



## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Employees with Pending Cases through USCIS**  
**FROM: Seyfarth Shaw LLP**  
**RE: USCIS Case Status Overview**

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### Purpose

USCIS will update the status of a case multiple times throughout the case processing period, and some of those status updates may result in USCIS sending an informational case notice in the mail. The information provided here is intended to help you decipher the agency updates, and common case status updates that USCIS uses are summarized and described in the table below.

USCIS sends hard copy documents such as receipts and approvals via regular United States Postal Service (“USPS”) mail and typically takes up to 3 weeks to be delivered to Seyfarth. When Seyfarth receives the document, the document is uploaded in the Immigration Case and you will be able to view and download the document.

### Who receives the USCIS Case Notices?

*Where you are the Applicant*, meaning that you are requesting the immigration benefit directly for yourself or for a family member, then both you and Seyfarth will receive a copy of the case notice (e.g., receipt notice, Request for Evidence, fingerprint notice, case decision, etc.).

*Where you are the Beneficiary*, meaning that a different person or company (such as a sponsoring employer) is requesting the immigration benefit and you are Beneficiary of that request, USCIS will send the notice to Seyfarth and to the person or company that filed the immigration benefit request **as the Petitioner**.

### What Do the USCIS Case Status Descriptions Mean?

USCIS Case Status Description	Means
<b><u>Case Was Received</u></b>	USCIS accepted and receipted the case, assigning a case number that you may track on the <a href="#">USCIS portal</a> directly. When the hard copy receipt notice is delivered to Seyfarth, the receipt number is updated in the Immigration Case in Caribou.
<b><u>Case Is Being Actively Reviewed</u></b>	USCIS accepted the case, which is in USCIS’ active queue to be processed. It can take several months for USCIS to process your case when it reaches this step and USCIS does not always update its system with this update. The final processing of your case is generally a case decision, a Request for

	Evidence (RFE), or in some cases a file transfer to a different USCIS office.
<b><u>Case Was Received And An E-mail Was Sent</u></b>	Applies only to premium processed cases. USCIS e-mails the receipt notice to your assigned Seyfarth team member. The electronic receipt confirmation may be forwarded to you. USCIS will still send a physical receipt notice as well that will be uploaded in Caribou, even with premium processing this hard copy can take up to 3 weeks to be delivered to Seyfarth.
<b><u>My Fingerprint Fee Was Received</u></b>	Applies only to cases requiring biometrics (e.g., I-485, I-765, etc.). This confirms that USCIS received and accepted the additional biometric fee for the case. This is another way for USCIS to indicate that the case has been received and is being processed.
<b><u>Case Was Updated To Show Fingerprints Were Taken</u></b>	USCIS has accepted your fingerprints for case processing. USCIS does not always update its system to indicate this case status. If you completed the biometrics, then there is nothing to worry about. If you are concerned, you may contact the USCIS customer service center using the phone number available on the I-797 Receipt Notice for the case. The next step in case status is generally a case decision, a Request for Evidence (RFE), or in some cases a file transfer to a different USCIS office.
<b><u>Request for Additional Evidence Was Sent</u></b>	USCIS issued a Request for Evidence (RFE) -- a fairly common step meaning that USCIS needs additional documents or information to make a case decision. In addition to the time it takes for the notice to be delivered to Seyfarth, the legal team will also need time to review the RFE, identify the legal strategy for the response and then communicate the need for any documents or information to you and/or HR. If additional information or documentation is required from you, a member of the Seyfarth team will contact you.
<b><u>Response To USCIS' Request For Evidence Was Received</u></b>	USCIS has received the RFE response. The next step is generally a final case decision (usually a case approval). Sometimes there may be an additional RFE or a denial. A final case decision can take several months after USCIS receives the RFE response.

	<p>USCIS does not always update its system with this update. Since the Seyfarth legal team will have courier confirmation of delivery, there is no reason to worry. As long as USCIS received the RFE response, then your case is being processed.</p>
<p><b><u>Name Was Updated</u></b></p>	<p>A generalized update that does not necessarily mean that USCIS updated your name in its system but instead signifies that USCIS has inputted data from your case in its system.</p> <p>Generally, the next case status update should be a final decision such as an approval or Request for Evidence (RFE).</p>
<p><b><u>Case Was Transferred And A New Office Has Jurisdiction</u></b></p>	<p>This update frequently occurs in I-485 and N-400 applications and means USCIS has transferred the case to another Service Center or Field Office. USCIS regularly transfers cases to other offices with more capacity to process cases.</p> <p>Generally, the next case status update should be a final decision such as an approval or Request for Evidence (RFE).</p>
<p><b><u>Case Remains Pending</u></b></p>	<p>Immigrant visas (often referred to as green cards) have per-country limitations for each fiscal year. This message means that the category in which your case is pending has backlogged, or “retrogressed,” and a green card cannot be issued for you at this time. You can use your priority date and country of birth to track your place in the immigrant visa “queue” on the <a href="#">Visa Bulletin</a>, which is released by the Department of State on a monthly basis. Once your priority date becomes “current,” USCIS will automatically begin processing your case again.</p>
<p><b><u>Case Was Approved</u></b></p>	<p>Congratulations! This means your case has been approved. When the original notice is delivered to Seyfarth, we will send you a formal approval e-mail and will also confirm the mailing address and make arrangements to send the original approval notice.</p>
<p><b><u>New Card Is Being Produced</u></b></p>	<p>Congratulations! This is the case approval update for the I-765 EAD, green card (AOS application or I-751 petition), and I-90 application, and means that USCIS is producing the card for you.</p>

	<p>You should keep monitoring the USCIS case status website, as USCIS will often update it within a few days or weeks with one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><u>Card Was Mailed</u></b> -- USCIS has mailed your card to the address indicated in the application. If you have moved and if you submitted an updated AR-11, then it will be mailed to your new home address.</li><li>• <b><u>Card Was Picked Up By The United States Postal Service</u></b> -- USPS has picked up your card and will be mailing it to the address indicated in the application filing. This case status update often contains tracking information, so be sure to track the card's movement carefully.</li><li>• <b><u>Card Was Delivered To You By The United States Postal Service</u></b> -- USPS has delivered your card. You should check your mail immediately.</li><li>• <b><u>United States Postal Service Was Unable to Deliver Your Card</u></b> -- <u>USPS was unable to deliver the card due to, for example, USPS not being able to find the location, etc. You should immediately contact your local USPS office to locate the card.</u></li></ul>
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### **What happens if I input the receipt number in the USCIS website and it does not return any content?**

Review the receipt number data entry to confirm it was entered accurately. Any hyphens, spaces, etc. should be removed. USCIS does not accept punctuation in the case status website.

If that does not resolve the issue, then it may be because there is a known USCIS technical glitch and the USCIS case status website will not produce any results. In our experience, USCIS will not update the case status website through a Service Request or by calling USCIS to alert it of the issue. As long as the case has been receipted, you should not worry. You can still check the case status website to see if USCIS will rectify the issue via a case adjudication.

Caribou will be updated when we receive notices from USCIS with case updates.



**What if my case was filed with premium processing? Does this impact anything?**

Yes. USCIS usually sends an electronic receipt notice and approval e-mail to your Seyfarth team member. Hard copy notices of both are also sent to Seyfarth and will be updated in the Immigration Case in Caribou.

**What happens if my case is updated with a status description that is not included above?**

USCIS continuously changes and updates the information shared on their case status site and you may check in with your Seyfarth team if you are unsure of an update on the site.

**Where can I find the USCIS case status website?**

You can access the USCIS case status website [here](#).