



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Effects of Puerto Rico Birth Certificate Invalidation on USCIS Benefit Seekers

WASHINGTON—On July 1, 2010, the Vital Statistics Office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico began issuing new, more secure certified copies of birth certificates to U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico, because of a new Puerto Rico birth certificate law. After September 30, 2010, all certified copies of birth certificates issued prior to July 1, 2010, will become invalid. After September 30, 2010, USCIS will not accept any certified copies of Puerto Rico birth certificates (PRBC) issued before July 1, 2010 for the purpose of establishing eligibility for immigration benefit petitions and applications.

Petitioners and applicants may continue to submit PRBCs issued before July 1, 2010, to establish United States citizenship or a familial relationship through September 30, 2010. USCIS will honor PRBCs in support of immigration filings if received on or before September 30, 2010, even if the adjudication takes place after the PRBC becomes invalid.

If an invalid PRBC is submitted in support of a petition or application, USCIS will notify the appropriate individual and give that individual the opportunity to submit a new, valid birth certificate.

Does an invalid birth certificate affect my citizenship status?

No, this law invalidates only the birth certificate. It does not change a person's citizenship status.

What if I already submitted a Puerto Rico birth certificate and my case has not been decided?

If you have already submitted a Puerto Rico birth certificate, the new Puerto Rico law will not affect the adjudication of your case.

How do I get a new Puerto Rico Birth Certificate?

Individuals who were born in Puerto Rico and are now living elsewhere can apply for a new birth certificate on-line or by mail. Mailed applications will not be accepted until after July 1, 2010. Instructions on how to apply by mail can be found at: www.prfaa.com/birthcertificates/ and www.prfaa.com/certificadosdenacimiento/.

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