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# USCIS Adjusts Fees to Help Meet Operational Needs

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Submitted by Chief Editor on Jul 31st 2020

**WASHINGTON**—Today, the Department of Homeland Security announced a [final rule \(PDF\)](#) <sup>[2]</sup> that adjusts fees for certain immigration and naturalization benefit requests to ensure U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services recovers its costs of services.

Unlike most government agencies, USCIS is fee funded. Fees collected and deposited into the Immigration Examinations Fee Account fund nearly 97% of USCIS' budget.

As required by federal law, USCIS conducted a comprehensive biennial fee review and determined that current fees do not recover the cost of providing adjudication and naturalization services. DHS is adjusting USCIS fees by a weighted average increase of 20% to help recover its operational costs. Current fees would leave the agency underfunded by about \$1 billion per year.

USCIS is required to examine incoming and outgoing expenditures and make adjustments based on that analysis," said Joseph Edlow, USCIS deputy director for policy. "These overdue adjustments in fees are necessary to efficiently and fairly administer our nation's lawful immigration system, secure the homeland and protect Americans."

The rule accounts for increased costs to adjudicate immigration benefit requests, detect and deter immigration fraud, and thoroughly vet applicants, petitioners and beneficiaries. The rule also supports payroll, technology and operations to accomplish the USCIS mission. The rule removes certain fee exemptions, includes new nominal fees for asylum applicants, and reduces fee waivers to help recover the costs of adjudication.

This final rule also encourages online filing by providing a \$10 reduction in the fee for applicants who submit forms online that are electronically available from USCIS. Online filing is the most secure, efficient, cost-effective and convenient way to submit a request with USCIS.

USCIS last updated its fee structure in December 2016 by a weighted average increase of 21%.

For a full list of changes and a complete table of final fees, see the [final rule \(PDF\)](#) [2].

This final rule is effective Oct. 2, 2020. Any application, petition, or request postmarked on or after this date must include payment of the new, correct fees established by this final rule.

**Team Notes:**

**Agency:**

DHS [3]

USCIS [4]

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**Links:**

[1] <https://immigration.com/news/uscis-adjusts-fees-help-meet-operational-needs>

[2] <https://s3.amazonaws.com/public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2020-16389.pdf>

[3] <https://immigration.com/agencies/agency/dhs>

[4] <https://immigration.com/agencies/agency/dhs/uscis>