



# General Information

# F4

## How do I pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee?



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

If you are immigrating to the United States and will be admitted as a lawful permanent resident, you must pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee online.

We strongly encourage you to pay this fee **after** you receive your immigrant visa packet from the U.S. Embassy or consulate abroad (including Canada and Mexico) and **before** you depart for the United States. Paying before you depart for the United States will ensure that you receive your Permanent Resident Card (commonly referred to as a Green Card) without delay.

### What is the USCIS Immigrant Fee?

The USCIS Immigrant Fee is used to process your immigrant visa packet once you arrive in the United States. The fee also covers the cost for USCIS to produce your Green Card.

**Please note:** You have to pay an immigration visa application fee to U.S. Department of State (DOS). This is a separate fee from the USCIS Immigrant Fee.

### How do I pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee?

#### 1. Attend your appointment at a U.S. embassy or consulate

- The U.S. embassy or consulate will give you and your family members:
  - A sealed immigrant visa packet. Keep it in a safe place and **do not open it**.
  - A handout with instructions on how to pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee (USCIS Immigrant Fee handout).
  - An Immigrant Data Summary sheet. Printed on the top of this document are your Alien Registration Number (A-Number) and DOS Case ID. Please make sure to write your A-Number and DOS Case ID at the top of your USCIS Immigrant Fee handout. You should record these numbers **before** you travel because you will turn in your immigrant visa packet and Immigrant Data Summary sheet when you enter the United States.

- Your **A-Number** is the letter "A" followed by 8 or 9 numbers; for example, "A012345678."
- Your **DOS Case ID** is 3 letters followed by 9 or 10 numbers; for example, "ABC1234567890."

**Please note:** For Diversity Visa (DV) immigrants, the DOS Case ID will have numbers followed by 2 letters followed by 5 more numbers; for example: "1234XY12345."

#### 2. Pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee

- Go to [www.uscis.gov/file-online](https://www.uscis.gov/file-online) to review USCIS online filing resources.
- Select **"Log in."**
- Next, select **"USCIS Immigrant Fee."**
- Enter your **A-Number** and **DOS Case ID**, found at the top of your USCIS Immigrant Fee handout. If you are paying for additional family members, you can add their A-Numbers and DOS Case IDs and pay all the fees in one transaction.
- Provide a valid credit card (Visa, Master Card, American Express, or Discover Card), debit card, or U.S. bank checking account information (account number and bank routing number).

If you are unable to pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee yourself, you may choose someone to pay the fee for you; for example, a family member, friend, employer, attorney, or accredited representative.

### Can I create a USCIS online account after I pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee?

After paying the USCIS Immigrant Fee, you can create a USCIS online account. A USCIS online account allows you to:

- Check the status of your Green Card;
- Change your address online; and
- Receive electronic notifications and case updates.

To create a USCIS online account, you will need to answer a series of questions based on your personal biographic information and immigration history. These are questions that only you should be able to answer. During this process, you may find it helpful to refer to documents such as:

- Your passport;
- The visa issued to you by the DOS; and
- Your visa application or petition.

## What happens after you arrive in the United States?

### 1. Arrive with your Immigrant Visa Packet at U.S. port of entry

- You are admitted to the United States as a lawful permanent resident by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

### 2. Receive your Green Card (Form I-551)

- After you are admitted to the United States, USCIS will verify that you have paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee and mail your Green Card to the U.S. address you provided to DOS at the time of your immigrant visa interview or to CBP when you were admitted to the United States.
- If USCIS does not have a record showing you paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee, USCIS will send you a notice with instructions on how to pay the fee.
- If you have any questions, contact us through our online help form at [egov.uscis.gov/cris/contactus](https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/contactus).
- You can also schedule an appointment with your local office if you have a question or need further assistance with your case. To make an appointment, go to [my.uscis.gov/appointment](https://my.uscis.gov/appointment).

## What should I do if I move to another U.S. address after I arrive in the United States?

- We will mail your Green Card to the most recent U.S. mailing address that we have on file. This could be the address you provided to the DOS at the time of your immigrant visa interview or to the CBP officer when you are admitted to the United States.
- If you plan on living at a different U.S. address immediately after you enter the United States, please give that address to the CBP officer or update your address (after taking the identity verification quiz and creating your USCIS online account) to ensure that your card arrives at your new home.
- If you move after you arrive in the United States, please update your address with USCIS by visiting [www.uscis.gov/addresschange](https://www.uscis.gov/addresschange) or by calling the National Customer Service Center at (800) 375-5283. Also, we recommend that you update your address with the U.S. Postal Service by visiting your local U.S. post office or online at [www.usps.com/umove](https://www.usps.com/umove).

## Tips on paying the USCIS Immigrant Fee

1. **Anyone** may pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee for you. This includes attorneys, accredited representatives, family members, friends, and employers.
2. **A-Number.** If your A-Number is fewer than 9 digits, insert a zero after the "A" and before the first digit to create a 9-digit number. For example, "**A12345678**" would become "**A012345678**."

3. **Navigating on your computer while paying the fee.** Do not use your computer's "Back" button when paying the USCIS Immigrant Fee. This may cause errors. Instead, use the navigation buttons in the system to go forward or backwards.
4. **Submitting your payment.** Click on the "Submit Payment" button only **one time** for each USCIS Immigrant Fee you are paying. If you click the button more than one time, you may end up paying the fee multiple times.
5. **Online payments only.** You must pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee online. USCIS will not accept payments by mail.
6. **Print a copy for your records.** We recommend that you print a copy of the fee transaction and the payment receipt for your records.

## What if I cannot pay my USCIS Immigrant Fee before I depart for the United States?

If you are unable to pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee before you leave to come to the United States, you must pay this fee after you are admitted to the United States. If USCIS does not have a record showing you paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee, USCIS will send you a notice with instructions on how to pay the fee.

**Please note:** You will not receive your Green Card until you have paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee.

## How do I know if I have to pay the fee or if I am exempt from paying the fee?

If DOS issued you an immigrant visa and you are applying for admission to the United States, you must pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee unless you are exempt. DOS will notify you if you are exempt from paying the fee.

The following immigrants generally are exempt from paying the USCIS Immigrant Fee:

- Children who enter the United States under either the Orphan or Hague adoption programs;
- Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants;
- Returning residents (SB-1s); and
- Individuals who are issued K visas.

## What happens if I fail to pay the fee?

USCIS **will not** issue your Green Card until you have paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee. Once the fee is paid, USCIS will process your payment and issue you a Green Card.

After you arrive in the United States, you will receive a stamp in your passport that validates your admission as a lawful permanent resident. The stamp is valid for 1 year. Once this stamp expires, you will need your Green Card as evidence of your lawful permanent resident status.

## For More Information

For more information on the USCIS Immigrant Fee, please visit [www.uscis.gov/ImmigrantFee](https://www.uscis.gov/ImmigrantFee) and [www.uscis.gov/file-online](https://www.uscis.gov/file-online).

## Key Information

| Key USCIS forms referenced in this guide | Form # |
|------------------------------------------|--------|
| Permanent Resident Card                  | I-551  |

| Key USCIS websites referenced in this guide | Website link                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Make an Appointment                         | <a href="https://my.uscis.gov/appointment">my.uscis.gov/appointment</a> |

| Key USCIS phone numbers referenced in this guide | Phone number   |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| USCIS National Customer Service Center           | (800) 375-5283 |
| Hearing Impaired TTY Customer Service            | (800) 877-8339 |

| Other U.S. Government services—click or call |                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| General Information                          | <a href="https://www.usa.gov">www.usa.gov</a>                   |
| New Immigrants                               | <a href="https://www.welcometoUSA.gov">www.welcometoUSA.gov</a> |
| U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement     | <a href="https://www.ice.gov">www.ice.gov</a>                   |
| U.S. Customs and Border Protection           | <a href="https://www.cbp.gov">www.cbp.gov</a>                   |
| U.S. Department of State                     | <a href="https://www.state.gov">www.state.gov</a>               |
| U.S. Postal Service                          | <a href="https://www.usps.gov">www.usps.gov</a>                 |

You can also visit [www.uscis.gov](https://www.uscis.gov) to download forms, file some applications online, check the status of an application, and more. It's a great place to start!

If you don't have Internet access at home or work, try your local library.

If you cannot find what you need, please contact us at [egov.uscis.gov/cris/contactus](https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/contactus).

**Disclaimer:** This guide provides basic information to help you become generally familiar with our rules and procedures. For more information, or the law or regulations, please visit our Web site. Immigration law can be complex, and it is impossible to describe every aspect of every process. You may wish to be represented by a licensed attorney or by a nonprofit agency accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals.