U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Vermont Service Center - to develop and support the best in Government

VERMONT SERVICE CENTER STAKEHOLDERS NEWSLETTER

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View from the Director's Desk

Earlier this month the Vermont Service Center hosted representatives from the Office of Transformation Coordination Communications Team. The OTC team engaged VSC employees in focus groups to explore and discuss the new transformed system that USCIS will be using in the near future. These employees provided invaluable input and feedback to the development team on upcoming transformation deployment.

Over the past year VSC employees have participated in the USCIS transformation efforts by providing technical expertise, working on new processes, evaluating proposed changes and participating in an agency-wide competition to name the system.

VSC is proud to be one of the first Centers to utilize the new system which will deploy later this year.

Helpful Hints

Filing Timely

The Vermont Service Center wants to encourage all of our stakeholders to submit applications and petitions in a timely manner. We ask that you check our processing times on the web, and whenever possible, take those into consideration when filing. When requesting an expedite on a case currently pending at the VSC, please review the expedite criteria on the USCIS website.

Important to Know

On Monday, August 29, individuals calling the National Customer Service Center's 1-800 phone number will hear a new message. This redesigned Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system provides customers with simplified access to immigration information, case status, and customer service representatives.

The new main menu options are: 1) Immigration Services, 2) Immigration Information, and 3) Special Programs and Other Resources.

Pencil Us In!

October 25th - The VSC VAWA Team will be participating in an outreach event for Community-Based Organizations in Miami, FL regarding VAWA I-360, T & U Visa Form Types.

October 26th - The VSC VAWA Team will be participating in an outreach event for Law Enforcement Agencies in Miami, FL with a focus on victims-related case work and the completion of U-visa Law Enforcement Certifications.

October 28th - The VSC VAWA Team will be participating in an outreach event for Community-Based Organizations in Atlanta, GA regarding VAWA I-360, T & U Visa Form Types.

October 28th - The VSC VAWA Team will be participating in an outreach event for Law Enforcement Agencies in Atlanta, GA with a focus on victims-related case work and the completion of U-visa Law Enforcement Certifications.

November 7th - The Vermont Service Center announces the date for their Fall Stakeholder Conference. This has been tentatively scheduled to be held in Burlington, Vermont at the Burlington Hilton Hotel. The event is planned for Monday November 7th.

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Inside the VSC - Division III

Division III is managed by Assistant Center Director, Carrie Selby and includes six Supervisory Immigration Service Officers and approximately fifty Immigration Service Officers. Division III concentrates efforts in the area of family-sponsored immigration; focusing specifically on Petitions for Alien Relative (Forms I-130) and Petitions for Alien Fiancé(e) (Forms I-129F). In addition all standalone I-130 and I-129F petitions filed with USCIS Service Centers that have been identified as possibly subject to the provisions of the Adam Walsh Act (AWA) are forwarded to the Vermont Service Center.

Processing Times for I-129 F and I-130 Immediate Relative Petitions

The Vermont Service Center is pleased to inform stakeholders that the processing times for form I-129F K1 Fiancé petitions have decreased from seven months to five months. The processing time for Immediate Relative petitions is current.

I-129 Petitions for the K Fiancé Classifications

As a part of USCIS's efforts to establish consistency and standardization, the Vermont Service Center announces the following changes to the adjudication of the I-129 K petitions:

- Validity dates on approvals will now be 4 months minus 1 day instead of the previous 90-day validity period.
- There has also been a change in the manner that the petitioner must demonstrate that the couple has met within the last two years. Previously we would accept a statement from the petitioner that the couple had met within the preceding 2 years. We will now be requiring evidence to demonstrate that the meeting has occurred, such as passport stamps, dated photos, airline tickets, etc. A statement alone will not be acceptable proof of meeting.

New Filing instructions for I-130 Petitioners Abroad

As of Monday, August 15, 2011, petitioners residing in countries without USCIS offices must file their Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative, with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) lockbox facility in Chicago.

USCIS wants stakeholders to know that during the first 90 days of this new process, we will monitor and assess the implementation of the changed procedures to identify any areas where additional updates to our policies would be appropriate. We have posted for public comment a memorandum outlining some of the circumstances that may warrant expedited processing of a Form I-130 by the Department of State at a local embassy or consulate where USCIS does not have a presence. USCIS is assessing whether the list of factors under which petitioners will receive expedited processing at a post should be expanded. USCIS is mindful of the real-life impact that the change in the processing of the Form I-130 might have in particular cases and, accordingly, will be issuing guidance to its adjudicators to ensure that the equities of each case are duly considered in determining whether a case warrants expedited local processing.

Contact the Vermont Service Center:
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Vermont Service Center
75 Lower Welden Street
St. Albans, VT 05479

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