



## U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

# USCIS Provides Greater Flexibility in Processing Work Authorization Requests for Asylum Applicants

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**WASHINGTON**—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services today announced a [regulatory change](#) to provide greater flexibility in the processing of initial employment authorization documents (commonly called EADs) for asylum applicants by removing the burdensome and agency-imposed 30-day time frame. The final rule becomes effective on Aug. 21.

This change provides USCIS sufficient time to receive, screen and process applications and to address national security and fraud concerns, maintain technological advances in identity verification and further deter those who may attempt to defraud the legal immigration system. It also gives the agency flexibility to shift limited adjudicator resources as needed. In the past, the agency has been forced to divert resources away from other types of benefit requests to meet the 30-day time frame.

The 30-day time frame was implemented by regulation more than 20 years ago. Since then, filings of asylum applications have spiked and USCIS has developed additional critical background screening and vetting procedures to reduce fraud and identify threats to national security and public safety.

“Removing this self-imposed internal processing time frame gives USCIS the operational flexibility to conduct the kind of systematic vetting and identity verification procedures the public expects from an agency charged with protecting national security,” said USCIS Deputy Director for Policy Joseph Edlow. “A key priority for USCIS is to safeguard the integrity of our nation’s legal immigration system from those who seek to exploit or abuse it. This change will reduce opportunities for fraud and protect the security-related processes we undertake for each employment authorization application, thereby increasing the integrity of immigration benefits.”

The rule also removes the requirement that asylum applicants submit their work authorization renewal requests to USCIS 90 days before the expiration of their current employment authorization. This change reduces confusion and clarifies that asylum applicants can file their renewal work authorization applications up to 180 days before the expiration date, minimizing potential gaps in employment authorization.

For more information, read the [final rule](#) published in the Federal Register on June 22.

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