

# I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal

## Instructions

### What Is the Purpose of This Form?

This form is used to apply for asylum in the United States and for withholding of removal (formerly called "withholding of deportation"). This application may also be used to apply for protection under the Convention Against Torture. You may file this application if you are physically present in the United States, and you are not a U.S. citizen.

**NOTE:** You **must** submit an application for asylum within 1 year of arriving in the United States, unless **you can establish that** there are changed circumstances that materially affect your eligibility for asylum or extraordinary circumstances directly related to your failure to file within 1 year. (See **Part C, Additional Information about Your Application, in Section V on Part 1** of the instructions for further explanation.)

You may include in your application your spouse and unmarried children who are under 21 years of age and physically present in the United States. You **must** submit certain documents for your spouse and each child included as required by these instructions. Children 21 years of age or older and married children must file separate applications. If you are granted asylum and your spouse and/or any unmarried children under 21 years of age are outside the United States, you may file Form I-730, Refugee and Asylee Relative Petition, for them to gain similar benefits.

### Instruction Sections: Filing Information and How Your Application Will Be Processed

The instructions are divided into two sections:

The first section has filing information. This section discusses basic eligibility criteria and guides you through filling out and filing the application.

The second section explains how your application will be processed. This section also describes potential interim benefits available while your application is pending.

Read these instructions carefully. The instructions will help you complete your application and understand how it will be processed. If you have questions about your eligibility, how to complete the form, or the asylum process, you may wish to consult an attorney or other qualified person to assist you. (See **Section IV, Right to Counsel, in Part I** of these instructions.)

### WARNING - IMPORTANT NOTICE

- **Applicants in the United States unlawfully are subject to removal if their asylum or withholding claims are not granted by an asylum officer or an immigration judge. Any information provided in completing this application may be used as a basis for the initiation of, or as evidence in, removal proceedings, even if the application is later withdrawn.**
- **Applicants determined to have knowingly made a frivolous application for asylum will be permanently ineligible for any benefits under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). You may not avoid a frivolous finding simply because someone advised you to provide false information in your asylum application. See section 208(d)(6) of the INA and 8 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) sections 208.20 and 1208.20.**
- **If filing with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), unexcused failure to appear for an appointment or to provide biometrics (such as fingerprints) and other biographical information within the time allowed may delay eligibility for employment authorization and result in an asylum officer dismissing your asylum application or referring it to an immigration judge.**
- **Applicants and eligible dependents in removal proceedings who fail without good cause to provide USCIS with their biometrics or their biographical information as required within the time allowed may have their applications found abandoned by the immigration judge. See sections 208(d)(5)(A) of the INA and 8 CFR sections 208.10, 1208.10, and 1003.47(d).**

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## Part 1. Filing Instructions

### I. Who May Apply and Filing Deadlines

You may apply for asylum irrespective of your immigration status and even if you are in the United States unlawfully unless otherwise provided by statute or regulations.

**You MUST file this application within 1 year after you arrived in the United States, unless you can show that there are changed circumstances that affect your eligibility for asylum or extraordinary circumstances that prevented you from filing within 1 year.** (See Section IV, Right to Counsel, in Part I of these instructions.) **Failure to file the Form I-589 within 1 year of your last arrival in the United States may delay your eligibility for employment authorization or result in the denial of your application for employment authorization.**

An Unaccompanied Alien Child (UAC) is a legal term referring to a non-U.S. citizen child who has no lawful immigration status in the United States; has not attained 18 years of age; and has no parent or legal guardian in the United States, or for whom no parent or legal guardian in the United States is available to provide care and physical custody. See 6 U.S.C. 279(g)(2). The Asylum Division has initial jurisdiction over an asylum application filed by a UAC, including a UAC in removal proceedings before an immigration judge. For more information about the asylum process for UAC, visit the USCIS asylum website at [www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/minor-children-applying-asylum-themselves](http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/minor-children-applying-asylum-themselves).

Detailed UAC filing instructions are found in **Part 1, Section XII** of these instructions.

If you have previously been denied asylum by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals, you must show that there are changed circumstances that affect your eligibility for asylum.

The determination of whether you are permitted to apply for asylum will be made once you have had an asylum interview with an asylum officer or a hearing before an immigration judge. Even if you are not eligible to apply for asylum for the reasons stated above, you may still be eligible to apply for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the INA or under the Convention Against Torture before the Immigration Court.

Pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1806(a)(7), if you are physically present in, or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, you may not apply for asylum until January 1, 2020; however, you may use Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, to apply for withholding of removal and for protection from removal under the Convention Against Torture in Immigration Court proceedings.

## Part 1. Filing Instructions (continued)

### II. Basis of Eligibility

#### A. Asylum

To qualify for asylum, you must establish that you are a refugee who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality, or last habitual residence if you have no nationality, because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. This means that you must establish that race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion was or will be at least one central reason for your persecution or why you fear persecution. (See section 208 of the INA; 8 CFR sections 208 and 1208, et seq.)

If you are granted asylum, you and any eligible spouse or child included in your application can remain and work in the United States and may eventually adjust to lawful permanent resident status. **If you are not granted asylum, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may use the information you provide in this application to establish that you are removable from the United States.**

#### B. Withholding of Removal

Your asylum application is also considered to be an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the INA, as amended. It may also be considered an application for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture if you checked the box at the top of **Page 1** of the form, or if the evidence you present indicates that you may be tortured in the country of removal. (See 8 CFR sections 208.13(c)(1) and 1208.13(c)(1)). If asylum is not granted, you may still be eligible for withholding of removal.

Regardless of the basis for the withholding application, you will not be eligible for withholding if you:

1. Assisted in Nazi persecution or engaged in genocide;
2. Have persecuted another person;
3. Have been convicted by a final judgment of a particularly serious crime, **which includes conviction for aggravated felonies**, and therefore represent a danger to the community of the United States;
4. Are considered for serious reasons to have committed a serious non-political crime outside the United States; or
5. Represent a danger to the security of the United States. (See section 241(b)(3) of the INA; 8 CFR sections 208.16 and 1208.16.)

#### Withholding of Removal Under Section 241(b)(3) of the INA

To qualify for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the INA, you must establish that it is more likely than not that your life or freedom would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion in the proposed country of removal.

If you obtain an order withholding your removal, you cannot be removed to the country where your life or freedom would be threatened. This means that you may be removed to a third country where your life or freedom would not be threatened. **However**, Withholding of removal does not adhere derivatively to any spouse or child included in the application; they would have to apply for such protection on their own.

If you are granted withholding of removal, this would not give you the right to bring your relatives to the United States. It also would not give you the right to apply for lawful permanent resident status in the United States.

#### Withholding of Removal Under the Convention Against Torture

The Convention Against Torture refers to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

To be granted withholding of removal to a country under Article 3 of the Convention against Torture, as implemented in U.S. law, you must show that it is more likely than not that you would be tortured in that country.

"Torture" is defined at 8 CFR sections 208.18(a) and 1208.18(a), which incorporate the definitions in Article 1 of the Convention against Torture as implemented in U.S. law. For an act to be considered torture, it must be an extreme form of cruel and inhuman treatment, it must cause severe physical or mental pain and suffering, and it must be specifically intended to cause severe pain and suffering.

Torture is an act inflicted for such purposes as obtaining from the victim or a third person information or a confession, punishing the victim for an act he or she or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, intimidating or coercing the victim or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind.

Torture must be inflicted by or at the instigation of, or with the consent or acquiescence of, a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. The victim must be in the custody or physical control of the torturer. Torture does not include pain or suffering that arises only from, is inherent in, or is incidental to lawful sanctions, although such actions may not defeat the objective and purpose of the Convention Against Torture.

Form I-589, will be considered an application for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture if you tell the immigration judge that you would like to be considered for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture, or if it is determined that evidence indicates that you may be tortured in the country of removal.

To apply for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture, you must check the box at the top of **Page 1** of the application and fully complete Form I-589.

You must include a detailed explanation of why you fear torture in response to **Part B, Question 4** of the application. In your response, you must write about any mistreatment you experienced or any threats made against you by a government or somebody connected to a government.

Only immigration judges and the Board of Immigration Appeals may grant withholding of removal or deferral of removal under the Convention Against Torture. If you have applied for asylum, the immigration judge will first determine whether you are eligible for asylum under section 208 of the INA and for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the INA. If you are not eligible for either asylum under section 208 of the INA or withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the INA, the immigration judge will determine whether the Convention Against Torture prohibits your removal to a country where you fear torture.

As implemented in U.S. law, Article 3 of the Convention against Torture prohibits the United States from removing you to a country in which it is more likely than not that you would be subject to torture. **However, the** Convention Against Torture does not prohibit the United States from returning you to any other country where you would not be tortured. This means that you may be removed to a third country where you would not be tortured. Withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture does not allow you to adjust to lawful permanent resident status or to petition to bring family members to come to, or remain in, the United States.

### C. Deferral of Removal Under the Convention Against Torture

If it is more likely than not that you will be tortured in a country but you are ineligible for withholding of removal, your removal will be deferred under 8 CFR sections 208.17(a) and 1208.17(a). Deferral of removal does not confer any lawful or permanent immigration status in the United States and does not necessarily result in release from detention. Deferral of removal is effective only until it is terminated. Deferral of removal is subject to review and termination if it is determined that it is no longer more likely than not that you would be tortured in the country to which your removal is deferred or if you request that your deferral be terminated.

### D. Legal Sources and Guidance Relating to Eligibility

The documents listed below are some of the legal sources and guidance relating to asylum, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the INA, and withholding of removal or deferral of removal under the Convention Against Torture. These sources are provided for reference only. You do not need to refer to them in order to complete your application.

1. Section 101(a)(42) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(42) (defining "refugee");

2. Section 208 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1158 (regarding eligibility for asylum);
3. Section 241(b)(3) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1231(b)(3) (regarding eligibility for withholding of removal);
4. Title 8 of the CFR **sections 103.2**, 208 and 1208, et seq.;
5. Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment as implemented by section 2242(b) or the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 and 8 CFR section 208, as amended by the Regulations Concerning the Convention Against Torture: Interim Rule, 64 FR 8478-8492 (February 19, 1999) (effective March 22, 1999); 64 FR 13881 (March 23, 1999);
6. The 1967 United Nations Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees;
7. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees; and
8. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for determining Refugee Status (Geneva, 1992).

### III. Confidentiality

The information collected will be used to make a determination on your application. It may also be provided to other government agencies (federal, state, local, and/or foreign) for purposes of investigation or legal action on criminal and/or civil matters and for issues arising from the adjudication of benefits. However, no information indicating that you have applied for asylum will be provided to any government or country from which you claim a fear of persecution. Regulations at 8 CFR sections 208.6 and 1208.6 protect the confidentiality of asylum claims.

### IV. Right to Counsel

Immigration law concerning asylum and withholding of removal or deferral or removal is complex. You have a right to **obtain and** provide your own legal representation at an asylum interview and during immigration proceedings before the Immigration Court at no cost to the U.S. Government.

If you need or would like help to complete this form and to prepare your written statements, assistance from pro bono (free) attorneys and/or voluntary agencies may be available. Voluntary agencies may help you for no fee or a reduced fee, and attorneys on the list referred to below may take your case for no fee. If you have not already received from USCIS or the Immigration Court a list of attorneys and accredited representatives, you may obtain a list by calling **1-800-870-3676** or visiting the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) website at [www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers-map](http://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers-map).

Representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) may be able to assist you in identifying persons to help you complete the application. RefWorld, a resource database available on UNHCR's website or at [www.refworld.org](http://www.refworld.org), provides useful country conditions information from a variety of sources. Contact information for the UNHCR is:

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**  
**1800 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 500**  
**Washington, DC 20036**  
**Telephone: 202-296-5191**  
**Email: [usawa@unhcr.org](mailto:usawa@unhcr.org)**  
**Website: [www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)**

**Calls from Detention Centers and Jails.** Asylum-seekers in detention centers and jails may call UNHCR toll-free by dialing #566 or **1-888-272-1913** on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time).

## V. Obtaining and Completing the Form

You may visit the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/I-589](http://www.uscis.gov/I-589) or call the USCIS National Customer Service Center at **1-800-375-5283** to obtain Form I-589. Customers who are deaf or who are hard of hearing who have TTY equipment may call: **1-800-767-1833**. There is no fee to obtain Form I-589. In order to view, print, or complete USCIS forms, customers should use the latest version of Adobe Reader which you can download for free at <http://get.adobe.com/reader>.

You must type or print all of your answers in black ink on Form I-589. Your answers must be completed in English. Forms completed in a language other than English will be returned to you. You must provide the specific information requested about you and your family and **answer all the questions asked**.

If any question does not apply to you or you do not know the information requested, answer "none," "not applicable," or "unknown."

You must provide detailed information and answer the questions as completely as possible. If you file your application with missing information, we may return it to you as incomplete. If you need more space, attach Form I-589 Supplement A or B (included in the application package) and/or additional sheet(s) indicating the question number(s) you are answering.

You are strongly urged to attach additional written statements and documents that support your claim. Your written statements should include events, dates, and details of your experiences that relate to your claim for asylum.

**NOTE:** Put your Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any), name (exactly as it appears in **Part A.I.** of the form), signature, and date on each supplemental sheet and on the cover page of any supporting documents.

You **may** amend or supplement your application **before or** at the time of your asylum interview with an asylum officer and at your hearing in Immigration Court by providing additional information and explanations about your asylum claim. **For asylum applications filed with USCIS, you must submit any documentary evidence no fewer than 14 calendar days before your interview with an asylum officer. Extensions to submit additional evidence may be granted by USCIS on a discretionary basis. Any such extension will be treated as an applicant-caused delay in the adjudication of your asylum application. Any applicant-caused delay may result in denial of your application for employment authorization if the delay remains unresolved when USCIS adjudicates the application for employment authorization. See 8 CFR section 208.7.**

### Part A.I. Information About You

This part asks for basic information about you. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) refers to your USCIS file number. If you do not already have an A-Number, USCIS will assign one to you.

You must provide your residential street address (the address where you physically live) in the United States in **Part A.I., Question 8**, of the asylum application. **You must provide** a mailing address, if different from the address where you reside, in **Question 9**. If someone else is collecting your mail for you at your mailing address, you may enter that person's name in the "In Care Of" field in your response to **Question 9**. If your mailing address is a post office box, include that address in **Question 9** and include a residential address where you physically live in **Question 8**.

In **Question 13**, use the current name of the country. Do not use historical, ethnic, provincial, or other local names.

If you entered the country with inspection, Form I-94 number referred to in **Question 19b** is the number on Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record, given to you when you entered the United States. In **Question 19c**, enter the date and status as it appears on Form I-94. If you did not receive Form I-94, write "None." If you entered without being inspected by an immigration officer, write "No Inspection" in **Question 19c** in the current status or status section.

### Part A.II. Spouse and Children

You must list your spouse and all of your children, including your stepchildren, deceased children, adopted children, and adult children, in this application, regardless of their age, marital status, whether they are in the United States, or whether or not they are included in this application or are filing a separate asylum application.

In addition, you may include in your asylum application your spouse and/or any children who are under 21 years of age and unmarried, if they are in the United States. Children who are married and/or children who are 21 years of age or older must file separately for asylum by submitting their own Form I-589. Including your spouse and/or your children in your asylum application means that if USCIS or EOIR approves your application, your spouse or children will also be approved.

On the other hand, if you are not approved for asylum, your spouse or children are also not approved.

If you apply for asylum while in proceedings before the Immigration Court, the immigration judge may not have authority to grant asylum to any spouse or child included in your application who is not also in proceedings.

When including family members in your asylum application, you **must** submit one additional copy of your completed asylum application and primary documentary evidence establishing your family relationship for each family member, as described below:

1. If you are including your spouse in your application, submit three copies of your marriage certificate and three copies of proof of termination of any prior marriages.
2. If you are including any unmarried children under 21 years of age in your application, submit three copies of each child's birth certificate.

If you do not have and are unable to obtain these documents, you must submit secondary evidence. Secondary evidence includes but is not limited to medical records, religious records, and school records. You may also submit an affidavit from at least one person for each event you are trying to prove. Affidavits may be provided by relatives or others. Persons providing affidavits need not be U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents.

**Affidavits must:**

1. Fully describe the circumstances or event(s) in question and fully explain how the person acquired knowledge of the event(s);
2. Be sworn to or affirmed by persons who were alive at the time of the event(s) and have personal knowledge of the event(s) (date and place of birth, marriage, etc.) that you are trying to prove; and
3. Show the full name, address, and date and place of birth of each person giving the affidavit and indicate any relationship between you and the person giving the affidavit.

If you submit secondary evidence or affidavits, you must explain why primary evidence (for example, birth or marriage certificate) is unavailable. You may explain the reasons primary evidence is unavailable using Form I-589 Supplement B or additional sheets of paper. Attach this explanation to your secondary evidence or affidavits.

If you have more than four children, complete Form I-589 Supplement A for each additional child or attach additional pages and documentation providing the same information asked in **Part A.II.** of Form I-589.

**Part A.III. Information About Your Background**

Answer **Questions 1 - 5**, providing details as requested for each question. Your responses to the questions concerning the places you have lived, your education, and your employment history must be in reverse chronological order starting with your current residence, education, and employment and working back in time.

**Part B. Information About Your Application**

This part asks specific questions relevant to eligibility for asylum, for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, or for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture. For **Question 1**, check the box(es) next to the reason(s) that you are completing this application. For all other questions, check "Yes" or "No" in the box provided.

If you answer "Yes" to any question, explain in detail using Form I-589 Supplement B or additional sheets of paper, as needed.

You must clearly describe any of your experiences, or those of family members or others who have had similar experiences that may show that you are a refugee.

If you have experienced harm that is difficult for you to write down and express, you must be aware that these experiences may be very important to the decision-making process regarding your request to remain in the United States. At your interview with an asylum officer or hearing with an immigration judge, you will need to be prepared to discuss the harm you have suffered. If you are having trouble remembering or talking about past events, we suggest that you talk to a lawyer, an accredited representative, or a health professional who may be able to help you explain your experiences and current situation.

**Part C. Additional Information About Your Application**

Check "Yes" or "No" in the box provided for each question. If you answer "Yes" to any question, explain in detail using Form I-589 Supplement B or additional sheets of paper, as needed.

If you answer "Yes" to **Question 5**, you must explain why you did not apply for asylum within the first year after you arrived in the United States. The Government **may** accept as an explanation certain changes in the conditions in your country, certain changes in your own circumstances, and certain other events that may have prevented you from applying earlier.

For example, some of the events the Government might consider as valid explanations include but are not limited to the following:

1. You have learned that human rights conditions in your country have worsened since you left;
2. Because of your health, you were not able to submit this application within 1 year after you arrived;

3. You previously submitted an application, but it was returned to you because it was not complete, and you submitted a complete application within a reasonable amount of time.

Federal regulations specify some of the other types of events that may also qualify as valid explanations for why you filed late. These regulations are found at 8 CFR, sections 208.4 and 1208.4. The list in the regulations is not all-inclusive, and the Government recognizes that there are many other circumstances that might be acceptable reasons for filing more than 1 year after arrival.

If you are unable to explain why you did not apply for asylum within the first year after you arrived in the United States or your explanation is not accepted by the Government, you may not be eligible to apply for asylum, but you **may still be considered** for withholding of removal under INA section 241(b)(3), or for protection from removal under the Convention Against Torture.

#### Part D. Your Signature

You must sign your application in **Part D** and respond to the questions concerning any assistance you received to complete your application, providing the information requested. Sign after you have completed and reviewed the application.

**If it is determined that you have knowingly made a frivolous application for asylum, you will be permanently ineligible for any benefits under the INA.** (See section 208(d)(6) of the INA.)

According to regulations at 8 CFR sections 208.20 and 1208.20, an application is frivolous if any of its material elements is deliberately fabricated. (See **Section IV, Right to Counsel, in Part 1** of these instructions if you have any questions.) You may not avoid a frivolous finding simply because someone advised or told you to provide false information on your asylum application.

#### Part E. Signature of Person Preparing Form, If Other Than You

Any person, other than an immediate family member (your spouse, parent(s) or children), who helped prepare your application must sign the application in **Part E** and provide the information requested.

#### Penalty for Perjury

All statements in response to questions contained in this application are declared to be true and correct under penalty of perjury. You and anyone, other than an immediate family member, who assists you in preparing the application must sign the application under penalty of perjury. Your signature is evidence that you are aware of the contents of this application. Any person assisting you in preparing this form, other than an immediate family member, must include his or her name, address, and telephone number and sign the application where indicated in **Part E**.

Failure of the preparer to sign will result in the application being returned to you as an incomplete application.

If USCIS or EOIR later learns that you received assistance from someone other than an immediate family member and the person who assisted you **willfully** failed to sign the application, this may result in an adverse ruling against you.

Title 18, United States Code (U.S.C.), section 1546(a), provides in part:

Whoever knowingly makes under oath, or as permitted under penalty of perjury under section 1746 of title 28, knowingly subscribes as true, any false statement with respect to a material fact in any application, affidavit, or other document required by the immigration laws or regulations prescribed thereunder, or knowingly presents any such application, affidavit, or other document containing any such false statement shall be fined in accordance with this title or imprisoned not more than 10 years, or both.

If aggravating factors exist, the maximum term of imprisonment could reach 25 years.

If you knowingly provide false information on this application, you or the preparer of this application may be subject to criminal penalties under title 18 of the U.S.C. and to civil penalties under section 274C of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1324c (see 8 CFR **sections** parts 270 and 1270).

#### Part F. To Be Completed at Asylum Interview, If Applicable

Do not sign your application in **Part F** before filing this form. You will be asked to sign your application in this space at the conclusion of the interview regarding your claim.

**NOTE:** You must, however, sign **Part D** of the application.

#### Part G. To Be Completed at Removal Hearing, If Applicable

Do not sign your application in **Part G** before filing this form. You will be asked to sign your application in this space at the hearing before the immigration judge.

**NOTE:** You must, however, sign **Part D** of the application.

**You are reminded again that, if it is determined that you have knowingly made a frivolous application for asylum, you may be permanently ineligible for any benefits under the INA.** (See section 208(d)(6) of the INA.)

According to regulations at 8 CFR sections 208.20 and 1208.20, an application is frivolous if any of its material elements is deliberately fabricated. Again, note that you may not avoid a frivolous finding simply because someone advised or told you to provide false information on your asylum application.

## VI. Required Documents and Required Number of Copies That You Must Submit With Your Application

You must submit the following documents to apply for asylum and withholding of removal:

- 1. The completed, signed original and one copy of your completed application, Form I-589**, and the original and one copy of any supplementary sheets and supplementary statements. If you choose to submit additional supporting material, see **Section VII, Additional Evidence That You Should Submit, in Part 1** of these instructions. You **must** include two copies of each document. You should make and keep an additional copy of the completed application for your own records.
- 2. An additional copy of your completed application, Form I-589**, with supplementary statements, for each family member listed in **Part A.II.** that you are including in your application.
- 3. Two copies of primary or secondary evidence** of relationship, such as birth or school records of your children, marriage certificate, or proof of termination of marriage, for each family member listed in **Part A.II.** that you are including in your application.  
**NOTE:** If you submit an affidavit, you must submit the original and one copy. (For affidavit requirements, see **Part A.II in Part 1, Section V**, of these instructions.)
- 4. One passport-style photograph** of yourself and of each family member listed in **Part A.II.** that you are including in your application. The photos must have been taken no more than 30 days before you file your application. Using a pencil, print the person's complete name and A-Number (if any) on the back of each photograph.
- 5. Two copies of all passports or other travel documents** (cover to cover) in your possession and two copies of any U.S. immigration documents, such as a Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record, for you and each family member included in your application, if you have such documents. Do not submit original passports or travel documents unless specifically requested.
- 6. If you have other identification documents** (for example, birth certificate, military or national identification card, driver's license, etc.), we recommend that you submit two copies with your application and bring the original(s) with you to the interview.

**Copies.** Documents filed with this application should be *photocopies*. If you choose to send an original document, USCIS or the Immigration Court may keep that original document for its records.

**Translations.** Any document containing foreign language submitted to USCIS must be accompanied by a full English language translation that the translator has certified as complete and accurate, and by the translator's certification that he or she is competent to translate from the foreign language into English.

## VII. Additional Evidence That You Must Submit

You must submit reasonably available corroborative evidence showing (1) the general conditions in the country from which you are seeking asylum, and (2) the specific facts on which you are relying to support your claim.

If evidence supporting your claim is not reasonably available or you are not providing such corroboration at this time, you must explain why, using Form I-589 Supplement B or additional sheets of paper.

Supporting evidence may include but is not limited to newspaper articles, affidavits of witnesses or experts, medical and/or psychological records, doctors' statements, periodicals, journals, books, photographs, official documents, or personal statements or live testimony from witnesses or experts.

If you have difficulty discussing harm you have suffered in the past, you may wish to submit a health professional's report explaining this difficulty.

## VIII. Fee

There is no fee for filing this application.

## IX. Biometrics, Including Fingerprints and Photographs

- 1. Biometric Service Appointment.** Applicants for asylum are subject to a biometrics check of all appropriate records and other information databases maintained by the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Department of State. **You will be required to appear for a biometric services appointment to submit biometrics (fingerprints, photograph, and/or signature), so that USCIS can verify your identity, and conduct background and security checks, including a check of criminal history records maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), before making a decision on your application.**

You and your spouse and children will be given instructions on how to complete this requirement. You will be notified in writing of the time and location of the Application Support Center (ASC) where you must go to be fingerprinted and photographed.



**2. Arrests and Convictions.** Aliens who have been convicted of a particularly serious crime in the United States are not eligible for asylum. If you have been arrested and convicted in the United States for any crime, you must submit a certified copy of all arrest reports, court dispositions, sentencing documents, and any other relevant documents. You do not need to include documents for minor traffic violations unless you were arrested for the traffic offense and the offenses were alcohol- or drug-related.

**3. Failure to Appear for Scheduled Appointment.** An unexcused failure to appear for a scheduled appointment or to provide your required biometrics, including fingerprints and photograph, or to provide other biographical information within the time allowed, may delay or result in denial of employment authorization and/or result in an asylum officer dismissing your asylum application or referring it to an immigration judge. For applicants before an immigration judge, such failure without good cause may constitute an abandonment of your asylum application and result in the denial of employment authorization. (See 8 CFR section 1003.47(d)).

At the time you file your Form I-589, you **must** submit photographs as specified in **Section VI, Required Documents and Required Number of Copies That You Must Submit With Your Application, in Part 1** of these instructions.

## X. Organizing Your Application

Organize your application together in the following order, forming one complete package (if possible, secure with binder clips and rubber bands so that material may be easily separated):

1. Your original Form I-589, with all questions completed, and the application signed by you in **Part D** and signed by any preparer in **Part E**; and
2. One passport-style photograph of you stapled to the form at **Part D**.

Behind your original Form I-589, attach in the following order:

1. One Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative, signed by you and the attorney or representative, if you are represented by an attorney or representative;
2. The originals of all supplementary sheets and supplementary statements submitted with your application;
3. One copy of any additional supporting documentation;
4. One copy of the evidence of your relationship to your spouse and unmarried children under 21 years of age that you are including in your application, if any; and

5. One copy of the items listed above in your original package, except your photograph.

**If you are including family members in your application, attach one additional package for each family member.**

Arrange each family member's package as follows:

1. One copy of your completed, signed Form I-589 and supplementary sheets submitted with the original application. In **Part A.II.**, staple in the upper right corner one passport-style photo of the family member to be included; and
2. One copy of Form G-28, if any.

For example, if you include your spouse and two children, you should submit your original package, plus one duplicate for you, plus one package for your spouse and one package for each child, for a total of five packages. Be sure each has the appropriate documentation.

**NOTE:** Any additional pages submitted should include your printed name (exactly as it appears in **Part A.I.** of the form), A-Number (if any), signature and date.

## XI. Incomplete Asylum Applications

USCIS will issue a receipt notice for an asylum application properly filed under 8 CFR section 103. If USCIS rejects your application, we will return the application with a rejection notice explaining the reasons for rejection. You may correct the deficiencies and refile your application. If you filed your asylum application with USCIS, you can check the status of your application on the USCIS website.

The filing of a complete application starts the 365 calendar-day period you must wait before you may apply for employment authorization. If your application is not complete and is returned to you, the 365 calendar-day period will not begin until you resubmit a properly filed application. (See **Section V, Employment Authorization While Your Application Is Pending, Part 2** of these instructions for further information regarding eligibility for employment authorization.)

## XII. Where to File?

Although USCIS will confirm in writing its receipt of your application, you may wish to send the completed forms by registered mail (return receipt requested) for your own records.

*If you are in proceedings in Immigration Court, unless you are filing as an unaccompanied alien child (UAC):*

If you are currently in proceedings in Immigration Court (that is, if you have been served with Form I-221, Order to Show Cause and Notice of Hearing; Form I-122, Notice to Applicant for Admission Detained for Hearing Before an Immigration Judge; Form I-862, Notice to Appear; or Form I-863, Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge), you are required to file your Form I-589 with the Immigration Court having jurisdiction over your case.

At the master calendar hearing, counsel for DHS will provide you with instructions for providing biometric and biographical information to USCIS that you must follow. These instructions may also be obtained at [www.uscis.gov/laws/immigration-benefits-eoir-removal-proceedings](http://www.uscis.gov/laws/immigration-benefits-eoir-removal-proceedings). The following paragraphs describe the instructions that you will have to follow.

In addition to filing your Form I-589 with the Immigration Court and serving a copy on the appropriate U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of **Principal Legal Advisor**, you must also complete the following requirements before the immigration judge can grant relief or protection in your case.

**Send the following three items to the USCIS Nebraska Service Center:**

1. A clear copy of the first three pages of your completed Form I-589 that you will be filing or have filed with the Immigration Court, which must include **your full name, current residential address, current mailing address, and A-Number**. Do not submit any documents other than the first three pages of the completed Form I-589;
2. A copy of Form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative, if you are represented; and
3. A copy of the instructions provided by counsel for DHS that you received at your first master calendar hearing in immigration removal proceedings.

**USCIS Nebraska Service Center  
Defensive Asylum Application with Immigration Court  
P.O. Box 87589  
Lincoln, NE 68501-7589**

**Note:** There is no filing fee required for Form I-589 applications.

After the three items are received at the USCIS Nebraska Service Center, **you will receive:**

1. A USCIS receipt notice indicating that USCIS received your Form I-589; and
2. An Application Support Center (ASC) notice for you and any eligible spouse and children included in your Form I-589 who are also in removal proceedings. Each ASC notice will indicate the individual's unique receipt number and will provide instructions for each person to appear for an appointment at a nearby ASC for collection of biometrics (such as your photograph, fingerprints, and signature). If you do not receive the ASC notice in 3 weeks, call **1-800-375-5283** (TTY: **1-800-767-1833**).

**NOTE:** If you also mail applications for other forms of relief that you are applying for while in removal proceedings, as specified by the instructions provided by counsel for DHS at your master calendar hearing, you will receive two notices with different receipt numbers. You must wait for and take both scheduling notices to your ASC appointment.

You (and your eligible spouse and children, regardless of age) must then:

1. **Attend** the biometrics appointment at the ASC and obtain a **biometrics confirmation** document before leaving the ASC; and
2. **Retain** your **ASC biometrics confirmation** as proof that your biometrics were taken and bring it to your future Immigration Court hearings.

**NOTE:** If the instructions above should change for submitting copies of the first three pages of your asylum application to the USCIS Nebraska Service Center for purposes of receiving the receipt notice and ASC scheduling appointment, you will be provided the changed instructions, either at the master calendar hearing or at another point in the Immigration Court proceedings. Follow the instructions you are provided, or else you may not receive the ASC biometrics scheduling notice in a timely manner.

1. After completion of exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings, and in conjunction with a motion to reopen under 8 CFR **section** 1003, with the Immigration Court having jurisdiction over the prior proceeding, any such motion must reasonably explain the failure to request asylum prior to the completion of the proceedings; or
2. In proceedings under 8 CFR **sections** 208.2(c) and 1208.2(c) and after Form I-863, Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, has been served on you and filed with the Immigration Court, an immigration judge will have exclusive jurisdiction over your case.

***Special Filing Instructions for an Unaccompanied Alien Child (UAC)***

If you are a child in removal proceedings and filing as a UAC, your completed application package should be sent to:

**USCIS Nebraska Service Center  
UAC I-589  
P.O. Box 87589  
Lincoln, NE 68501-7589**

If you received an instruction sheet from **counsel** for DHS when you attended a hearing in Immigration Court, or if you have a copy of documentation provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) showing that you are, or that you were in ORR custody as a UAC, such as the *UAC Initial Placement Referral Form* or the *ORR Verification of Release Form*, please submit those documents with your application package as well.

**If you are a UAC but you are not in removal proceedings**, please submit your Form I-589 application package as directed below in the discussion entitled, "If you are not in proceedings in Immigration Court or before the Board of Immigration Appeals."

**If you are in proceedings before the Board of Immigration Appeals:**

You may file your Form I-589 with the Board of Immigration Appeals in conjunction with a motion to remand or reopen under 8 CFR sections 1003.2 and 1003.8. You may file an initial Form I-589 with the Board of Immigration Appeals only if the Board of Immigration Appeals has jurisdiction over your case. Any such motion must reasonably explain the failure to request asylum and/or withholding of removal prior to the completion of the proceedings.

**If you are not in proceedings in Immigration Court or before the Board of Immigration Appeals:**

Mail your completed Form I-589 and any other additional information to the USCIS Service Center as indicated below or visit the USCIS website: [www.uscis.gov/i-589](http://www.uscis.gov/i-589).

If you live in:	Mail your application to:
Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Western Pennsylvania* (in the jurisdiction of the Pittsburgh field office), Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, or Wyoming	<b>USCIS Texas Service Center</b> Attn: Asylum P.O. Box 851892 Mesquite, TX 75185-1892

If you live in:	Mail your application to:
Alaska, Northern California*, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Northern Nevada* (in the jurisdiction of the Reno field office), North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, or Wisconsin	<b>USCIS Nebraska Service Center</b> P.O. Box 87589 Lincoln, NE 68501-7589
Arizona, Southern California*, Guam, Hawaii, or Southern Nevada* (in the jurisdiction of the Las Vegas field office),	<b>USCIS California Service Center</b> P.O. Box 10881 Laguna Niguel, CA 92607-0881
Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Eastern Pennsylvania* (in the jurisdiction of the Philadelphia field office), Rhode Island, or Vermont	<b>USCIS Vermont Service Center</b> Attn: Asylum 75 Lower Welden Street St. Albans, VT 05479-0589

**\*NOTE:** Applicants living in California, Nevada, and Pennsylvania should call the USCIS National Customer Service Center or their local asylum office if they are unsure where to mail their applications.

**National Customer Service Center: 1-800-375-5283**

*TTY: for the Hearing Impaired: 1-800-767-1833*

**California and Nevada Residents**

*Los Angeles Asylum Office: 714-808-8000*

*San Francisco Asylum Office: 415-293-1234*

**Pennsylvania Residents**

*Arlington Asylum Office: 703-235-4100*

*Newark Asylum Office: 201-531-0555*

Information concerning asylum offices and where to file asylum applications is also available on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

If you previously applied for and were denied asylum by USCIS or if you were previously included in a spouse's or parent's pending application but you are no longer eligible to be included as a dependent, mail your completed Form I-589 to the Asylum Office having jurisdiction over your place of residence. (See [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum) for information on Asylum Office jurisdiction.) Include a letter with your application stating that you previously applied for asylum and were denied or that you are now filing independently for asylum. Reference in the letter the application on which you were a dependent.

You may file your completed Form I-589 directly with the Asylum Office having jurisdiction over your case only if:

1. You have received the express consent of the Asylum Office Director or the Director of the Asylum Division to do so; or
2. You were previously included in a spouse's or parent's pending application but you are no longer eligible to be included as a derivative applicant. In such cases, you must include a cover letter referencing the previous application and explaining that you are now independently filing for asylum.

The following categories of individuals are not entitled to an asylum interview at a USCIS asylum office:

1. Certain alien crewmembers;
2. Certain stowaways;
3. Visa Waiver Program applicants for admission;
4. Visa Waiver Program overstays and status violators;

5. Certain aliens ordered removed under section 235(c) of the INA on security-related grounds; and
6. Aliens granted S nonimmigrant status under section 101(a)(15)(S) of the INA (such as witnesses and informants).

Individuals subject to these special categories who file asylum applications with USCIS service centers will be served with Form I-863, Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, when they appear at the USCIS asylum office and will be referred to Immigration Court for an asylum-only hearing.

If you fall into one of the above categories and you have not yet been served with Form I-863, you may file your completed Form I-589 with the USCIS service center having jurisdiction over your application. The asylum office director may elect to serve you with Form I-863, in which case the asylum office director will forward your asylum application to the appropriate Immigration Court.

If you are an alien crewmember in custody and you have been given Form I-589 as well as information about the privilege of being represented by counsel and the consequences of knowingly filing a frivolous asylum application, you have 10 days within which to submit your completed Form I-589 to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Field Office Director having jurisdiction over the port of entry at which your vessel arrived. The Field Office Director may extend the 10-day filing period for good cause. Once you file your application, the Field Office Director will serve you with Form I-863 and immediately forward your application to the appropriate Immigration Court.

## Part 2. Information Regarding Post-Filing Requirements

### I. Notification Requirements When Your Address Changes

If you change your address, you must inform USCIS in writing within 10 days of moving.

**While your asylum application is pending with the asylum office, you must notify the asylum office on Form AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card, or by a signed and dated letter notifying USCIS within 10 days after you change your address.**

The address that you provide on the application, or the last change of address notification that you submitted, will be used by USCIS for mailing. Any notices mailed to that address will constitute adequate service, except that personal service may be required for the following: Form I-122, Notice to Alien Detained for Hearing by an Immigration Judge; Form I-221, Order to Show Cause; Form I-862, Notice to Appear; Form I-863, Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge; and Form I-860, Notice and Order of Expedited Removal.

**If you are already in proceedings in Immigration Court, you must notify the Immigration Court on EOIR Form 33/IC, Alien's Change of Address Form/Immigration Court, of any changes of address within 5 days of the change in address.** You must send the notification to the Immigration Court having jurisdiction over your case. You must also notify USCIS on Form AR-11, Alien's Change of Address Card, or by a signed and dated letter within 10 days after you change your address.

## II. Asylum Interview Process

If you are not in proceedings in Immigration Court, you will be notified by the USCIS Asylum Office of the time, date, and place (address) of a scheduled interview.

USCIS recommends that you bring a copy of your Form I-589 with you when you have your asylum interview. An asylum officer will interview you under oath and make a determination concerning your claim. In most cases, you will not be notified of the decision in your case until a date after your interview.

You have the right to legal representation at your interview, at no cost to the U.S. Government. (See **Section IV, Right to Counsel.**) You also may bring witnesses with you to the interview to testify on your behalf.

**If you are unable to proceed with the asylum interview in fluent English, you must provide, at no expense to USCIS, a competent interpreter fluent in both English and a language that you speak fluently.**

Your interpreter must be at least 18 years of age. The following persons cannot serve as your interpreter: your attorney or representative of record, a witness testifying on your behalf at the interview, or a representative or employee of your country. Quality interpretation may be crucial to your claim. This assistance must be obtained at your expense prior to the interview.

**Failure without good cause to bring a competent interpreter to your interview may be considered an unexcused failure to appear for the interview. Any unexcused failure to appear for an interview may prevent you from receiving employment authorization, and your asylum application may be dismissed or referred directly to the Immigration Court.**

If you are deaf, or if you are hard of hearing and need a sign language interpreter in your language, one will be provided for you. Contact the Asylum Office with jurisdiction over your case as soon as you receive a notice for your asylum interview to notify the office that you will need a sign language interpreter in your language so that accommodations can be made in advance.

If available, you must bring some form of identification to your interview, including any passport(s), other travel or identification documents, or Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record. You may bring to the interview any additional available items documenting your claim that you have not already submitted with your application. All documents must be submitted in triplicate.

If members of your family are included in your application for asylum, they must also appear for the interview and bring any identity or travel documents they have in their possession.

### III. Status While Your Application Is Pending

While your case is pending, you will be permitted to remain in the United States. After your asylum interview, if you have not been granted asylum and appear to be removable under section 237 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1227, or inadmissible under section 212 of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1182, the asylum office will refer your application, together with the appropriate charging document, to the Immigration Court for adjudication in removal proceedings.

### IV. Travel Outside the United States

If you leave the United States without first obtaining advance parole from USCIS using Form I-131, Application for a Travel Document, we will presume that you have abandoned your application. If you obtain advance parole and return to the country of claimed persecution, we will presume that you abandoned your application, unless you can show that there were compelling reasons for your return.

**NOTE:** The application process for advance parole varies depending on your personal circumstances. Use InfoPass on the USCIS website to check with your local USCIS District Office for application instructions. Additional information on obtaining advance parole is available from the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

### V. Employment Authorization While Your Asylum Application Is Pending

Simply filing an application for asylum does not entitle you to employment authorization. **If 365 calendar days have elapsed since your asylum application was accepted by USCIS or the Immigration Court, and the application remains pending, you may request employment authorization by filing Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. (See 8 CFR section 208.7(a).)**

If your asylum application **was denied by the Immigration Court but you have a timely filed pending appeal before the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), you may be granted employment authorization, if you are otherwise eligible. Employment authorization is not permitted during any period of judicial review of the asylum application, but may be requested if a federal court remands the case to the BIA.**

**Submit Form I-765 with a copy of evidence that you have a pending asylum application or a pending appeal before the BIA, as specified in the Form I-765 instructions.**

**If you cause a delay in the processing of your asylum application that is unresolved when your application for employment authorization is adjudicated, USCIS will deny your application for employment authorization.**

Each family member whom you have asked to be included in your **asylum application who also wants employment authorization** must submit **his or her own** Form I-765.

You may obtain copies of Form I-765 by calling the USCIS Contact Center at **1-800-375-5283** or from the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

### VI. Employment Authorization When Your Asylum Application Is Approved

**Aliens granted asylum (asylees) are not required to apply for an employment authorization document; however you may request an EAD under 8 CFR section 274a.12(a)(5) if you want to have evidence of your employment authorization.**

### DHS Privacy Notice

**AUTHORITIES:** The information requested on this application, and the associated evidence, is collected pursuant to sections 208 and 241(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, and 8 CFR **sections** 208 and 1208.

**PURPOSE:** The primary purpose for providing the requested information on this form is to determine eligibility for asylum in the United States, and for withholding of removal. The information may also be used to apply for deferral of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

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

**ROUTINE USES:** DHS may share the information you provide on this benefit application with other federal, state, local, and foreign government agencies and authorized organizations. DHS follows approved routine uses described in the associated published system of records notices [DHS-USCIS-001 - Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking and DHS-USCIS-010 - Asylum Information and Pre-Screening] which you can find at [www.dhs.gov/privacy](http://www.dhs.gov/privacy) and EOIR-001, Records Management Information System, 69 Fed. Reg 26, 179 (May 11, 2004) or its successors. DHS may also share the information, as appropriate, for law enforcement purposes or in the interest of national security.

## USCIS Forms and Information

You can get USCIS forms and immigration-related information on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). If you do not have internet access, you may order USCIS forms by calling the USCIS Contact Center at **1-800-375-5283**. (For TTY (deaf or hard of hearing) call: **1-800-767-1833**).

Additional information concerning asylum and withholding of removal is available on the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum) and the EOIR website at [www.usdoj.gov/eoir](http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir).

## Penalties

If you knowingly and willfully falsify or conceal a material fact or submit a false document with Form I-589, we will deny your Form I-589 and may deny any other immigration benefit.

In addition, you will face severe penalties provided by law and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

For specific information, see **Part E in Part 1, Section V**, of these instructions.

## 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 12 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, and completing and submitting the form. 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 & Strategy, 20 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20529-2140. OMB No. 1516-0067. **Do not mail your completed Form I-589 to this address.**

## Supplements to Form I-589

**Form I-589, Supplement A** - For use to complete **Part A.II**.

**Form I-589, Supplement B** - For use to complete **Parts B** and **C** and to provide additional information for any other part of the application.