



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

# Straight from the Source

Immigration News from USCIS

September 2013

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1. **New Flyers Warn People “The Wrong Help Can Hurt”**—We have three new flyers to warn people about the unauthorized practice of immigration law. The flyers are written in plain English (and Spanish on the back side) for three distinct audiences:

- migrants who need immigration help
- people who want to provide immigration help to others, and
- people/organizations who seek BIA recognition/accreditation



All of our educational materials about immigration scams are available on our website at [www.uscis.gov/avoidscams](http://www.uscis.gov/avoidscams) or [www.uscis.gov/eviteestafas](http://www.uscis.gov/eviteestafas). Click on the “[Educational materials](#)” tab along the left side of that page. Also, don’t forget that we have radio public service announcements in English and Spanish.

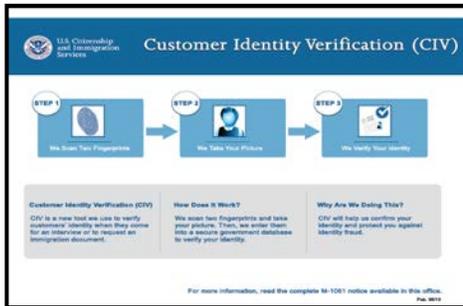


## 2. **FY2013 Citizenship Grant Recipients**

—On September 17, we announced the award of nearly \$9.9 million in grants to prepare permanent residents for citizenship. [Forty immigrant-serving](#)

[organizations](#) from 21 states will receive federal funding to support citizenship preparation services for permanent residents. The period of work covered in the grant is September 2013 through September 2015. Since the program began in October 2009, our [Citizenship and Integration Grant Program](#) has helped more than 66,000 permanent residents in 31 states and the District of Columbia prepare for citizenship. The citizenship grant program is part of a multifaceted approach to citizenship preparation, which includes the [Citizenship Resource Center](#), available at [www.uscis.gov/citizenship](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship).

**3. Special Immigrant Visa Program for Iraqi Nationals Expiring**—On Sept. 30, 2013, authorization for the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program for Iraqi nationals who worked for or on behalf of the U.S. government will expire. This program covers Iraqi nationals who—from March 20, 2003, to now—have been employed by or on behalf of the U.S. in Iraq for at least 1 year. The expiration date does not apply to spouses and unmarried children who are following to join the principal applicant. As announced at its inception, this program will expire on Sept. 30, 2013, unless Congress extends it. After Sept. 30, 2013, we will reject any Form I-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant, or Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, filed by a principal applicant based on the Iraqi SIV program. For more details, click [here](#).



**4. USCIS Begins Customer Identity Verification**—On September 9, 2013, we began using a [new verification tool](#) called Customer Identity Verification (CIV) in our field offices. Customers who come to our offices for an interview or to get an immigration document will have their fingerprints and photographs taken electronically. We initially experienced some technical issues when we launched the CIV tool in the spring. We’ve since resolved those issues and are currently using CIV for naturalization applicants. Adjustment of status applicants will be

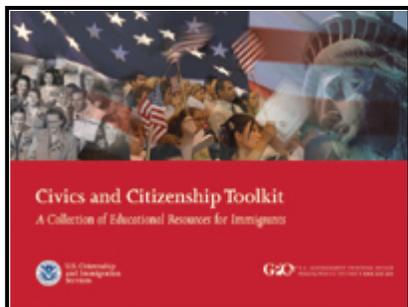
added next. The process normally takes a few minutes. People who come to our office for InfoPass appointments or to accompany a customer will not undergo this process. After we verify the customer’s identity, they can proceed to their interview or receive their document. CIV enhances the integrity of the immigration system and combats identity fraud by allowing us to verify a customer’s identity.

**5. 10,000 U Visas Approved Four Years Running**—For the 4th year in a row, we approved [the statutory maximum of 10,000 petitions for U nonimmigrant status](#) (U visas) for fiscal year 2013. Each year, 10,000 U visas are available for victims of crime who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse and are willing to help law enforcement prosecute the offenders. Congress created the U-visa program to strengthen law enforcement’s ability to investigate and prosecute cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other crimes while also offering protection to victims. More than 76,000 victims and their family members have received U visas since the program began. We will resume issuing U visas on Oct. 1, 2013, the first day of fiscal year 2014. For more information about the U visa program, visit our [Victims of Criminal Activity Web page](#).

**6. New California Voter Page**—The California Secretary of State has created a new webpage—[www.sos.ca.gov/elections/new-voter](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/new-voter)—to help people who are new to voting, or who will soon be eligible to vote, find basic voting information and materials. The website and supporting educational materials are offered in English and nine other languages. The Secretary of State asks organizations, schools, community colleges, businesses and agencies that serve the communities where these languages are spoken to help spread the word and make this new resource available to as many people as possible. Materials are available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. The webpage features a collection of “widgets” in different languages, which link to the New Voters page in that language.



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**7. Website to Order Civics Toolkit Has Changed**—We manage a website where non-profit organizations, schools, and libraries can order a free copy of the Civics and Citizenship Toolkit. The prior website ([www.citizenshiptoolkit.gov](http://www.citizenshiptoolkit.gov)) is no longer operational. Please use this link instead: [www.uscis.gov/citizenshiptoolkit](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenshiptoolkit). By ordering the toolkit at this site, you are automatically added to the distribution list and will receive updated materials (i.e. a new flash card when the President changes), automatically. For-profit entities can purchase the toolkit and other materials at [bookstore.gpo.gov](http://bookstore.gpo.gov).

**8. Policy Memos Issued**—USCIS issued and posted the following policy memos at: [www.uscis.gov>laws>policy memoranda](http://www.uscis.gov>laws>policy%20memoranda)

- **September 19, 2013**—[Exception to the Two-Year Custody and Two-Year Residency Requirement for Abused Adopted Children](#). **PLEASE NOTE:** We are taking public comments on this memo until October 2, 2013.
- **September 6, 2013**—[Extension of Validity of Medical Certifications on Form I-693](#)



**9. Upcoming National Engagements**—We manage a comprehensive calendar of public engagements at [www.uscis.gov/publicengagement](http://www.uscis.gov/publicengagement). Click on the links below for details:

- **October 8, 2013**—The USCIS Western Region will host a webinar to review the naturalization process from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm Pacific time. The event is open to the first 125 participants. See this [link](#) for details. Please do not join more than 10 minutes before the session.

*Straight from the Source* is produced monthly by the USCIS Western Region Community Relations Program to provide a helpful “wrap-up” of key developments for USCIS stakeholders and customers. Please share this with colleagues and clients. To provide feedback or to be added to the distribution list, please e-mail [janna.m.evans@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:janna.m.evans@uscis.dhs.gov).