



# Instructions for Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative

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

USCIS  
**Form I-600**  
OMB No. 1615-0028  
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## What Is the Purpose of This Form?

Form I-600, Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative, enables U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to determine whether a foreign-born child (or orphan) from a country that is not a party to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention or Hague Convention) is eligible to be classified as your (and your spouse's, if married) immediate relative. You may use Form I-600 if you are a U.S. citizen who has or will adopt an orphan who is not habitually resident in a Hague Convention country.

On April 1, 2008, the Hague Adoption Convention entered into force for the United States. Therefore, it is important to note that you cannot file Form I-600A, Application for Advance Processing of an Orphan Petition, and/or Form I-600 for the adoption of a child habitually residing in a Hague Adoption Convention country unless the adoption occurred before April 1, 2008, or meets the requirements for a grandfathered transition case (example: Form I-600A or Form I-600 was filed prior to April 1, 2008). For a list of Hague Adoption Convention countries and for additional information regarding grandfathered transition cases, see the Department of State's website at [www.adoption.state.gov](http://www.adoption.state.gov) and the adoption-related pages on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/adoption](http://www.uscis.gov/adoption).

## General Requirements

### Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act of 2012 (UAA)

Effective July 14, 2014, any agency or person providing adoption services, including home study preparation, in intercountry adoption cases involving Form I-600A or Form I-600 must be accredited or approved, or be a supervised or exempted provider in compliance with the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 and accreditation regulations at Title 22 Part 96 of the Code of Federal Regulations (22 CFR 96). This accreditation or approval requirement now applies to both non-Hague Convention and Hague Convention adoptions.

The UAA does not apply to cases that meet certain criteria. For more information about the UAA, see the adoption-related pages on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/adoption](http://www.uscis.gov/adoption).

### Role of Service Provider under the UAA

#### 1. Adoption Service Provider

If the UAA applies to your non-Hague Convention case, an individual or entity must be authorized under 22 CFR 96 to provide adoption services following the same accreditation or approval process required in Hague Convention adoption cases. You should ask any adoption service provider whether they are authorized under 22 CFR 96 to provide adoption services before working with that provider. A list of individuals and entities authorized under 22 CFR 96 is available at the Department of State's adoption website at [www.adoption.state.gov](http://www.adoption.state.gov).

#### 2. Legal Services Provider

Only an individual who is licensed in the United States as an attorney, or who is otherwise permitted under 8 CFR 1.2, 292.1, and 292.2 to practice before USCIS, may give you legal advice concerning your petition, or provide any other legal services concerning your petition. You should ask anyone providing you with legal advice if he or she is licensed to practice law or are otherwise permitted by U.S. Federal regulation to provide you with legal advice pertaining to immigration processes.

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## What Are the Eligibility Requirements?

### 1. Child

Under section 101(b)(1)(F) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), an orphan is a child who has no parents because of the death or disappearance of, abandonment or desertion by, or separation or loss from both parents.

Under INA 101(b)(1)(F), an orphan is also a child who has a sole or surviving parent, who is incapable of providing the child with proper care, and has irrevocably released the child for emigration and adoption in writing.

Specific age requirements apply and some children may not be eligible to be a beneficiary of a Form I-600. For example, you may not file Form I-600 on behalf of a child who is already in the United States, unless that child is in parole status and has not been adopted in the United States. You must also file Form I-600 before the child reaches 16 years of age, unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- A. Sibling Exception:** You may file Form I-600 after the child's 16th birthday, but before the child's 18th birthday only if the orphan is the birth sibling of another foreign national child who has immigrated (or will immigrate) based on adoption by the same adoptive parent or parents; **OR**
- B. Form I-600A Filed When a Child is 15 Years of Age:** Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations at 8 CFR 204.3 do not directly address the relationship between the separate filing of Form I-600A and the statutory requirement to file Form I-600 while the child is under 16 years of age (or under 18 years of age as permitted under INA 101(b)(1)(F)(ii)). Consistent with the regulations governing Hague Convention adoption cases, USCIS will deem the Form I-600A filing date to be the Form I-600 filing date provided both of these requirements are met:

- (1) Form I-600A was filed after the child's 15th birthday, but before the child's 16th birthday (or, if applicable, after the child's 17th birthday, but before the child's 18th birthday); **AND**
- (2) Form I-600 is filed not more than 180 days after *initial* approval of Form I-600A.

**NOTE:** Even if you have not yet completed the adoption or obtained all of the required supporting documentation, you **MUST** file Form I-600 before the child turns 16 (or 18 if exception A. applies) or, if exception B. applies, no more than 180 days after the *initial* approval of your Form I-600A so that the child does not age out.

### 2. Parents

You must be a U.S. citizen to file Form I-600.

**NOTE:** If you are married and your spouse lives in the United States, you must submit proof that your spouse is living in the United States lawfully. Your spouse does not need to be a U.S. citizen. **However, if residing in the United States, your spouse must be a U.S. Citizen, a U.S. National, or a Lawful Permanent Resident, or have another lawful immigration status.**

If you are unmarried, you must be at least 25 years of age to file Form I-600.

### 3. Adoption abroad - child adopted by both parents, and seen in person by at least one adoptive parent

If the child was adopted abroad, you must establish that you or your spouse (if married) personally saw and observed the child before or during the adoption proceedings in order for the adoption to be considered full and final. If you are married, the adoption decree must also show that you and your spouse adopted the child jointly.

**NOTE:** U.S. Immigration law no longer requires that **both** spouses in a married couple personally see and observe the child before or during the adoption proceedings in order for the adoption to be considered full and final. Now **at least one** spouse in a married couple must see and observe the child before or during the adoption proceedings in order for the adoption to be considered full and final.

#### 4. Adoption abroad - child not seen by at least one parent, or not adopted by both parents

If the child was adopted abroad, but you or your spouse (if married) did not personally see and observe the child before or during the adoption proceedings, the child will be considered to be coming to the United States for adoption. You will then need to either adopt the child anew in your state of residence or take whatever steps may be required by your state of residence to recognize the foreign adoption.

Also, if you are married and you and your spouse did not jointly adopt the child abroad, the child will be considered to be coming to the United States for adoption, and the spouse who did not adopt abroad will need to adopt the child in the United States.

#### 5. Pre-adoption requirements

If the orphan has not been adopted abroad, or if the child will be considered to be coming to the United States for adoption, you and your spouse (if married) must establish that:

- A. You and your spouse will adopt the child in the United States; and
- B. Any pre-adoption requirements of the state of the orphan's proposed residence in the United States have been met.

### General Instructions

USCIS provides forms free of charge through the USCIS website. In order to view, print, or fill out our forms, you should use the latest version of Adobe Reader, which you can download for free at <http://get.adobe.com/reader>.

**Signature.** Each petition must be properly signed and filed. All signatures must be original. USCIS will not accept a photocopy of a signed petition or a typewritten name in place of a signature. A power of attorney is also not sufficient for USCIS purposes. If you are under 14 years of age, your parent or legal guardian may sign the petition on your behalf. A legal guardian also may sign for a mentally incompetent person.

**Filing Fee.** Each petition must be accompanied by the appropriate filing fee and biometric services fee (if applicable). (See the **What Is the Filing Fee?** section of these instructions.)

**Evidence.** At the time of filing, you must submit all evidence and supporting documentation listed in the **Initial Evidence** section of these instructions.

**Biometric Services Appointment.** USCIS may require that you appear for an interview or provide fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature at any time to verify your identity, obtain additional information, and conduct background and security checks, including a check of criminal history records maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, before making a decision on your petition. After USCIS receives your petition and ensures it is complete, we will inform you in writing if you need to attend a biometric services appointment. If an appointment is necessary, the notice will provide you the location of your local or designated USCIS Application Support Center (ASC) and the date and time of your appointment. If you, your spouse (if married), or an adult member of your household fail to attend the biometric services appointment, USCIS may deny your petition. For petitioners residing abroad, see the **Note for Petitioners Residing Abroad** below.

As part of USCIS' biometric services requirements, the following persons must be fingerprinted for this petition:

1. You and your spouse (if married); and
2. Each adult member of your household 18 years of age or older (Note: This may also include any person who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday, or who does not actually live at the same residence, but whose presence in your residence is relevant to your and your spouse's suitability to adopt, as determined by USCIS).

If necessary, USCIS may also take a photograph and signature of those named above as part of the biometric services requirement.

**Note for Petitioners Residing in the United States:** After you file your petition, USCIS will notify each person in writing of the time and ASC location where he or she must go for biometric services.

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**Note for Petitioners Residing Abroad:** Each individual who requires biometric services must submit a completed Form FD-258, Applicant Fingerprint Card, or appear for electronic biometrics where available. A USCIS international office, U.S. Embassy, U.S. Consulate, or U.S. military installation abroad must prepare the fingerprint card or collect the electronic biometrics. For additional information on obtaining biometric services when residing outside the United States, consult the nearest USCIS international office, U.S. Embassy, or U.S. Consulate.

**Acknowledgement of Appointment at USCIS Application Support Center (if applicable).** Review the ASC Acknowledgement that appears in **Parts 5. and 7.** of the petition. The purpose of this acknowledgement is to confirm that you and your spouse (if married) have completed your petition, reviewed your responses, and verified that the information provided is complete, true, and correct. If you and/or your spouse used someone to prepare this petition, that person must review the acknowledgement with you and/or your spouse to make sure you and/or your spouse understand it.

**Copies.** You may submit a legible photocopy of documents requested, unless the instructions specifically state that you must submit an original document. USCIS may request the original document at any time if the original document should become necessary. If you submit original documents when not required, the documents may remain a part of the record, and USCIS will not automatically return them to you.

**Translations.** If you submit a document with information in a foreign language, you must also submit a full English translation. The translator must certify that the English language translation is complete and accurate, and that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English.

**Affidavits.** If you cannot obtain a required document, you must submit an original written statement from the governmental agency that should have the record verifying that the record does not exist or a citation to the U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual indicating that the records are generally not available, or otherwise demonstrate the unavailability of both the primary and secondary evidence. Only then may you submit two or more written affidavits sworn to or affirmed by persons who are not parties to the petition who have direct personal knowledge of the event and circumstances. Affidavits should contain the following information about each person making the affidavit: his or her full name, address, date and place of birth, relationship to you, full information concerning the event, and complete details on how he or she acquired knowledge of the event.

#### **How to Fill Out Form I-600**

1. Type or print legibly in black ink.
2. If you need extra space to complete any item within this petition, attach a separate sheet of paper; type or print your name and Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number, Part Number, and Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet.
3. Answer all questions fully and accurately. If a question does not apply to you (e.g., if you have never been married and the question asks "Provide the name of your current spouse"), print "N/A" unless otherwise directed. If your answer to a question which requires a numeric response is zero or none (e.g., "How many children do you have?" or "How many times have you departed the United States?"), type or print "None" unless otherwise directed.
4. **Accommodations for Individuals With Disabilities and/or Impairments.** If you believe that you need USCIS to accommodate your, your spouse's (if married), or other household member's disability and/or impairment, select the "Yes" box and then select the appropriate boxes in **Part 4.** to indicate who has the disabilities and/or impairments and describe the nature of the disabilities and/or impairments. Also, type or print the accommodation(s) you are requesting in the space provided. If you are requesting a sign-language interpreter, you should indicate for which language.
5. **Petitioner's Statement, ASC Acknowledgement (if applicable), Certification, Signature, and Contact Information.** Select the box that indicates if you have read and understand this petition or if someone interpreted this petition for you. If applicable, select the box to indicate if someone else prepared this petition for you. You also must affirm that you have read and understand the **Acknowledgement of Appointment at USCIS Application Support Center** (if applicable). Further, you must sign and date your petition and complete **Item Numbers 4., 5., and 6.**

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6. **Petitioner's Duty of Disclosure.** Under 8 CFR 204.311(d), you, your spouse (if married), and any adult member of your household have a duty of candor in completing Form I-600A (if applicable), Form I-600, during the home study process, and an ongoing duty of disclosure throughout the adoption process. (See the **Duty of Disclosure** section below for specific information.) Read the Duty of Disclosure statement, then sign and date this section of the petition.
  7. **Spouse's Statement, ASC Acknowledgement (if applicable), Certification, Signature, and Contact Information.** Your spouse should select the box that indicates if he or she has read and understands this petition or if someone interpreted this petition for him or her. If applicable, your spouse should select the box to indicate if someone else prepared this petition for him or her. Your spouse must also affirm that he or she has read and understands the **Acknowledgement of Appointment at USCIS Application Support Center** (if applicable). Further, your spouse must sign and date the petition and complete **Item Numbers 4., 5., and 6.**
  8. **Spouse's Duty of Disclosure.** Under 8 CFR 204.311(d), your spouse (if married) has a duty of candor in completing Form I-600A (if applicable), Form I-600, during the home study process, and an ongoing duty of disclosure throughout the adoption process. (See the **Duty of Disclosure** section below for specific information.) Your spouse must read the Duty of Disclosure statement, then sign and date this section of the petition.
  9. **Interpreter's Name, Contact Information, Certification, and Signature.** If you and/or your spouse (if married) used an interpreter to read the instructions and questions on this petition, the interpreter must complete **Part 9.**, certify that he or she has read and accurately translated to you and/or your spouse the **Acknowledgement of Appointment at USCIS Application Support Center** (if applicable), sign and date the petition.
  10. **Name, Contact Information, Statement, Certification, and Signature of the Person Preparing this Petition, If Other Than the Petitioner and/or Spouse.** If you and/or your spouse (if married) used a preparer to complete this petition, the preparer must complete **Part 10.**, certify that he or she has read to you and/or your spouse the **Acknowledgement of Appointment at USCIS Application Support Center** (if applicable), sign and date the petition. If the person completing this petition is an attorney or accredited representative whose representation extends beyond the preparation of this petition, he or she must submit a completed Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative, or Form G-28I, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney in Matters Outside the Geographical Confines of the United States, along with your petition.

**NOTE:** An "accredited representative" for purposes of preparation of this form means an individual accredited under 8 CFR 292.2(d) to practice before USCIS and/or the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR). This type of accreditation is separate and distinct from accreditation under the Department of State regulations at 22 CFR Part 96 to provide adoption services.

**We recommend that you print or save a copy of your completed petition to review in the future and for your records. If you must appear for a biometric services appointment at a USCIS ASC, we recommend that you review your copy of your completed petition before you come to the appointment. At that appointment, you will be permitted to complete the petition process only if you are able to confirm, under penalty of perjury, that all of the information in your petition is accurate, true, and complete. If you are not able to make that attestation in good faith at that time, you will be required to return for another appointment when you are able to do so.**

#### **Form I-600A/I-600, Supplement 1, Listing of Adult Member of the Household**

You must complete **Form I-600A/I-600, Supplement 1, Listing of Adult Member of the Household**, for each adult member of your household. For purposes of this supplement, the definition of an adult member of the household is any individual other than you and your spouse (if married), who has the same principal residence as you and is 18 years of age or older on or before the date that Form I-600A or Form I-600 is filed. Residence is defined as the place of general abode or a person's principal, actual dwelling place in fact, without regard to intent.

**NOTE:** USCIS reserves the right to request information on any household member who has not yet reached his or her 18th birthday before the date when Form I-600A or Form I-600 is filed, or who does not actually live at the same residence, but whose presence in the residence is relevant to the issue of your and your spouse's (if married) suitability to adopt.

## Initial Evidence

If you previously submitted items 1., 2., and 8. listed below with your Form I-600A, you do not need to do so again when filing your Form I-600 unless requested by the USCIS office processing your Form I-600.

**NOTE:** If you are requesting a suitability and eligibility determination as part of this filing, you must submit all items listed below. For more information about such filings, see the filing instructions for Form I-600 on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/I-600](http://www.uscis.gov/I-600).

### 1. Proof of Petitioner's U.S. Citizenship

- A.** If you are a U.S. citizen by birth, you must submit a copy of your birth certificate issued by a civil registrar, vital statistics office, or other civil authority. If your birth certificate is not available, submit a statement from the appropriate civil authority certifying that your birth certificate is not available. In such a situation, secondary evidence must be submitted, such as:
- (1) **Religious records** bearing the seal of the organization showing the baptism, dedication, or comparable rite occurred within two months after your birth and showing the date and place of your birth, date of the religious ceremony, and the names of your parents;
  - (2) **School records** issued by the authority (preferably the first school you attended) showing the date of your admission to the school, your age at the time, and your parents' names and places of birth;
  - (3) **Census records** (state or Federal) showing your name, place of birth, and date of birth or age;
  - (4) **Affidavits** sworn to or affirmed by persons who were living at the time of your birth and who have personal knowledge of your date and place of birth in the United States. Affidavits should contain the following information about each person making the affidavit: his or her full name, address, date and place of birth, relationship to you, full information concerning the event, and complete details on how he or she acquired knowledge of your birth; or
  - (5) An unexpired **U.S. passport** issued for 10 years.
- B.** If you were born outside the United States, submit a copy of one of the following:
- (1) Certificate of Naturalization or Certificate of Citizenship issued by USCIS or the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS);
  - (2) Form FS-240, Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States, issued by a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate;
  - (3) An unexpired U.S. passport issued for 10 years; or
  - (4) An original statement from a U.S. consular officer verifying your U.S. citizenship with an unexpired passport.

**NOTE:** If you are married, and your spouse lives in the United States, you must submit proof that your spouse is living in the United States lawfully. If your spouse is a U.S. citizen or non-citizen U.S. national, you must submit evidence from **Part A.** or **B.** above as proof of your spouse's U.S. citizenship or non-citizen U.S. national status. If your spouse is an alien who is residing in the United States, submit proof of your spouse's lawful immigration status, such as: Form I-551, Permanent Resident Card; Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record; a copy of the biographic pages of your spouse's passport and his or her nonimmigrant visa pages showing an admission stamp; or any other Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-issued document.

### 2. Proof of Marriage of Petitioner and Spouse (if applicable)

If you are married, you must submit a copy of your marriage certificate. If you or your spouse were previously married, you must also submit proof of termination of any prior marriages.

**NOTE:** If any change occurs in your marital status while your petition is pending, immediately notify the USCIS office or the government entity that USCIS designates that has jurisdiction over your case.

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### 3. Proof of Orphan's Age and Identity

You should submit a copy of the orphan's birth certificate, or if such a certificate is not available, an explanation together with other proof of age and identity. Such secondary evidence could include medical records, school records, church records, entry in a family Bible, orphanage intake sheets, or affidavits from individuals with first-hand knowledge of the event(s) to which they are testifying. If there is doubt that the child is the birth child of his or her purported birth parent, you may be provided the option of submitting DNA evidence to establish the claimed relationship.

### 4. Copies of Death Certificates of Child's Parents (if applicable)

### 5. Certified Copy of Adoption or Custody Decree and Certified Translation

### 6. Evidence Child is an Orphan (as defined in INA 101(b)(1)(F) and 8 CFR 204.3(b))

- A. If the orphan is a child of a sole parent, you should submit evidence that the birth mother is a sole parent, is incapable of providing proper care for the child, and has irrevocably released the child for emigration and adoption in writing.

**NOTE:** The father of an orphan is ineligible for classifications as a sole parent as defined in 8 CFR 204.3(b).

- B. If the orphan is a child of a surviving parent, you should submit evidence that the other parent is deceased, the surviving parent is incapable of providing proper care for the child, and the surviving parent has irrevocably released the child for emigration and adoption in writing.
- C. If the child does not have a sole or surviving parent, you should submit evidence that the child is an orphan due to the death or disappearance of, abandonment or desertion by, or separation or loss from both parents. These terms are defined in 8 CFR 204.3(b) and indicate what must be established for each of these situations to apply. It is *not* necessary to establish that each parent is gone for the same reason. For example, if one parent has disappeared and the other parent has abandoned the child, the child is an orphan.

**NOTE:** Before USCIS, or the government entity that USCIS designates, can make a final decision on your petition, an officer must complete an internal document called Form I-604, Determination on Child for Adoption, also known as an orphan investigation. USCIS, or the government entity that USCIS designates, must complete an orphan investigation as part of every orphan adoption case to verify that the child is an orphan under U.S. immigration law.

### 7. Proof of Compliance with Pre-adoption Requirements (if any)

If the child is to be adopted in the United States, you must provide evidence that any pre-adoption requirements of the state of the orphan's proposed residence in the United States have been met. If you cannot submit this evidence upon initial filing of your petition under the laws of your state of proposed residence in the United States, you may submit this evidence later. However, USCIS will not approve your Form I-600 petition for a specific child without it.

### 8. Home Study

You must submit a home study prepared according to the requirements specified in 8 CFR 204.311 by a person who is authorized under 22 CFR 96 to prepare the home study.

**NOTE:** Effective July 14, 2014, 8 CFR 204.3(e) and certain definitions in 8 CFR 204.3(b) no longer apply unless a case meets certain criteria specified in the Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act of 2012 (UAA), which would exempt the case from UAA requirements. See the adoption-related pages on the USCIS website for more information at [www.uscis.gov/adoption](http://www.uscis.gov/adoption).

An authorized home study preparer must prepare your home study. The home study preparer (or, if the home study is prepared by an entity, the officer or employee who has authority to sign the home study for the entity) must personally sign the home study and any updated or amended home study under penalty of perjury under U.S. law.

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A home study preparer is an individual or agency authorized to conduct home studies, either as a public domestic authority, a public foreign authority, an accredited agency, approved person, supervised provider, or exempted provider (see 8 CFR 204.301). The home study preparer (other than a public domestic authority or a public foreign authority) must hold any license or other authorization that is required to conduct adoption home studies under the law of the jurisdiction in which the home study is prepared. You should ask any adoption service provider whether they are authorized to provide adoption services in connection with adoptions according to 22 CFR 96 before engaging that provider's services.

**NOTE:** An accredited agency must review and approve any home study that was not performed by an accredited agency before it is submitted to USCIS. This requirement does not apply to a home study that was prepared by a public domestic authority or a public foreign authority. A public domestic authority means an authority operated by a state, local, or tribal government within the United States. A public foreign authority means an authority operated by a national or subnational government of a foreign country.

If USCIS approved your Form I-600A application or it is still pending, you do not need to resubmit a copy of your home study with your Form I-600 petition. **However, you must submit a home study with your petition, if you did not previously submit it with your Form I-600A.** The only exception to this requirement is if you live in a state where an appropriate state authority must review and approve your home study and submit it directly to USCIS.

If you previously submitted your home study with your approved Form I-600A, submit a copy of your Form I-600A approval notice and select **Part 3. Information About Your Home Study and Primary Adoption Service Provider, Item Number 1., Item A.** If you previously submitted your home study, but your Form I-600A is still pending, you should provide a copy of your Form I-600A fee receipt and select **Part 3., Item Number 1., Item B.**

If you are submitting your home study with your Form I-600 because you did not yet submit it with or you did not file Form I-600A select **Part 3., Item Number 1., Item C.** If you are unable to submit your home study with your Form I-600 because your state of residence must review and forward the home study directly to USCIS, select **Part 3., Item Number 1., Item D.** Do not submit your Form I-600A to USCIS until your state authority is ready to send your home study to USCIS. If your state authority must review and approve your home study, but will forward it to you (as opposed to USCIS directly), do not file your Form I-600 until that appropriate state authority has reviewed your home study and you are ready to submit it to USCIS.

In all cases, your home study must not be more than six months old when it is submitted to USCIS. If it is more than six months old, you must include an update or amendment that is not more than six months old.

### ***Home Study Requirements***

For a complete description of the requirements for a home study subject to the UAA, see 8 CFR 204.311 and 22 CFR 96.

### **Home Study Updates and Amendments**

Ordinarily, you will not have to submit an updated or amended home study to USCIS unless you are requesting an extension of your Form I-600A approval, or there is a significant change in your household or in the characteristics of the child you intend to adopt since your home study was completed. Listed below are some examples of significant changes that require a home study amendment or update. Your adoption service provider can advise you on other changes that may require an amended or updated home study.

- 1. Change in marital status.** USCIS will automatically revoke an approved Form I-600A if you are an unmarried petitioner who marries or if you are married and your current marriage ends. USCIS will revoke the approval of Form I-600A without prejudice to the filing of a new Form I-600A.

If the change in marital status is:

- A. While your Form I-600A is pending, you must submit an updated or amended home study with a new Form I-600A that reflects your changed marital status and required signatures.** No fee is required.



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- B. After your Form I-600A has been approved, a new Form I-600A that reflects your new marital status is required, along with an updated or amended home study.** The fee is required. (Note: You could also decide not to file a new Form I-600A and instead wait to request a suitability and eligibility determination as part of your Form I-600 petition filing. For more information about such filings, see the filing instructions for Form I-600 on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/I-600](http://www.uscis.gov/I-600).)
2. **Change of residence including a change in the child's proposed state of residence in the United States.** You must meet any pre-adoption requirements of the new state of proposed residence in the United States in the case of a child coming to the United States for adoption.
  3. **Any change in history of arrest, substance abuse, child abuse, and/or family violence, as an offender, for you, your spouse (if married), or any household member regardless of age.**
  4. **Change to a different non-Hague Convention country.** This change may require an updated or amended home study to address suitability under the requirements of the new non-Hague Convention country.
  5. **Addition of one or more children to your home, whether through adoption, foster care, birth, or any other means, prior to the child's immigration to the United States.** You must submit an updated or amended home study even if your last home study recommended the adoption of more than one child. The updated or amended home study must recommend the adoption of an additional child because the actual placement of one or more children in your household after you submit your home study to USCIS is a significant change in your household, which must be assessed to ensure you and your spouse (if married) remain suitable to parent an orphan.
  6. **Addition of one or more members of the household, including adults and children, to the family prior to the child's immigration to the United States.**
  7. **Seeking to adopt a child with a special need, disability, and/or impairment, if the last home study you submitted to USCIS did not already address your suitability to parent a child with a particular special need, disability, and/or impairment.**
  8. **Lapse of more than six months between the date your home study is completed and the date you submit it to USCIS.**
  9. **Change in the number of children or characteristics (such as age and/or gender) of the child or children you intend to adopt.**

### **How to File Updates and Amendments to Your Home Study**

If you need to file an updated or amended home study, you must always include a copy of the home study that is being updated or amended, including all prior updates and amendments.

If you need to submit an updated or amended home study after USCIS has approved your Form I-600A (if applicable), but before USCIS, or the government entity that USCIS designates, issues a decision on your Form I-600, you must submit the following items to the USCIS office that approved your Form I-600A (if applicable) if your Form I-600A approval is still valid *or* to the USCIS office with jurisdiction over your Form I-600 if your Form I-600A approval (if applicable) has expired.

1. Your new updated or amended home study;
2. A signed written request or cover letter for an updated or amended approval notice; and
3. A copy of the home study that is being updated (including all prior updates and amendments).

See the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/adoption/home-study-information](http://www.uscis.gov/adoption/home-study-information).

**NOTE:** A change in marital status **after approval** of a Form I-600A will require you to file a new Form I-600A with a new home study and any required fees.

If USCIS determines that the updated or amended home study shows that you and your spouse (if married) remain suitable to parent an orphan, USCIS will issue a new approval notice with the same expiration date as the original approval, unless you submitted the updated or amended home study in support of a request for an extension of your Form I-600A approval.

If you need to submit an updated or amended home study before USCIS adjudicates your Form I-600A (if applicable), you may submit the updated or amended home study, cover letter, and a copy of the home study that you are updating or amending (including all prior updates and amendments) to the office that has jurisdiction over your Form I-600A.

### Duty of Disclosure

Under 8 CFR 204.311(d), you, your spouse (if married), and any adult member of your household have a duty of candor in completing Form I-600A (if applicable), Form I-600, during the home study process, and an ongoing duty of disclosure throughout the adoption process. This duty requires you, your spouse, and any adult member of your household, to:

1. Provide true and complete information to the home study preparer;
2. Disclose other relevant information, such as physical, mental, or emotional health problems or behavioral issues;
3. Disclose any arrest, conviction, or other adverse criminal history, whether in the United States or abroad, even if the record of the arrest, conviction, or other adverse criminal history was expunged, sealed, pardoned, or the subject of any other amelioration;
4. Disclose any history of substance abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse, and/or family violence as an offender under 8 CFR 204.309(a)(1); and
5. Notify the home study preparer and USCIS of any new event or information that might warrant submission of an amended or updated home study.

With respect to child abuse or neglect, this duty of disclosure requires the disclosure of any currently pending investigation by any child welfare agency, court, or other official authority in any state or foreign country concerning the abuse or neglect of any child, as well as past investigation *other than* an investigation that was completed and formally closed based on a finding that the allegation of abuse or neglect was unfounded or unsubstantiated.

This duty of disclosure is an ongoing duty, and continues while any Form I-600A is pending, after any Form I-600A is approved, while any Form I-600 that you filed is pending, and until there is a final decision admitting a child, on whose behalf you filed Form I-600, to the United States with a visa.

### WARNING

Under 8 CFR 204.309(a), USCIS will deny this petition if you, your spouse (if married), or any adult member of your household:

1. Fail to disclose, conceal, or misrepresent any facts to the home study preparer or USCIS about any arrest, conviction, or history of substance abuse, sexual abuse, child abuse, and/or family violence, or any other criminal history as an offender. The fact that an arrest or conviction or other criminal history was expunged, sealed, pardoned, or the subject of any other amelioration does not relieve you, your spouse, or any additional adult member of your household of the obligation to disclose the arrest, conviction, or other criminal history;
2. Fail to cooperate in having available child abuse registries checked in accordance with 8 CFR 204.311;
3. Fail to disclose, as required by 8 CFR 204.311, each and every prior adoption home study, whether completed or not, including those that did not favorably recommend you, your spouse, or any adult member of your household for adoption or custodial care.

## What Is the Filing Fee?

The filing fee for Form I-600 is **\$775** for each petition, unless the children are birth siblings.

A biometric services fee of **\$85** is required for every petitioner, spouse (if married), and any adult member of the household, unless you filed Form I-600A and you, your spouse, and any adult members of your household are within the 15-month biometric services validity period. For adult persons living abroad, see the **Note for Petitioners Residing Abroad** below.

**NOTE:** The filing fee and biometric services fee are not refundable, regardless of any action USCIS takes on this petition. **DO NOT MAIL CASH.** You must submit all fees in the exact amount.

**Note for Petitioners Residing Abroad:** You, your spouse (if married), and each adult member of your household **MUST** provide biometrics:

1. USCIS will inform a person residing abroad if he or she must pay a USCIS biometric services fee.
2. The U.S. Department of State or U.S. military installations abroad may also charge biometric services fees.
3. Contact the nearest USCIS international office, U.S. Embassy, or U.S. Consulate for instructions on fees and the method of payment.

**NOTE:** No fee is required for this petition if you filed Form I-600A, and:

1. It was approved (or an extension was approved) within the previous 18 months; or
2. Is still pending; and
3. This is the first Form I-600 you have filed based on your valid Form I-600A (or you are filing multiple petitions for children who are birth siblings).

If you did not file Form I-600A, and instead are requesting a suitability and eligibility determination as part of your Form I-600 petition filing, then you must enclose a separate check or money order for each petition requiring filing and/or biometric services fees. For example, if a married couple residing in the United States with one adult member of their household files such a petition, the total fees would be **\$775 for Form I-600 and a separate check or money order for \$255 (\$85 x 3 adults living in the household) for biometrics.**

**NOTE:** USCIS will provide one additional biometric services appointment at no charge to you, your spouse (if married), and/or any adult member of your household, if the 15-month biometric services validity period has or will expire before the final adjudication of your Form I-600 petition. See the adoption-related pages on the USCIS [website](http://www.uscis.gov/website) at [www.uscis.gov/adoption](http://www.uscis.gov/adoption) for more information about requesting the additional biometric services appointment.

**Use the following guidelines when you prepare your checks or money orders for the Form I-600 filing and biometric services fees:**

1. The checks or money orders must be drawn on a bank or other financial institution located in the United States and must be payable in U.S. currency.
2. Make the checks or money orders 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."

### Notice to Those Making Payment by Check

If you send us a check, USCIS will convert it into an electronic funds transfer (EFT). This means we will copy your check and use the account information on it to electronically debit your account for the amount of the check. The debit from your account will usually take 24 **hours and** your bank will show it on your regular account statement.

You will not receive your original check back. We will destroy your original check, but will keep a copy of it. **If USCIS cannot process the EFT for technical reasons, you authorize us to process the copy in place of your original check. If your check is returned as unpayable, USCIS will re-submit the payment to the financial institution one time. If the check is returned as unpayable a second time, we will reject your petition and charge you a returned check fee.**

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## How to Check If the Fees Are Correct

Form I-600's filing fee and biometric services **fee are** current as of the edition date in the lower left corner of this page. However, because USCIS fees change periodically, you can verify that the fees are correct by following one of the steps below.

1. Visit the USCIS [website](http://www.uscis.gov) at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov), select "FORMS," and check the appropriate fee; or
2. Call the USCIS National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283** and ask for fee information. For TTY (deaf or hard of hearing) call: **1-800-767-1833**.
3. If you live outside the United States, contact the nearest USCIS international office, U.S. Embassy, or U.S. Consulate for instructions on fees and the method of payment.

## Where To File?

Please see our website at [www.uscis.gov/I-600](http://www.uscis.gov/I-600) or call our National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283** for the most current information about where to file this petition. For TTY (deaf or hard of hearing) call: **1-800-767-1833**.

## Address Change

You must notify USCIS of your new address within 10 days of moving from your previous residence. For information on filing a change of address go to the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/addresschange](http://www.uscis.gov/addresschange) or contact the USCIS National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283**. For TTY (deaf or hard of hearing) call: **1-800-767-1833**.

In addition, you must notify the USCIS office with jurisdiction over your case. If you filed your petition with the USCIS Lockbox, the National Benefits Center (NBC) has jurisdiction over your case. If you filed at a USCIS international office or a government entity that USCIS designates, you will need to submit your change of address to that office. Due to your change in residence, USCIS may also require you to submit an updated or amended home study for a significant change.

See the adoption-related pages on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/adoption](http://www.uscis.gov/adoption) for information on significant changes due to a change in residence and current mailing addresses for the NBC and USCIS international offices.

**NOTE:** Do not submit a change of address request to the USCIS Lockbox facilities because these facilities do not process change of address requests.

## Processing Information

**Certification.** You must fill out and sign the **Parts 5. and 6.** of Form I-600. Your spouse (if married) must fill out and sign **Parts 7. and 8.** of the petition.

**USCIS will reject any Form I-600 that is not signed or accompanied by the correct fee, if any, and issue a notice stating that your Form I-600 is deficient.** You may correct the deficiency and resubmit Form I-600. A petition is not considered properly filed until USCIS accepts it.

**Initial Processing.** Once USCIS accepts your petition, we will check it for completeness. If you do not completely fill out this petition, you will not establish a basis for eligibility and USCIS may reject or deny your petition.

**Requests for More Information.** We may request that you provide more information or evidence to support your petition. We also may request that you provide the originals of any copies you submit. USCIS will return any requested originals when they are no longer needed.

**Requests for Interview.** We may request that you appear at a USCIS office for an interview based on your petition. At the time of any interview or other appearance at a USCIS office, we may require that you provide your fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature to verify your identity and/or update background and security checks.

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**Decision.** A decision on Form I-600 involves a determination of whether you have established the child's eligibility to be classified as an orphan under U.S. immigration law. USCIS will notify you of the decision in writing.

### Individuals With Disabilities and/or Impairments

USCIS is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and/or impairments that will help them fully participate in USCIS programs and benefits.

Reasonable accommodations vary with each disability and/or impairment. They may involve modifications to practices or procedures. There are various types of reasonable accommodations that USCIS may offer you. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, USCIS may provide you with a sign-language interpreter at an interview or other petition-related appointment;
2. If you are blind or have low vision, USCIS may permit you to take a test orally rather than in writing; or
3. If you are unable to travel to a designated USCIS location for an interview, USCIS may visit you at your home or a hospital.

If you believe that you need USCIS to accommodate your disability and/or impairment, select "Yes" and then any applicable box in **Part 4.** that describes the nature of your disabilities and/or impairments. Also, describe the types of accommodations you are requesting on the lines provided. If you are requesting a sign-language interpreter, indicate for which language.

**NOTE:** All domestic USCIS facilities meet the Accessibility Guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act, so you do not need to contact USCIS to request an accommodation for physical access to a domestic USCIS office. However, in **Part 4.** of this petition, you can indicate whether you use a wheelchair. This will allow USCIS to better prepare for your visit.

USCIS considers requests for reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis, and we will make our best efforts to reasonably accommodate your disabilities and/or impairments. USCIS will not exclude you from participating in USCIS programs or deny your petition because of your disabilities and/or impairments. Requesting and/or receiving an accommodation will not affect your eligibility for any USCIS benefits.

### USCIS Forms and Information

[www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) where you can obtain the latest USCIS forms and immigration-related information. If you do not have Internet access, you may order USCIS forms by calling our toll-free number at **1-800-870-3676**. You may also obtain forms and information by calling the USCIS National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283**. For TTY (deaf or hard of hearing) call: **1-800-767-1833**.

Instead of waiting in line for assistance at your local USCIS office, you can now schedule an appointment through the USCIS Internet-based system, **InfoPass**, at [infopass.uscis.gov/](http://infopass.uscis.gov/). Use the **InfoPass** appointment scheduler and follow the screen prompts to set up your appointment. **InfoPass** generates an electronic appointment notice that appears on the screen.

### Penalties

If you knowingly and willfully falsify or conceal a material fact or submit a false document with your Form I-600, we will deny your Form I-600 and may deny any USCIS benefit you request.

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## USCIS Privacy Act Statement

**AUTHORITY:** The information requested on this petition and the associated evidence, is collected under Section 101(b)(1)(F) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) [8 USC 1101], 8 CFR 204.3, and 8 CFR 204.311.

**PURPOSE:** The primary purpose for providing the requested information on this form is to classify an orphan who is, or will be, adopted by a U.S. citizen, as an immediate relative of the U.S. citizen to allow the child to enter the United States. DHS will use the information you provide to grant or deny your petition.

**DISCLOSURE:** The information you provide is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information, and any requested evidence, may delay a final decision in your case or result in denial of your petition.

**ROUTINE USES:** DHS may share the information you provide on this form with other Federal, state, local, and foreign government agencies and authorized organizations following approved routine uses described in the associated published system of records notices [DHS/USCIS-005 - Inter-Country Adoptions Security and DHS/USCIS-001 - Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records, which can be found at [www.dhs.gov/privacy](http://www.dhs.gov/privacy)]. The information may also be shared, as appropriate, for law enforcement purposes or in the interest of national security.

**NOTICE TO ADULT MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD:** You are not the petitioner who is filing Form I-600. As an adult member of the petitioner's household, however, information about you may be relevant to the adjudication of the petitioner's Form I-600. Under 8 CFR 103.2(b)(16), the petitioner is entitled to review any information that may be used as evidence supporting a denial of Form I-600. By signing the Form I-600A/Form I-600, Supplement 1, you are providing your consent to permit USCIS to disclose to the petitioner and adoption service provider, if applicable, information that USCIS may obtain about you that is relevant to the adjudication of the petitioner's Form I-600, even if the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a, might otherwise prevent disclosure of the information to the petitioner.

**PRIVACY ACT WAIVER:** Except as permitted by the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a, applicable routine uses, and information related to adult members of your household as noted above, USCIS may not disclose or give access to any information or record relating to any petitioner, spouse (if married), or adult member of your household to any individual or entity other than that person, including but not limited to an accredited agency, approved person, exempted provider, supervised provider, or other adoption service provider, unless you give written consent, as provided by the Privacy Act.

## Paperwork Reduction Act

An agency may not conduct or sponsor an information collection, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at 45 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering the required documentation and information, completing and submitting the petition, preparing statement, attaching necessary documentation, and submitting the petition. The collection of biometrics is estimated to require 1 hour and 10 minutes. 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 Coordination Division, Office of Policy and Strategy, 20 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20529-2140; OMB No. 1615-0028. **Do not mail your completed Form I-600 to this address.**