

Social Security

POMS Recent Change

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Originating Office: ORDP OISP
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Part RM – Records Maintenance
Chapter 102 – The Social Security Number, Policy and General Procedures
Subchapter 11 – Alien Evidence for an SSN
Transmittal No. 36, 09/10/2021

Audience

PSC: CA, CS, ICDS, IES, ISRA, RECONR, SCPS, TSA, TST;
OCO-OEIO: ANC, CAQCR, CR, CTE, FCR;
MAMPSC: DMS, ISRA, OAS, SPIKE;
FO/TSC: CS, CS TII, CS TXVI, CSR, CTE, DRT, DT, FR, OA, OS, RR, TA, TSC-CSR;

Originating Component

OISP

Effective Date

Upon Receipt

Background

In section RM 10211.025 B, USCIS provided instructions that extension sticker will no longer be provided; We added a note to reflect this change in USCIS policy.

Summary of Changes

RM 10211.025 Evidence of Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) Status for an SSN Card

The note in RM 10211.025 B reflects a change in the issuance of extension stickers.

RM 10211.025 Evidence of Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) Status for an SSN Card

A. Policy For Evidence Of Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) Status

Aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence must submit evidence of lawful permanent resident (LPR) status; this includes conditional, temporary, and alternate LPR status described in this section. Aliens who submit evidence of LPR status are issued unrestricted SSN cards (without a legend) provided the evidence requirements for an SSN are met.

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See also:

RM 10210.010, Evidence Policy for an Original or New SSN

RM 10210.015, Evidence Policy for a Replacement SSN Card

RM 10214.110, Requesting Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Initial Verification (IV) of Immigration Documents

B. Acceptable Evidence Of LPR Status

Accept any of the following documents, per RM 10211.025, in this section:

- Permanent resident card (Form I-551),
- Machine Readable Immigrant Visa (MRIV) with Temporary I-551 notation,
- Temporary I-551 stamp,
- Alternate evidence of LPR status, or
- Alien Registration Card (Form I-151).

Verify all evidence of LPR status using SAVE through the SSN application path in the Enumeration system. See RM 10214.110 for the SAVE response code which successfully verifies evidence of LPR status described in this section

See also:

The ACM for exhibits and features of current valid evidence of LPR status, described in this section, under “I-551” and “Immigrant Visa”.

C. Procedure And Description For Accepting Evidence Of LPR Status

Review all evidence of LPR status per RM 10210.205, Policy for Reviewing and Verifying Evidence for an SSN.

See also:

The ACM for exhibits and features of current valid evidence of LPR status, described here, under “I-551” and “Immigrant Visa”.

1. Permanent resident card (Form I-551)

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issues Form I-551 as evidence of LPR status. There are four valid versions of the form:

- the original Resident Alien Card issued from 1977 to 1989 (which does not show an expiration date),
- a revised version of the Resident Alien Card issued from 1989 to 1997,
- the optical Permanent Resident Card issued from 1998 to 2010, and

- the redesigned I-551 card with state-of-the-art technology issued from 2010 to the present.

A "Signature Waived" may appear in the signature area of the front and back of the card for certain people, such as children under the age of consent or individuals who are physically unable to provide a signature. Children under the age of 14 are not always fingerprinted; a "Fingerprint Not Available" may appear in the fingerprint portion. Individuals age 14 and over should have a fingerprint on the card. When the card does not have an expiration date and the bearer did not apply for a new card with a fingerprint and more current photo, the card is still valid.

a. I-551 shows an expiration date

In 1989, DHS began issuing I-551 cards showing an expiration date. The expiration date for LPRs is generally 10 years from the issue date. Permanent resident aliens with cards issued for a 10-year period that are expiring or have expired do not lose their permanent resident status. However, they need to renew their Permanent Resident Cards to maintain acceptable evidence of their status and to avoid difficulties in obtaining employment, benefits, and re-entry to the U.S. after travel abroad. They can renew their cards at a local US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office or by mail through a USCIS service center.

b. I-551 with an extension sticker

When renewing at a local USCIS office, an extension sticker may be affixed to the expiring or expired I-551. Accept an expired I-551 card with an extension sticker as evidence of LPR status.

LPRs who renew or replace their cards through a service center (because they do not live near an application support center) do not get a sticker affixed to the expiring or expired I-551. If the applicant alleges he or she is in the process of renewing the I-551 through a USCIS service center, advise the applicant that he or she will need to wait until he/she receives the new I-551 to submit as evidence of immigration status.

Note: Starting January 1, 2021, USCIS will no longer issue an extension sticker for the (10 year I-551 card). Instead they will issue a Notice of Action (I-797) extending LPR for an additional 12 month. Accept an expired I-551 card accompanied by an I-797 stating, "Your Lawful Permanent resident status is extended for a period of 12 months. During the 12 month extension you are authorized employment and travel". In the Enumeration system, select "Expired I-551 with I-797 Extension" from the Primary DHS Document field on the "Proof of Legal Alien Status" screen. Enter the new expiration date for the I-551 card based on the one-year extension. On the "SAVE Verification" screen, enter the receipt number shown on the I-797 as part of the Additional Verification request. On the Summary screen, enter the receipt date in the Remarks field

c. I-551 card shows only a 2-year validity period (conditional LPR)

A conditional LPR is issued an I-551 valid for a 2 -year period. When the card expires, DHS determines whether to grant the person lawful permanent resident alien status and issue him or her an I-551 for a 10-year period (i.e., with a 10-year expiration date). DHS

does not affix extension stickers to these cards. If the applicant submits an expired I-551 with a Notice of Action (I-797) extending LPR status, see RM 10211.025C.1.d.

d. Expired I-551 with Notice of Action (Form I-797)

USCIS issues a conditional resident alien, who has applied to have his or her conditional status removed, a Form I-797 stating the I-551 has been extended for 18 months.

Accept an expired I-551 card accompanied by an I-797 stating, “Your conditional resident status is extended for a period of 18 months. During the 18 month extension you are authorized employment and travel”.

In the Enumeration system, select "Expired I-551 with I-797 Extension" from the Primary DHS Document field on the "Proof of Legal Alien Status" screen. Enter the new expiration date for the I-551 card based on the one-year extension. On the "SAVE Verification" screen, enter the receipt number shown on the I-797 as part of the Additional Verification request. On the Summary screen, enter the receipt date in the Remarks field

NOTE: A sole USCIS receipt (Form I-797) is not acceptable evidence of alien status. Do not accept I-797 receipts for lost or stolen evidence of alien status in lieu of the original evidence (e.g., I-551 cards, MRIV with admission stamp, etc).

e. I-551 card does not show an expiration date

From 1979 until 1989, I-551 cards did not generally show an expiration date. The cards are still valid as evidence of LPR status. Do not refer the applicant to DHS for an updated I-551.

2. Machine Readable Immigrant Visa (MRIV) with Temporary I-551 notation

Treat an MRIV in an unexpired foreign passport which meets the following criteria the same as a valid Temporary I-551 stamp:

- The MRIV shows the statement, “UPON ENDORSEMENT SERVES AS TEMPORARY I-551 EVIDENCING PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR 1 YEAR”,
- is endorsed with an admission stamp on the upper portion of the MRIV which overlaps onto the adjoining page of the foreign passport, **and**
- not more than one year has passed between the date of the admission stamp and the date of the SSN application.

NOTE: Under limited circumstances, if a passport is unavailable, the DOS will issue the MRIV on a Form DS-232, *Unrecognized Passport or Waiver Cases* or suitable travel document. Accept an MRIV, if either on a Form DS-232, or valid travel document. To determine whether the foreign travel document is issued by the foreign country, see GN 00307.000. The MRIV must meet the criteria described here.

See also:

RM 10205.600H, The Immigrant Completes an SS-5 and Applied for an SSN when Applying for a Visa.

Background and description of the MRIV with Temporary I-551 notation

Beginning June 28, 2004, certain U.S. Embassies and Consulates began issuing the machine readable immigrant visa (MRIV) printed with the language, "UPON ENDORSEMENT SERVES AS TEMPORARY I-551 EVIDENCING PERMANENT RESIDENCE FOR 1 YEAR" in the body of the MRIV above the machine-readable zone (two lines of code at the bottom of the card). This language is almost identical to that contained in the Alien Documentation Identification and Telecommunication System (ADIT) Stamp, commonly referred to as the "Temporary I-551 stamp" or "ADIT Stamp." The Department of State (DOS) officer at the Embassy or Consulate places the MRIV inside the immigrant's passport, attached to one of the interior pages. The officer will not place a Temporary I-551 stamp in the foreign passport.

Registration number (Alien number or A#)

The MRIV shows the alien's registration number (A number or A#) as the "Registration Number" in the upper right-hand corner of the MRIV. The DHS Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer does not write the alien registration number on the admission stamp.

Admission stamp

When an alien is admitted to the U.S. as a permanent resident, the CBP officer places the admission stamp on the upper portion of the MRIV. Part of the admission stamp usually overlaps onto the adjoining page of the foreign passport. However, since hand stamping is a manual and inexact process, there may be instances where the CBP officer's hand stamp does not quite overlap the adjoining page. Thus, there may be some slight variations on the exact placement of the hand stamp, particularly if stamped hurriedly by the immigration officer. If an admission stamp is present, on or near the MRIV, with a date that falls within the validity period of the visa, accept that it is a valid admission stamp.

The MRIV with Temporary I-551 notation is valid for one year from the date of endorsement by the admission stamp. For example, if the admission stamp shows a date of entry into the U.S. as January 4, 2004, the expiration of the temporary I-551 status will be January 3, 2005.

MRIV Expiration Date

Do not use the expiration date on the MRIV itself to determine when the temporary I-551 status expires. The expiration date on the MRIV only shows how long the MRIV is valid, not how long the alien's temporary I-551 status is valid. An expired MRIV may still be acceptable evidence of an alien's temporary I-551 status, if the MRIV with the Temporary I-551 notation meets the requirements in RM 10211.025C.2, in this section.

3. Background and description of the Temporary I-551 stamp

Accept a currently valid I-551 Stamp.

When the alien does not have a machine readable immigrant visa, per RM 10211.025C.2 in this section, DHS places a Temporary I-551 stamp in the foreign passport as evidence of immigration status when the alien is admitted to the US as an LPR. The LPR uses the Temporary I-551 until the permanent I-551 card is received. The stamp may be placed in the alien's foreign passport or on a Form I-94, Arrival Departure record.

DHS USCIS will continue to issue the Temporary I-551/ADIT stamp when processing certain immigrant benefits (i.e., as temporary evidence of LPR status, until a replacement I-

551 is issued) and in adjustment of status situations.

When an alien previously admitted to the U.S. applies for a replacement I-551 or adjusts to LPR status, DHS places a Temporary I-551 stamp in the foreign passport. When the alien does not have a foreign passport, DHS places the Temporary I-551 stamp, a photo of the alien, and DHS seal on Form I-94.

The Temporary I-551 stamp, which was printed in red through June 30, 2014, is now printed in blue as of July 1, 2014, reads:

Upon endorsement, serves as temporary I-551 evidencing permanent residency for one year.

Issue date __(date)__

Officer __(name)__

EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZED

Valid Until __(date)__

Each stamp is uniquely numbered with a five-digit identifier which can be found below the "Valid Until" line. Also, the officer writes the A number on the stamp.

If the Temporary I-551 has expired but the person has not yet received the Permanent Resident Card, refer the applicant to DHS to extend the validity period of the Temporary I-551 stamp.

NOTE: DHS may not specify an expiration date. In this case, the stamp is valid until the alien receives an I-551.

4. Alternate evidence of LPR status

a. Employment Authorization Document (I-766) showing certain alien categories

Generally, when DHS grants or approves an adjustment to LPR status, the alien receives his or her I-551 card several weeks after the adjustment to LPR status has been granted. In these cases, while the alien is awaiting the I-551 card, SAVE will verify the alien's LPR status, since it is the current immigration status.

Under DHS guidance, we have established alternate evidence of LPR status for those applicants who have adjusted to LPR status and are awaiting their I-551 cards. These guidelines apply even if the applicant does not indicate he or she has adjusted to LPR status. The alternate evidence of LPR status only applies to the 10 most prevalent alien categories that adjust to LPR status.

Consider the alien to be an LPR if all of the following requirements are met:

- The applicant submits an I-766; and
- On the face of the I-766, the Category is one listed in RM 10211.025C.4.b.; and
- SAVE verifies LPR status.

See also:

The ACM for descriptions of the I-766.

b. Required I-766 categories

Under the alternate evidence of LPR status policy described in RM 10211.025C.4.a, in this section, if an I-766 card is submitted, on the face of the I-766 card the Category shown must be one of the following (status indicated in parenthesis):

- A3, A03 or A-3 (REFUGEE),
- A4, A04 or A-4 (PAROLEE),
- A5, A05 or A-5 (ASYLEE),
- A6, A06 or A-6 (FIANCEE – K1/CHILD – K2)
- A9, A09 or A-9 (SPOUSE/CHILD OF USC)
- A15 (LAPR DEPENDENT – V)
- A16 (VSFT/T1)
- C9, C09 or C-9 (ADJUSTMENT APPLICANT)
- C16 (ADJ APP – RES 1972)
- C25 (VSFT/T DEPENDENT)

5. Alien Registration Card (Form I-151)

Accept Form I-151 in only rare situations; see Form I-151, Alien Registration Receipt Card, RM 10210.805.

D. References

- The ACM for exhibits and features of current valid evidence of LPR status, described in this section, under “I-551” and “Immigrant Visa”.
- RM 10214.110, Requesting Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Initial Verification (IV) of Immigration Documents