



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Request for Review Tip Sheet

What may I do if U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) denies my application for refugee status?

There is no appeal for a denial of an application for refugee status. However, you may request that USCIS review your case again. USCIS may exercise its discretion to review a case upon timely receipt of a Request for Review (RFR) from the principal applicant or a third party if the principal applicant waives his/her rights to confidentiality. The request must include one or both of the following:

1. A detailed explanation of how a significant error was made by the adjudicating officer; and/or
2. New information that would merit a change in the decision.

Generally, USCIS will accept only **ONE REQUEST** that is postmarked or received by USCIS at the designated filing location within **90 days** from the date of the denial notice.

What do I need to know about writing an RFR?

The following information is VERY IMPORTANT so please follow each instruction closely.

1. You should include your Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) case number on EVERY page that is submitted.
2. The RFR must contain a complete return address (not just a phone number or email address) where the RFR response will be sent.
3. The RFR must be in English. Any supporting documents submitted along with the RFR should be translated into English.
4. Principal applicants may seek assistance from another individual, organization or attorney when preparing an RFR. If you seek assistance in completing an RFR, the name of the individual, organization or attorney providing assistance and the relationship to the applicant should be included in the RFR. All RFRs must be signed by the principal applicant with an original signature.
5. Information on a refugee case will not be shared with anyone other than the principal applicant. Therefore, if an attorney is submitting an RFR on your behalf, a form G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative, must be submitted with the RFR. If someone other than an attorney is submitting an RFR, you should provide a letter stating that you waive your right to confidentiality along with the RFR.
6. The RFR should address the reason(s) you were denied. In order to determine the reason(s) for

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denial, read the decision letter carefully or ask staff from the OPE to explain it in detail.

7. If you believe an error was made in the decision process, you must provide a detailed description of the error(s). If you have new information to provide, it must contain sufficient detail to enable the reviewer to make a decision on your case. If the new information provided contains facts that occurred prior to the USCIS interview, you should include an explanation of why you did not present the information at the initial interview.
8. The RFR must be submitted within the time limit; no more than 90 days after the date of the decision (see date on denial notice). If the RFR is not submitted within 90 days, you must provide an explanation for why it is being submitted late.
9. The RFR may be mailed directly to USCIS or delivered to the OPE.
10. USCIS receives many RFRs from refugee applicants, so please be patient when awaiting your response. Your RFR will be reviewed, but the review processing time may vary based on location. The RFR response will be sent to you through established procedures (usually through the OPE, local representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) or mailed to you directly at the address provided in the RFR). If you change addresses, it is your responsibility to let USCIS know so that your RFR response will be sent to the correct address.

What else should I know?

- A. You may want to consider having your RFR reviewed and corrected by someone who reads and writes English very well.
- B. It is best if you can send a RFR that is typed so that it is easy to read. If you cannot provide a typed RFR, please be sure that the handwriting is clear enough to read. If USCIS staff cannot read the handwriting, the RFR will be rejected and returned.
- C. Do not submit additional RFRs, because only your first RFR will be reviewed.
- D. There is no limit to the length of an RFR. However, the RFR should specifically address the reason for the denial and should explain why you think the decision was wrong and/or explain how any new evidence submitted establishes that you are eligible for refugee status. Additional information that is not relevant to the case is not helpful and may make the review process take longer.
- E. You should not provide general background information, country conditions or situation reports with your RFR. Accompanying documentation, such as human rights reports from respected organizations or newspaper/journal clippings may be submitted if they directly relate to your case; for example, if the your name is mentioned specifically or an incident you were involved in is described.
- F. If you wish to submit DNA evidence with your RFR, established procedures must be followed. Please consult with the OPE about what the procedures are in your location if you wish to submit DNA.
- G. Unless specifically noted in the decision letter, additional documentation such as police reports, hospital records, marriage or birth certificates, etc. do not need to be submitted to support your claim.

In cases where specific documentation is required, USCIS will specify this in the decision letter.

H. When USCIS makes a decision on your RFR, USCIS may grant your case, may ask that you have another interview, or may decide that your case will remain denied. In some instances, you may be asked to provide additional evidence in writing before receiving a final decision. You will receive a written decision notice from USCIS regarding your RFR.

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