



# News Release

Sept. 23, 2010

## **After Public Comment, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Announces Final Rule Adjusting Fees for Immigration Benefits**

*Rule does not increase the naturalization application fee*

**WASHINGTON** – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today announced a [final rule](#) adjusting fees for immigration applications and petitions. The final rule follows a period of public comment on a proposed rule, which USCIS published in the [Federal Register](#) on June 11, 2010. After encouraging stakeholders to share their input, USCIS considered all 225 comments received. The final rule will increase overall fees by a weighted average of about 10 percent but will not increase the fee for the naturalization application. The final rule will be published in the *Federal Register* tomorrow, September 24, and the adjusted fees will go into effect on November 23, 2010.

“USCIS is grateful for the valuable public input that we received as we prepared the final fee rule,” said USCIS Director Alejandro Mayorkas. “We remain mindful of the effect of fee increases on the communities we serve, and we will continue to work to enhance the services we provide.”

The final fee rule establishes three new fees, including a fee for regional center designations under the Immigrant Investor (EB-5) Pilot Program, a fee for individuals seeking civil surgeon designation, and a fee to recover USCIS costs to process immigrant visas granted by the Department of State. Additionally, the final rule reduces and eliminates several fees, including some for servicemembers and certain veterans of the U.S. armed forces who are seeking citizenship-related benefits. The final rule also expands the availability of fee waivers to additional categories.

USCIS is a primarily fee-based organization, with about 90 percent of its budget coming from fees paid by applicants and petitioners for immigration benefits. The law requires USCIS to conduct fee reviews every two years to determine the funding levels necessary to administer the nation’s immigration laws, process immigration benefit requests and provide the infrastructure needed to support those activities. The final fee rule announced today concludes a comprehensive review begun in 2009.

USCIS’s fee revenue in fiscal years 2008 and 2009 was much lower than projected, and fee revenue in fiscal year 2010 remains low. While USCIS received appropriations from Congress and made budget cuts of approximately \$160 million, this has not bridged the remaining gap between costs and anticipated revenue. A fee adjustment, as detailed in the final rule announced today, is necessary to ensure USCIS recovers the costs of its operations while also meeting the application processing goals identified in the 2007 fee rule.

A detailed Fact Sheet and a set of Questions and Answers on the final fee rule accompany this News Release. To read the final rule, please see the [Federal Register](#) announcement. For more information on USCIS and its programs, visit [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).