



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Dear Stakeholder –

USCIS would like to inform stakeholders that, effective Sept. 12, 2011, we began sending original I-797 receipt and approval notices directly to applicants and petitioners. Copies of the notices are being sent to attorneys or accredited representatives, if a Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative, is on file. Previously, the original notice had been sent to the attorney or accredited representative's address listed on the Form G-28, while a copy was sent to the address provided by the applicant or petitioner in the applicable application or petition form. We implemented this notification change to ensure that documents (such as I-94 Arrival-Departure Records) are mailed directly to the address specified by the applicant or petitioner. USCIS apologizes for any inconvenience caused by not conducting commensurate outreach and providing time for affected stakeholders to adjust their practices.

USCIS realizes that this change will affect our stakeholders, and we considered suspending implementation of the new policy temporarily to provide an opportunity for those affected to adjust. However, we determined that a temporary suspension would not be practical due to the estimated four-to-six week delay associated with the required systems adjustments. In addition, on Nov. 28, 2011, the final rule for Immigration Benefits Business Transformation, Increment I, will go into effect. Under the amendments made by this rule, documents produced as the result of an approved application or petition will be mailed directly to the address provided by the party seeking the benefit on the applicable application or petition and not that specified by the attorney or accredited representative on a Form G-28. Our objective is to make sure that original receipts, decisions, and documents produced as a result of approved applications or petitions are sent to the address specified by the party making the request.

In Transition

In an effort to combat possible immigration services scams, USCIS generally discourages the practice of entering another person's address for mailing purposes. Nonetheless, Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker, petitioners who would like an attorney or representative of record to resume receiving original I-797 notices may use an attorney's address as the mailing address on the petition.

Please note: Using an address other than the petitioner's address as the mailing address may cause processing delays related to the Validation Instrument for Business Enterprises (VIBE), as VIBE automatically uses the address provided on the petition to

validate the petitioner's current location. If petitioners use an attorney's address as the mailing address on the I-129 petition, a cover letter should be included with the filing that clearly indicates the current address of the petitioner. This information will be used to assist the Immigration Services Officer (ISO) in completing a manual check in VIBE using the petitioner's address. In addition, if an attorney's address is used as the petitioner's mailing address on the form, the petitioner will not receive any I-797 notices.

Premium Processing

For petitions filed through Premium Processing, the applicant or petitioner may provide an alternate address for mailing of the original approval notice and I-94 if a pre-paid, self-addressed mailer is provided with the requested mailing address.

Kind Regards,

Office of Public Engagement
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
www.uscis.gov