



Privacy Impact Assessment  
for the

# Travel and Employment Authorization Listings (TEAL)

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## Abstract

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) developed the Travel and Employment Authorization Listings (TEAL) system to streamline access to relevant information during the adjudication of certain benefits. TEAL consolidates immigration information about applicants from selected USCIS and DHS systems to provide greater accessibility to immigration information necessary to determine benefit eligibility. USCIS is conducting this Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) because TEAL retrieves personally identifiable information (PII) from USCIS and DHS systems.

## Overview

The USCIS Vermont Service Center (VSC) owns and operates TEAL. USCIS VSC is responsible for the timely and efficient adjudication of certain immigration benefits. In order to make the determination of whether to grant or deny an individual's application for an immigration benefit, USCIS adjudicators need to verify the accuracy of the information provided in the application and ascertain the applicant's eligibility for the benefit sought by querying other USCIS and DHS systems.

TEAL supports the VSC's ability to adjudicate the following immigration applications: I-90, Replacement National; I-130, Petition for Alien Relative; I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status; I-751, Petition to Remove the Conditions of Residence; and I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.

TEAL was developed to streamline access to relevant information by consolidating applicants' immigration information from selected USCIS and DHS systems. Through TEAL, users no longer need to access multiple systems individually. USCIS adjudicators use TEAL to query multiple systems in order to centralize an applicant's immigration information thereby reducing time to access each system. This facilitates VSC's ability to determine an applicant's benefit eligibility more efficiently.

TEAL retrieves data from the various systems using the applicant's Alien number (A-number). In order to retrieve an applicant's information, USCIS adjudicators must log-in using their supplied user credentials (e.g., user ID and password). The adjudicator then either enters the case receipt number or A-number into TEAL. The adjudicator may also use a barcode scanner to read the receipt number barcode that is affixed to the physical application. If the adjudicator inputs or scans the case receipt number, TEAL queries the Citizenship and Immigration Services Centralized Oracle Repository (CISCOR) to retrieve the applicant's A-number.<sup>1</sup> TEAL then uses the A-number to access relevant immigration information from various USCIS and DHS systems that have records associated with that A-number. TEAL may also be used in batch mode to query multiple A-numbers simultaneously. For batch mode queries, adjudicators enter multiple A-numbers or case receipt numbers into TEAL and then TEAL retrieves the necessary information for each case in sequence.

TEAL retrieves real-time, read-only immigration information from the following systems:

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<sup>1</sup> See the USCIS Benefits Processing of Applicants other than Petitions for Naturalization, Refugee Status, and Asylum PIA and BIS SORN, DHS/USCIS -007 (73 FR 56596).



## *USCIS sources*

- Central Index System (CIS)<sup>2</sup>
- Computer Linked Adjudication Information Management System 3.0 (CLAIMS 3) Mainframe (MF)<sup>3</sup>
- CISCOR<sup>4</sup>
- FD - 258 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprint Tracking System<sup>5</sup>
- FD - 258 FBI Name Check Response<sup>6</sup>
- Alien Change of Address Query Request (AR-11)<sup>7</sup>
- Refugees, Asylum and Parole System (RAPS)
- Marriage Fraud Mainframe System (MFAS)<sup>8</sup>

## *DHS Customs and Borders Protection's (CBP) sources*

- Treasury Enforcement Communication System (TECS) Subject Lookout Search (SQ11)<sup>9</sup>
- TECS Arrival/Departure Data Query (SQ94)<sup>10</sup>

System access is determined by the benefit application under review. TEAL does not store any information from the source system in a separate database or in any other electronic format. The information is immediately discarded after each query.

Information retrieved by TEAL includes information provided by the individual on the application for immigration benefits, and varies depending on the benefit. This information includes, but is not limited to: full name, alias, date of birth, A-number, case receipt number, place of birth, and address history. The USCIS adjudicator prints screen shots from or record information retrieved by TEAL in the applicant's A-file, which is the hard copy or digitized file DHS keeps to store all information relevant to an immigrant's interactions with DHS as he or she applies for benefits and changes immigration status.<sup>11</sup> This information is used for USCIS benefits adjudication purposes to determine an applicant's eligibility for a benefit.

TEAL is an existing system and will eventually be replaced by the Person Centric Query Service (PCQS). There are no planned updates for this application.

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<sup>2</sup> A-File/ CIS SORN, DHS/USCIS 001 (72 FR 1755).

<sup>3</sup> Benefits Processing of Applicants other than Petitions for Naturalization, Refugee Status, and Asylum PIA and BIS SORN, DHS/USCIS -007 (73 FR 56596).

<sup>4</sup> BIS SORN, DHS/USCIS -007 (73 FR 56596).

<sup>5</sup> BCS SORN, DHS-USCIS-002 (72 FR 31082).

<sup>6</sup> BCS SORN, DHS-USCIS-002 (72 FR 31082).

<sup>7</sup> AR-11 PIA and BIS SORN, DHS/USCIS -007 (73 FR 56596).

<sup>8</sup> BIS SORN, DHS/USCIS -007 (73 FR 56596).

<sup>9</sup> CBP Border Crossing Information (BCI) SORN, DHS/CBP-007 (73 FR 43457)

<sup>10</sup> CBP TECS SORN, DHS/CBP-011 (73 FR 77778).

<sup>11</sup> A-File/ CIS SORN, DHS/USCIS 001 (72 FR 1755).



The legal authority to operate TEAL is derived from 8 U.S.C. § 1101 *et seq.* More specifically, 8 U.S.C. § 1103 charges the Secretary of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the duty of administering and enforcing all laws relating to the immigration and naturalization of aliens. These laws are generally found in 8 C.F.R., *Aliens and Nationality*.

## Section 1.0 Characterization of the Information

The following questions are intended to define the scope of the information requested and/or collected as well as reasons for its collection as part of the program, system, rule, or technology being developed.

### 1.1 What information is collected, used, disseminated, or maintained in the system?

TEAL retrieves the following information from USCIS and DHS systems to determine benefit eligibility: full name, alias, A-number, case receipt number, address, gender, date of birth, country of birth, country of citizenship, citizenship status, marital status, arrival and departure status, employment history, education record, background check search [statement of 'no hit' or 'positive hit'], fingerprint results [either 'IDENT,' meaning positive for possible criminal activity, or 'NONIDENT,' meaning no history of criminal activity], and FBI name check response [i.e., "Pending" because the search is ongoing, "No Record" or a "Positive Response"].

### 1.2 What are the sources of the information in the system?

TEAL retrieves information from the following IT systems:

#### *USCIS sources*

- CIS, which is used to maintain information on the status of individuals, including permanent residents, naturalized citizens, border crossers, apprehended aliens, legalized aliens, and aliens issued employment authorization. CIS also contains information regarding individuals who are under investigation (including those who are possible national security threats or threats to the public safety), or who were investigated by the DHS in the past, or who are suspected of violating immigration-related laws or regulations;
- CLAIMS 3 MF, which is used to process numerous USCIS applications;
- CISCOR, which is used to consolidate data from CLAIMS 3;
- FD - 258 FBI Fingerprint Tracking System, which is used to track the status of fingerprint submissions to and results from the FBI;
- FD - 258 FBI Name Check Response, which is used to maintain information relating to the subject's criminal history;





















