



# Instructions for Application for Carrier Documentation

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

USCIS  
**Form I-131A**  
OMB No. 1615-0135  
Expires 11/30/2024

## What Is the Purpose of Form I-131A?

United States laws impose penalties on carriers (airlines, ships, etc.) that bring to the United States foreign nationals who are not in possession of a valid passport and any required visa. If you are a lawful permanent resident (LPR) or conditional permanent resident (conditional LPR) of the United States traveling overseas temporarily, you ordinarily may use your valid Permanent Resident Card (commonly called a Green Card) or a Reentry Permit (in place of a visa) as documentation of your eligibility to return to the United States. If you do not have a valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card or Reentry Permit (for example, your card or permit was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged), you may experience difficulties when you attempt to return to the United States.

If you are not an LPR or a conditional LPR, but you received a Form I-512/Form I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (EAD), with travel endorsement, and your document was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged while you are traveling overseas temporarily, you also may experience difficulties when you attempt to board your carrier and return to the United States.

This application allows foreign nationals in these situations to apply for Carrier Documentation (Transportation Letter or Boarding Foil). If the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) determines that you remain an LPR or conditional LPR, or had previously received an Advance Parole Document on a Form I-512 or Form I-512L or travel endorsement on an Employment Authorization Document that is still valid, DHS may, as a matter of discretion on a case-by-case basis, provide a Carrier Documentation. The Carrier Documentation may be a foil placed in your passport or a boarding letter. If DHS provides Carrier Documentation, you may present the documentation to a carrier destined for the United States. Generally, Carrier Documentation is valid for 30 days from the date of issuance.

**NOTE:** If your Advance Parole Document is a Boarding Foil issued by the Department of State and you are outside of the United States, you should immediately report to the Department of State Consular Office where that foil was issued if your travel document containing that foil was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged. You should not submit this application to replace a Boarding Foil.

### Warnings

1. Carrier Documentation only allows you to demonstrate to the commercial carrier that you are not required to provide a visa or comparable document at the time that you apply for admission or otherwise seek lawful entry into the United States at a U.S. Port-of-Entry (POE); it does not guarantee that you will be allowed into the United States. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will perform all the required inspection procedures, including determining admissibility or ability to enter, upon your arrival at a POE.
2. DHS may revoke or terminate your Carrier Documentation at any time, with or without notice. That revocation or termination could have implications for your travel.

### Replacing or Renewing Your Permanent Resident Card

If you no longer have your Permanent Resident Card, or it has expired, you must apply for a new Permanent Resident Card. Receiving Carrier Documentation does not take the place of obtaining a new Permanent Resident Card. To apply for a replacement of your Permanent Resident Card, you must file Form I-90, Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card, with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Visit the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/I-90](https://www.uscis.gov/I-90) for more information.

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## Replacing Your Form I-512/I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, EAD With Travel Endorsement

If you no longer have your Form I-512/I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document, with travel endorsement and you choose to replace it after you return to the United States, you must file Form I-131 and/or Form I-765 with USCIS. Receiving Carrier Documentation to facilitate travel back to the United States does not take the place of obtaining a new Form I-512/I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, EAD with travel endorsement. Visit the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov/I-765](http://www.uscis.gov/I-765) and [www.uscis.gov/I-131](http://www.uscis.gov/I-131) for more information.

### Who May File Form I-131A?

#### You may file Form I-131A to apply for Carrier Documentation if:

1. You have been lawfully admitted to the United States as a LPR or conditional LPR;
2. You have not lost LPR or conditional LPR status by abandoning that status or by removal from the United States;
3. You have traveled abroad temporarily, and without any intent of abandoning your LPR or conditional LPR status;
4. You wish to return to the United States using a valid Permanent Resident Card after an absence of less than 1 year or using a valid Reentry Permit after an absence of less than 2 years; and
5. You are not in possession of a valid, unexpired Permanent Resident Card or Reentry Permit (for example, your card or permit was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged) or other document authorizing you to apply for admission to, or otherwise seek lawful entry into, the United States.

#### You also may file Form I-131A if:

1. You received Form I-512/Form I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (with travel endorsement);
2. The Form I-512/Form I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (with travel endorsement), has not been revoked;
3. You wish to return to the United States after a temporary absence before your Form I-512/Form I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (with travel endorsement), expires; and
4. You are not in possession of a valid, unexpired Form I-512/Form I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (with travel endorsement), because it was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged.

#### Who is NOT eligible to receive Carrier Documentation?

DHS retains the discretion to determine, on a case-by-case basis, to whom it is appropriate to provide Carrier Documentation. Some of the reasons that DHS may decline to provide you with Carrier Documentation are:

1. You are physically present in the United States;
2. You are no longer a valid LPR or conditional LPR of the United States; or
3. You were issued Carrier Documentation and it is still valid, unless the prior documentation was returned to DHS or was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged;
4. Your Form I-512/Form I-512L, Advance Parole Document, or Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document (with travel endorsement), has expired, will expire, or is revoked, before you return to the United States; or

**NOTE:** Form I-131A should not be used to apply for or replace Humanitarian Parole. Please see the Instructions for Form I-131 if you seek to apply for Humanitarian Parole.

5. Your Advance Parole Document is a Boarding Foil issued by the Department of State and you are outside of the United States. If your travel document containing that foil was lost, stolen, destroyed, or damaged, you should immediately report to the Department of State Consular Office where that foil was issued.

### Expired Permanent Resident Card

If you have an expired Permanent Resident Card (with a 10-year validity period) or Conditional Permanent Resident Card (with a 2-year validity period) and valid Form I-797, Notice of Action, for either Form I-751, Petition to Remove Conditions on Residence, or Form I-829, Petition By Entrepreneur to Remove Conditions, showing you timely filed Form I-751 or I-829 (filed by or before the expiration date shown on the existing Conditional Permanent Resident Card).

You may use these documents to board a carrier to the United States, and you do not need to file Form I-131A.

You should contact your carrier to confirm they will let you board with these documents; however, if they will not, you should file Form I-131A.

### Returning Resident Visa

As an alternative to Form I-131A, it may be appropriate for you to obtain a returning resident (SB-1) visa as documentation of your LPR or conditional LPR status. You may contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate (or visit its website), to obtain information about seeking a returning resident (SB-1) immigrant visa. If you apply for and receive an SB-1 visa, you do not need to file Form I-131A.

## General Instructions

We provide free forms through the USCIS website. To view, print, or complete our forms, you should use the latest version of Adobe Reader, which you can download for free at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. If you do not have internet access, you may call the USCIS Contact Center and ask that we mail a form to you.

**Signature.** You (or your signing authority) must properly complete your application. USCIS will not accept a stamped or typewritten name in place of a signature on this application. If you are under 14 years of age, your parent or legal guardian may sign the application on your behalf. A legal guardian may also sign for a mentally incompetent person. If your application is not signed or if the signature is not valid, we will reject your application. See 8 CFR 103.2(a)(7)(ii)(A). If USCIS accepts a request for adjudication and determines that it has a deficient signature, USCIS will deny the request.

**Validity of Signatures.** USCIS will consider a photocopied, faxed, or scanned copy of the original handwritten signature valid for filing purposes. The photocopy, fax, or scan must be of the original document containing the handwritten ink signature.

**Filing Fee.** See Form G-1055, available at [www.uscis.gov/forms](http://www.uscis.gov/forms), for specific information about the fees applicable to this form.

**Evidence.** When you file your application, you must submit all evidence and supporting documents listed in the **What Evidence Must You Submit** section of these Instructions.

**Biometric Services Appointment.** USCIS may require you to appear for an interview or provide biometrics (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 (FBI), before making a decision on your application or petition. If we determine that a biometrics appointment is necessary, we will send you an appointment notice with the date, time, and location of your appointment. If you are currently overseas, your notice will instruct you to contact a U.S. Embassy, U.S. Consulate, or USCIS office outside the United States to schedule an appointment.

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At your biometrics appointment, you must sign an oath reaffirming that:

1. You provided or authorized all information in the application;
2. You reviewed and understood all of the information contained in, and submitted with, your application; and
3. All of this information was complete, true, and correct at the time of filing.

**Copies.** You should submit legible photocopies of requested documents unless the Instructions specifically instruct you to submit an original document. USCIS may request an original document at any time during our process. If we request an original document from you, we will return it to you after USCIS determines it no longer needs the original.

**NOTE:** If you submit original documents when they are not required or requested, **USCIS may destroy them after we receive them.**

**Translations.** If you submit a document with information in a foreign language, you must also submit a full English translation. The translator must sign a certification that the English language translation is complete and accurate, and that they are competent to translate from the foreign language into English. The certification must also include their signature, printed name, the signature date, and their contact information.

**USCIS Contact Center.** For additional information on the application and Instructions about where to file, change of address, and other questions, visit the USCIS Contact Center at [www.uscis.gov/contactcenter](http://www.uscis.gov/contactcenter) or call at **800-375-5283** (TTY **800-767-1833**). The USCIS Contact Center provides information in English and Spanish.

**Disability Accommodations/Modifications.** To request a disability accommodation/modification, follow the instructions on your appointment notice or at [www.uscis.gov/accommodationsinfo](http://www.uscis.gov/accommodationsinfo).

#### How To Complete Form I-131A

1. Type or print legibly in black ink.
2. If you need extra space to complete any item within this application, use the space provided in **Part 7. Additional Information** or 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 (for example, if you have never been married and the question asks “Provide the name of your current spouse”), type or print “N/A,” unless otherwise directed. If your answer to a question which requires a numeric response is zero or none (for example, “How many children do you have” or “How many times have you departed the United States”), type or print “None,” unless otherwise directed.
4. **USCIS Online Account Number.** You will only have a USCIS Online Account Number (OAN) if you previously filed a form that has a receipt number that begins with IOE. If you filed the form online, you can find your OAN in your account profile. If you mailed us the form, you can find your OAN at the top of the Account Access Notice we sent you. If you do not have a receipt number that begins with IOE, you do not have an OAN. The OAN is not the same as an A-Number.
5. **Country of Birth and Country of Citizenship. Part 1., Item Numbers 11. - 12.** Provide the name of the country of your birth and the name of the country of your citizenship. Use the current names of the country of your birth and country of your citizenship. If you do not have citizenship in any country, type or print “stateless” and provide an explanation in **Part 7. Additional Information**.

- 6. Part 4. Applicant's Statement, Contact Information, Certification, and Signature.** Select the appropriate box to indicate whether you read this application yourself or whether you had an interpreter assist you. If someone assisted you in completing the application, select the box indicating that you used a preparer. You must also sign and date your application and provide your daytime telephone number, mobile telephone number (if any), and email address (if any). Every application **MUST** contain the signature of the applicant (or parent or legal guardian, if applicable). A stamped or typewritten name in place of a signature is not acceptable.
- 7. Part 5. Interpreter's Contact Information, Certification, and Signature.** If you used anyone as an interpreter to read the Instructions and questions on this application to you in a language in which you are fluent, the interpreter must complete this section; provide his or her name, the name and address of his or her business or organization (if any), daytime telephone number, mobile telephone number (if any), and email address (if any). The interpreter must sign and date the application.
- 8. Part 6. Contact Information, Declaration, and Signature of the Person Preparing this Application, if Other Than the Applicant.** This section must contain the signature of the person who completed your application, if other than you, the applicant. If the same individual acted as your interpreter **and** your preparer, that person should complete both **Part 5.** and **Part 6.** If the person who completed this application is associated with a business or organization, that person should complete the business or organization name and address information. Anyone who helped you complete this application **MUST** sign and date the application. A stamped or typewritten name in place of a signature is not acceptable. If the person who helped you prepare your application is an attorney or accredited representative, he or she may also need to 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 application.
- 9. Part 7. Additional Information.** If you need extra space to provide any additional information within this application, use the space provided in **Part 7. Additional Information.** If you need more space than what is provided in **Part 7.**, you may make copies of **Part 7.** to complete and file with your application, or attach a separate sheet of paper. Type or print your name and 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.

We recommend that you print or save a copy of your completed application for your records.

### What Evidence Must You Submit?

You must submit all evidence requested in these Instructions with your application. If you fail to submit required evidence, USCIS may reject or deny your application in accordance with 8 CFR 103.2(b)(1) and these Instructions.

#### Your application must include:

- A copy of all pages of your original passport, including the biographic page. If we approve your application, you will need to present your original passport at the time you receive your Boarding Foil or transportation letter;
- If you are a lawful permanent resident (LPR), evidence of your LPR or conditional LPR status (if available) (for example, a copy of your Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551), your immigrant visa, or the CBP admission stamp in your passport). If you are not a lawful permanent resident, but have an Advance Parole Document, evidence of your advance parole document, if available (for example, a copy of your Form I-512/Form I-512L Advance Parole Document, or a copy of your Employment Authorization Document with travel endorsement);
- A copy of your tickets, itinerary, or any other evidence indicating your last date of departure from the United States and your intended date of return travel to the United States (for example, e-tickets, boarding passes); and
- You **must** submit two identical color passport-style photograph of yourself taken recently. The photos must have a white to off-white background, be printed on thin paper with a glossy finish, and be unmounted and unretouched.

The photos must be 2 by 2 inches with a full face, frontal view. Head height should measure 1 to 1 3/8 inches from the top of your hair to the bottom of your chin, and eye height should measure between 1 1/8 to 1 3/8 inches from the top of your eyes to the bottom of the photo. Your head must be bare unless you are wearing headwear as required by a religious denomination. Using a pencil or felt pen, lightly print your name and A-Number (if any) on the back of the photos.

### Where to File?

Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate, or visit its website for instructions on how to file. Before appearing at a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate to file your Form I-131A, you must submit your filing fee through the USCIS online filing system on the USCIS [website](#). You must bring evidence of payment with you when you appear in person at your nearest U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate to file Form I-131A. Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate to file Form I-131A.

### Address Change

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you must notify USCIS of your new address within 10 days of moving from your previous residence. For information on changing your address, go to our website at [www.uscis.gov/addresschange](http://www.uscis.gov/addresschange), or call the USCIS Contact Center.

**NOTE:** Do not submit a change of address request to the USCIS Lockbox.

### Processing Information

We will reject any Form I-131A that is not signed or accompanied by proof of having paid the filing fee online. You may correct the deficiency and resubmit Form I-131A. We do not consider your Form I-131A as properly filed until a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate accepts it.

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

**Requests for More Information.** USCIS may request that you provide more information or evidence to support your application. We may also request that you provide the originals of any copies you submit. If we request an original document from you, we will return it to you after USCIS determines it is no longer needed.

**Requests for Interview.** We may request that you appear at a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate for an interview based on your application. At the time of any interview or other appearance at a U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate, USCIS may require you to provide your biometrics to verify your identity and/or update background and security checks.

**Decision.** The U.S. Embassy or U.S. Consulate where you filed will notify you that the decision has been made by contacting you using the information you provided on Form I-131A. The decision on Form I-131A is discretionary and you cannot appeal it.

### USCIS Forms and Information

To ensure you are using the latest version of this application, visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

## Penalties

If you knowingly and willfully falsify or conceal a material fact or submit a false document with your Form I-131A, we will deny your application and may deny any other immigration benefit. In addition, you will face severe penalties provided by law and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

## DHS Privacy Notice

**AUTHORITIES:** The information requested on this application, and the associated evidence, is collected under the Immigration and Nationality Act sections 1103, 1158, 1182, 1203, and 1204.

**PURPOSE:** The primary purpose for providing the requested information on this application is to apply for Carrier Documentation with either USCIS or the Department of State within one year of your departure from the United States, which will allow you to board a vessel or aircraft, travel to the United States, and present yourself at a U.S. port-of-entry for inspection as a returning lawful permanent resident. DHS uses the information to determine your eligibility for the requested travel document.

**DISCLOSURE:** The information you provide is voluntary. However, failure to provide the requested information, including your Social Security number (if applicable), and any requested evidence, may delay a final decision or result in denial of your application.

**ROUTINE USES:** DHS may share the information you provide on this application and any additional requested evidence 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/ICE/CBP-001 - Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records, DHS/USCIS-007 - Benefits Information System, DHS/USCIS-018 Immigration Biometric and Background Check, and STATE-39 Visa Records] and the published privacy impact assessments [DHS/USCIS/PIA-016(a) Computer Linked Application Information Management System and Associated Systems, DHS/USCIS/PIA-051 Case and Activity Management for International Operations, and DOS Non-Immigrant Visa System] which you can find at [www.dhs.gov/privacy](http://www.dhs.gov/privacy) or [www.state.gov/privacy](http://www.state.gov/privacy). DHS may also share this information, as appropriate, for law enforcement purposes or in the interest of national security.

## Paperwork Reduction Act

USCIS may not conduct or sponsor an information collection, and you are not required to respond to a collection of information, unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at **50 minutes per response**, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering the required documentation and information, completing the application, preparing statements, attaching necessary documentation, and submitting the application. 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. 1615-0135. **Do not mail your completed Form I-131A to this address.**