

Instructions for Form G-639, Freedom of Information/Privacy Act Request

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Instructions

NOTE: Read all instructions carefully before completing this form. Applicants making false statements are subject to criminal penalties (Pub. L. 93-579.99 Stat. [5 U.S.C. 552a(i)(3)]).

Do Not Use Form G-639:

1. For status inquires, write to the USCIS office where the application was filed or call our National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283**.
2. For consular notification of a visa petition approval. Use Form I-824, Application for Action on an Approved Application or Petition, instead.
3. To request the return of original documents. Use Form G-884, Request for Return of Original Documents.
4. To request records of naturalization prior to September 27, 1906. Write to the clerk of court where the naturalization occurred.
5. To request information on USCIS manifest arrivals prior to December 1982. Write to the National Archives.
6. To obtain proof of status (i.e., Social Security benefit, Selective Service requirement).

Where Should I Submit My FOIA/PA Request?

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or Privacy Act (PA) requests must be submitted by mail, fax, or e-mail to the following:

**National Records Center (NRC)
FOIA/PA Office**
P.O. Box 648010
Lee's Summit, MO 64064-8010
Fax: (816)350-5785
Email: uscis.foia@uscis.dhs.gov

NOTE: Do not submit your FOIA/PA request to your local USCIS office or Service Center. USCIS processes all FOIA/PA requests at the NRC.

All FOIA or PA requests must be in writing. Form G-639 is not required to make a FOIA/PA request.

What Information Is Needed to Search for USCIS Records?

Failure to provide complete and specific information as requested in **Number 2** of the form may result in a delay in processing or USCIS' inability to locate the record(s) or information requested. You may access www.uscis.gov for a description of DHS/USCIS systems of records.

Verification of Identity

Individuals requesting access to their own records must include with their request their full name, current address, date and place of birth (see **Number 4**). The request must be signed and the signature must either be notarized or submitted under penalty of perjury. If you are requesting access to the records of another individual and on behalf of that individual, you must submit this same verification of identity statement from that individual (U.S. Department of Justice Form 361, Certification of Identity may also be used), together with appropriate consent authorization of the records subject.

Verification of Identity of Parents, Guardians, Children, or Other Persons

Parents or legal guardians must establish their own identity as parents or legal guardians and the identity of the child or other person being represented.

Authorization or Consent

Other parties requesting non-public information about an individual under FOIA or PA must provide proof of the consent of that person on Form G-639 or by an authorizing letter, together with appropriate verification of identity of the record subject.

Can Your Request Be Expedited?

To have your case processed ahead of other requests received previously, you must show a compelling need for your request to be expedited.

How Do You Show a Compelling Need?

A requester who seeks expedited processing must explain in detail the basis of the need and submit a separate statement that the facts stated are certified to be true and correct to the best of his or her knowledge and belief. The requester must establish that one of the following situations exists in order to receive expedited treatment of his or her FOIA/PA request:

1. Circumstances in which the lack of expedited processing could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or
2. An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal Government activity, if made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information.

Fees

No fees are required until you are notified by USCIS during the processing of your request.

Except for commercial requesters, the first 100 pages of reproduction and the first two hours of search time will be provided without charge. Thereafter, for requests processed under the Privacy Act, there may be a fee of 10 cents per page for photocopy duplication.

Other costs for searches and duplication will be charged at the actual direct cost.

Fees will only be charged if the aggregate amount of fees for searches, copy, and/or review is more than \$14. If the total anticipated fees amount to more than \$250, or the same requester has failed to pay fees in the past, an advance deposit may be requested.

NOTE: If fees for a prior request are outstanding, we will not honor future requests until all fees are paid.

Fee waivers or reductions may be sought for a request that clearly will benefit the public and is not primarily in the personal or commercial interest of the requester. Such requests must include a justification.

Payment of Fees

Do not send money with this request. When USCIS instructs you to do so, submit the fees in the exact amount.

Use the following guidelines when you prepare your check or money order for your Form G-639 fee:

1. The check or money order must be drawn on a bank or other financial institution located in the United States and must be payable in U.S. currency; **and**
2. Make the check or money order payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security**.

NOTE: Spell out U.S. Department of Homeland Security; do not use the initials "USDHS" or "DHS."

When you provide a check as payment, you authorize USCIS to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction. An EFT may debit your account as soon as the same day you make your payment and you will not receive your check back from your financial institution.

A charge of \$30 will be imposed if a check in payment of a fee is not honored by the bank on which it is drawn. Each remittance will be accepted subject to collection.

Routine Uses

Information will be used to comply with requests for information under **Title 5 U.S. Code 552 and 552a**. Information provided to other agencies may be for referrals, consultations, and/or to answer subsequent inquiries concerning specific requests.

Effect of Not Providing Requested Information

Providing the information requested on this form is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the information may result in our inability to comply with a request.

General Information

The Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) allows requesters to have access to Federal agency records, except those exempted by FOIA.

Privacy Act Statement

Authority to collect this information is contained in **Title 5 U.S. Code 552 and 552a**. The purpose of the collection is to enable USCIS to locate applicable records and to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts.

Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 554a)

With certain exceptions, the Privacy Act of 1974 permits persons (U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens) to gain access to information pertaining to themselves in Federal agency records, to have a copy made of all or any part thereof, to correct or amend such records, and to permit individuals to make requests concerning what records pertaining to themselves are collected, maintained, used, or disseminated. The PA also prohibits disclosure of any person's records without his or her written consent, except under certain circumstances as prescribed by the Privacy Act.

USCIS Forms and Information

You can get USCIS forms and immigration-related information on the USCIS Internet Web site at www.uscis.gov. You may order USCIS forms by calling our toll-free number at **1-800-870-3676**. You may also obtain forms and information by telephoning our National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283**

Paperwork Reduction Act

An agency may not conduct or sponsor information collection, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information, unless Form G-639 displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at 15 minutes per response. This includes the time to review the instructions, as well as complete and submit your Form G-639. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Regulatory Products Division, Office of the Executive Secretariat, 20 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20529-2020; OMB No. 1615-0102. **Do not mail your completed Form G-639 to this address.**