



USCIS Update

March 15, 2010

USCIS Centralizes Processing of Orphan Adoptions

Change will Streamline Processing

WASHINGTON - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that on April 1, 2010, it is centralizing processing and adjudication of all new orphan (Non-Hague) petitions with the agency's specialized adoptions team in Missouri.

Prospective adoptive parents will continue to file their *Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative* ([Form I-600](#)) and *Application for Advance Processing of Orphan Petition* ([Form I-600A](#)) with USCIS' Dallas Lockbox facility. The Lockbox will forward the case to the Orphan Unit at USCIS' National Benefit Center (NBC) for processing and adjudication. The applicant will receive a receipt notice with the NBC address and contact information for follow-up correspondence.

While this takes place behind the scenes, adoptive parents will benefit because it allows USCIS to:

- Process applications and petitions more efficiently,
- Streamline and standardize work processes, and
- Offer more consistent service.

Parents will also benefit from the specialized skills and experience of the NBC Non-Hague Adoption Unit, based on the NBC's implementation of the USCIS Hague Adoption Convention program in 2008.

USCIS has dedicated a toll-free NBC Adoption telephone line, 1-877-424-8374 and published an Orphan Home Study Tip sheet ([Form M-760](#)) to aid adoption service providers and prospective adoptive parents.

Local USCIS field offices in the United States will continue to accept requests for extensions and change of circumstances for approved Form I-600A applications in accordance with the current filing instructions. Overseas U.S. citizens may continue to file Form I-600 at a U.S. Embassy, consulate or USCIS office abroad that has jurisdiction to accept the petition. However, in order to file a Form I-600 petition abroad, the petitioner must have an approved Form I-600A and be physically present in the adoptive child's country.

Prospective parents who reside abroad may continue to file the Form I-600A with an overseas USCIS office or the Dallas Lockbox facility.

For more information on orphan adoptions visit: <http://www.uscis.gov/adoptions>.

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