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BCIS BEGINS OFFERING "ONLINE" FILING FOR TWO POPULAR IMMIGRATION FORMS

CHICAGO – Today, the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) started accepting electronic filing (e-filing) of two of the most commonly submitted immigration forms – the application used to renew or replace a "green card" (Form I-90) and the Application for Employment Authorization (Form I-765). Together, both forms represent approximately 30 percent of the 7 million applications filed with the Bureau every year.

For those who file electronically, BCIS confirms the identity of the customer early in the application process. BCIS also electronically collects a photograph, signature, and fingerprint for the individual. These biometric data are stored and can be used later for verification of the person's identity. Customers whose applications are approved receive high quality immigration documents with special security features produced from BCIS' centralized card production facility.

"For the first time in our history, BCIS is able to offer our customers the option of filing for certain immigration benefits using the Internet, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week," said Acting Director Eduardo Aguirre. "E-Filing is part of our ongoing effort to provide simpler, more convenient ways for customers to interact with BCIS while meeting our national security objectives," he added.

Customers who e-file do not have to submit photographs at the time they file their applications. Instead, they will schedule themselves for an appointment to visit an Application Support Center (ASC) at a convenient time for the electronic collection of a photograph, signature, and fingerprint. After filing electronically, customers will schedule their appointment by calling the National Customer Service Center at (800) 375-5283.

The Employment Authorization and "green card" replacement applications were selected as the first forms for e-filing because they account for approximately 30 percent of the applications received annually by the BCIS. Additionally, these forms are relatively easy to complete and require very little supporting documentation because these individuals already have records on file with BCIS. Electronic filing for other immigration applications will be phased in over the next several years.

As an added convenience, customers who e-file will also be able to pay the fees for these applications online through the electronic transfer of U.S. funds from their checking or savings account, eliminating the need to obtain a money order or cashier's check. The BCIS plans to start accepting credit card payments for e-filed cases later this year. For additional information on e-filing requirements, please visit us at www.bcis.gov.

BCIS customers who have e-filed or who have an application pending at one of BCIS' Service Centers can check the status of their application on line by visiting

www.bcis.gov. The website also provides information and forms online for users to download free of charge. Electronic filing is a key facet of BCIS' Immigration Service Modernization program, a 10-year effort to transform the delivery of immigration services. The initiative focuses on improvements in a wide range of areas, including customer service, employee development, technology and processes, and management infrastructure.

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