





At the same time officers are pressured to move the workload expeditiously, their confidence level in making correct decisions and detecting benefit fraud is weakened by a lack of adequate training in fraud detection.

In an August 2011 report, the DHS OIG observed that USCIS has not developed formal, post-basic, fraud training program. Additionally, fraud prevention training is not provided to all adjudicators responsible for adjudication of specific benefits. In at least one instance, 85% of the employees responsible for adjudication of a specific benefit were not provided the fraud detection training.

We understand USCIS is currently developing post-basic training fraud courses. We also are told that USCIS has agreed to begin the necessary steps to ensure officers receive this training annually, once the courses are developed and implemented. Although we can applaud any steps toward adequate training of adjudicators, our concern is that the frequency of the training will be inadequate.

The people perpetrating fraud work hard every day to alter their methods. Providing training to officers only on an annual basis would continue to leave them without sufficient confidence to know when to refer cases of suspected fraud to officers with more expertise and equipped with advanced research capabilities. This, we believe, leaves a gaping hole in the deterrence of immigration benefit fraud.

We recognize it's not an easy task to strike the balance between efforts to process the volume of requests for immigration benefits while protecting the system from fraud. It is our belief that USCIS policies in the area of production expectations and frequency of training could have a negative effect on the detection of immigration benefit fraud.

This concludes my statement. I look forward to responding to your questions.