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News Release

USCIS TO EXPAND PREMIUM PROCESSING SERVICE

Two Permanent, Employment-based Categories Available Starting August 28, 2006

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced today the addition of two new classifications to the Premium Processing Service, which allows U.S. businesses to pay a \$1,000 Premium Processing fee in exchange for 15-calendar-day processing of their case.

Starting on August 28, USCIS will begin accepting Premium Processing requests for petitions involving two employment-based immigration “categories” within the third employment-based “preference.” Those categories involve EB-3 Professionals, (i.e. immigrant workers with bachelor degrees who are members of the professions), and EB-3 Skilled Workers, (i.e. immigrant workers capable of performing skilled labor requiring at least two years of education, training or experience). Employers file for both categories using an Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker (Form I-140). Premium Processing is not available to “other workers” in the EB-3 category for jobs that do not require two years of education, training or experience.

In addition, USCIS has revised and will release a new Request for Premium Processing Services form (Form I-907), to include expansion of Premium Processing Service to the newly designated classifications. **Any Premium Processing Service requests for Form I-129 received BEFORE August 28, 2006 must use the current Form I-907 with the revision date of 04/01/2006. USCIS will not accept any Premium Processing Service requests for Form I-140 before August 28, 2006.**

While the new Form I-907 does not request any additional information, the updated form does include new instructions containing updated information. Starting on August 21, USCIS will make the new Form I-907 with updated instructions available for review on the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov. Employers cannot use the new form until August 28, 2006. The new Form I-907 will bear a revision date of **August 28, 2006**, with the designation “N” shown after the revision date (in the lower right corner of the form), to show that **prior versions are not acceptable after that date.** **All requests for Premium Processing Service received on August 28, 2006 or later MUST be filed using the new Form I-907.**

Under the Premium Processing Service, USCIS guarantees petitioners that, for a \$1,000 processing fee, it will issue either an approval notice, or where appropriate, a notice of intent to deny, a request for evidence or open an investigation for fraud or misrepresentation, within 15 calendar days of receipt. If

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the petition is not processed within 15 calendar days, USCIS will refund the \$1,000 fee and continue to process the request as part of the Premium Processing Service. In addition to faster processing, petitioners who participate in the program may use a dedicated phone number and e-mail address to check on the status of their petition or ask any other questions they may have concerning their petition. Premium Processing Service continues to be available for the designated classifications within Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker.

Since 2001, the Premium Processing Service has been available for several classifications within Form I-129, including E Treaty Traders and Investors, H-1B Specialty Occupation Workers, H-2B Temporary Workers performing agricultural services, H-3 Trainees, L Intracompany Transferees, O Aliens of Extraordinary Ability and those performing essential support services, P Performers and Athletes and those performing essential support services, and Q international Cultural Exchange Visitors, R Religious Workers and NAFTA Professionals from Canada and Mexico. Form I-129 petitions for those nonimmigrant worker classifications will continue to be eligible for Premium Processing Service unless the filing period has closed (for example, when the annual cap for a specific visa has been reached.)

Information about the expanded Premium Processing Service is available on the USCIS website at http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/prem_process.htm or by calling the USCIS National Customer Service Center toll free at 1-800-375-5283.

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On March 1, 2003, U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services became one of three legacy INS components to join the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. USCIS is charged with fundamentally transforming and improving the delivery of immigration and citizenship services, while enhancing our nation's security.