Office of Communications

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Questions & Answers

June 29, 2009

USCIS Check Instructions

Questions & Answers

Q. What information must be included on my check?
A. Your check must be pre-printed with your name, bank name and address, bank routing number, your account number and the check number. Additionally, if your home address and phone number are not pre-printed on the check, you should type or write in ink that information on the check. Finally, either type or write in ink to complete all fields on the check with the correct information, including: "Date," "Pay to the Order of," "Amount (in numerals)," "Amount (in words)," "For/Memo," and "Signature."

Q. Who should I write the check to?
A. Your check should be made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security. You should type or write this legibly in ink on the line next to "Pay to the Order of" on your check.

Q. What amount should I write on the check?
A. You should fill in the check for the exact amount of your application fees as listed on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website at www.uscis.gov under the "Immigration Forms" tab. If you write the check for an amount different than the amount on the form, it will delay the processing of your application.

Q. Who should sign the check?
A. The person who signs the check should be the person whose name is authorized for signature on the bank account from which the funds will be drawn. This is usually the same person whose name is pre-printed on the check, or in the case of a business check an authorized signee on the business checking account. The signature should be signed with an ink pen and be legible or match the signature card on file at the bank.

Q. My business prints our own checks, or my bank allows me to print my own checks at home. Can I use "self-printed" checks?
A. While self-printed checks are acceptable, they must conform to banking industry standards in order to allow for proper processing. If the check cannot be processed, then your application will be delayed or possibly returned to you until USCIS receives a valid check for payment. Typically, self-printed checks require special printer ink and software to produce the "magnetic ink character recognition" or MICR fonts that banks require to process the check. You should contact your bank to ensure your self-printed check meets these standards before submitting it with your application.

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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Home > Immigration Forms > Forms and Fees

Paying Immigration Fees

Use the following guidance when paying filing, biometrics, or other fees to USCIS:

- Bank drafts, cashier's checks, certified checks, personal checks (See Check Instructions below), and money orders must be drawn on U.S. financial institutions and payable in U.S. funds.
- Make the check or money order payable to **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** (not "USDHS" or "DHS"), unless:
    1. You live in Guam and are filing your application there. In this case, make it payable to **Treasurer, Guam**.
    2. You live in the U.S. Virgin Islands and are filing your petition or application there. In this case, make your payment to **Commissioner of Finance of the Virgin Islands**.
    3. You live outside the United States, Guam, or the U.S. Virgin Islands, and are filing your application or petition where you live. In this case, contact the nearest Embassy or consulate of the U.S. Department of State for instructions on the method of payment.

USCIS Check Instructions

Customers that require payment for the services they are requesting are advised to follow the instructions below to ensure that their application will be filed correctly.

Please Note

Personal checks must be pre-printed with the name of the bank and the account holder. Also, the account holder's address and phone number must be pre-printed, typed or written in ink on the check. All checks must be typed or written in ink.

1. Write the date you are filling out the check including: day, month and year.
2. On the "Pay to the Order of" line write: "U.S. Department of Homeland Security."
3. Write in numbers the exact dollar amount of the fee for the service you are requesting. In the example, the amount is "$595.00."
4. Spell out the exact dollar amount of the fee for the service you are requesting. The "cents" portion of the amount should be written as a fraction over 100. In this example, the amount is "Five hundred ninety-five and 00/100."
5. Write a brief description of the purpose of your payment. In this example, it is "N-400 application fee."
6. Sign the check using your legal signature.

Related Files

- Questions and Answers: Check Instructions (24KB PDF)

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