Office of Communications

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Update

Sept. 24, 2008

USCIS REMINDS CUSTOMERS OF PROGRAM FLEXIBLITIES

WASHINGTON— We realize that unexpected events in a person's home country can sometimes affect travel or other plans. Given recent severe weather in the Caribbean, USCIS would like to remind customers of available services.

For Non-Immigrants:

- **Extension and/or Change of Status**: Non-immigrant tourists and business visitors (B-1/B-2 visa holders) may request an extension of stay (Form I-539 – Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status) when unexpected events in their home country delay their travel. Customers who request an extension will need to explain how the event has disrupted their ability to travel home, how much longer they anticipate staying in the U.S., and also show they will be able to support themselves in their non-immigrant status for the additional time. In addition, USCIS will consider requests for a change status to that of a person here temporarily on business (B1) or pleasure (B2) where the individual is no longer able to extend their pre-existing non-immigrant status on another category.
  Please note: Customers who have been paroled into the U.S. and whose travel plans are delayed due to unexpected events in their home country may visit the local USCIS office and request an extension of parole.
- **Foreign Student Employment Authorization**: If unexpected events affect the ability of an F1 or M1 nonimmigrant student to continue to pay for their education, the student may request off-campus employment (Form I-765 – Application for Employment Authorization). In order to qualify, the student must demonstrate how the unexpected event has affected their ability to continue to pay for their education without employment.
- **Expedited Processing**: Non-immigrant visitors affected by unexpected events in their home country may request expedited processing of the above applications or for an application or petition filed for a service or benefit that is otherwise immediately available.

Please note, these flexibilities are available to non-immigrants who are in-status and complying with the immigration laws.

For Others:

- Individuals who are abroad and have lost their USCIS issued travel documents or whose documents have expired due to an unexpected event that delayed their original travel plans, may contact a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

For more information, please call our National Customer Service Center at (800) 375-5283.

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