prospective adoptive parents and adoption service providers:

Before traveling to Moscow to file a Form I-600 petition, prospective adoptive parents should:

- Ensure that fingerprint record clearances are valid and will remain valid throughout the processing of the Form I-600 in Moscow, Russia.
- Ensure that the Form I-600A, *Application for Advance Processing of Orphan Petition*, approval remains valid until the Form I-600 is filed at Moscow. A one time no fee extension of approval of Form I-600A may be obtained prior to traveling. An extension request must be submitted before the expiration of the original period of validity of Form I-600A.
- Obtain an amended home study and an amended notice of approval of Form I-600A if there has been a significant change to the household (e.g., a change of residence, new adult household member, new child to the home, etc.) after the home study was last submitted to USCIS with Form I-600A.

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- Obtain an amended home study and an amended notice of approval of Form I-600A in the event that the prospective adoptive parent(s) have accepted a placement to adopt a child whose medical condition is more serious than the original recommendation in the home study.

Note: If an amended notice of Form I-600A approval is necessary, the request must be made to the USCIS office that initially approved the prospective adoptive parent's Form I-600A and must include an amended home study.

Prospective adoptive parents should submit written authorization to USCIS with the filing of their Form I-600 if the prospective adoptive parents want to permit USCIS to release information about their case to either their U.S. or Russian adoption service provider, if such has not been previously submitted. The Privacy Act and DHS regulations limit the information that may be provided to an adoption service provider on a particular case without written permission from the prospective adoptive parents.

For additional information on intercountry adoptions, visit www.uscis.gov or <http://www.adoption.state.gov>.

Please see the Questions and Answers about adoptions from the Russian Federation.

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