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8  
9 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
10 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
11 SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION  
12

13 **Federal Trade Commission,**  
Plaintiff,

14 vs.

15 **Forms Direct, Inc., a corporation, also**  
16 **d/b/a Immigration Direct and successor**  
17 **in interest to American Immigration**  
18 **Center Inc., File Right, LLC, United**  
**Immigration Inc. and US Immigration**  
**Technology LLC; and**

19 **Cesare Alessandrini, individually and as**  
20 **an officer of Forms Direct, Inc.;**

21 Defendants.  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
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Case No.

**COMPLAINT FOR PERMANENT  
INJUNCTION AND OTHER EQUITABLE  
RELIEF**

COMPLAINT FOR PERMANENT  
INJUNCTION AND OTHER EQUITABLE  
RELIEF

1 Plaintiff, the Federal Trade Commission (“FTC”), for its Complaint against Defendants  
2 Forms Direct, Inc. d/b/a Immigration Direct and successor in interest to American Immigration  
3 Center Inc., File Right, LLC, United Immigration Inc. and US Immigration Technology LLC; and  
4 Cesare Alessandrini (collectively, “Defendants”) alleges:

5 1. The FTC brings this action under Section 13(b) of the Federal Trade Commission  
6 Act (“FTC Act”), 15 U.S.C. §53(b), to obtain permanent injunctive relief, rescission or  
7 reformation of contracts, restitution, the refund of monies paid, disgorgement of ill-gotten  
8 monies, and other equitable relief for Defendants’ acts or practices in violation of Section 5(a) of  
9 the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. §45(a), in connection with the advertising, marketing, promotion or sale  
10 of immigration and naturalization form preparation services.

### 11 **SUMMARY OF THE CASE**

12 2. This case concerns Defendants’ deceptive scheme to induce consumers into  
13 purchasing immigration and naturalization form preparation services from websites that falsely  
14 create the impression of an affiliation with the U.S. government. The design of Defendants’  
15 search engine advertisements and websites has tricked consumers into believing that Defendants’  
16 websites are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government. Consumers have  
17 purchased Defendants’ immigration products and services believing that they were submitting  
18 payment to a U.S. government agency such as the United States Citizenship and Immigration  
19 Service (“USCIS”). Defendants have also led consumers to believe that the fee they were paying  
20 Defendants was the applicable government agency filing fee. In reality, Defendants have charged  
21 consumers fees ranging from approximately \$120 to \$300 – which did not include the  
22 government filing fees – for assistance in completing the applicable immigration government  
23 form, through products such as Defendants’ online form preparation services. Such forms, and  
24 any pertinent instructions on how to complete the forms, are freely available on the USCIS  
25 website. Despite numerous consumer complaints and two prior state enforcement actions  
26 regarding Defendants’ deception, Defendants have failed to disclose adequately that: 1) their  
27 websites are not affiliated with the U.S. government, and 2) consumers who use their services  
28

1 must still submit their applications to the U.S. government and pay any applicable government  
2 filing fee.

3 **JURISDICTION, VENUE, AND INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT**

4 3. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1337(a),  
5 and 1345, and 15 U.S.C. §§ 45(a) and 53(b).

6 4. Venue is proper in this district under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(3), (c)(1), (c)(2), and  
7 (d), and 15 U.S.C. § 53(b).

8 5. Assignment to the San Francisco Division is proper because Defendant Forms  
9 Direct, Inc. transacts business in San Francisco County and has advertised its services to many  
10 consumers who reside in the county.

11 **PLAINTIFF**

12 6. The FTC is an independent agency of the United States Government created by  
13 statute. 15 U.S.C. §§ 41-58. The FTC enforces Section 5(a) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a),  
14 which prohibits unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce.

15 7. The FTC is authorized to initiate federal district court proceedings, by its own  
16 attorneys, to enjoin violations of the FTC Act and to secure such equitable relief as may be  
17 appropriate in each case, including rescission or reformation of contracts, restitution, the refund  
18 of monies paid, and the disgorgement of ill-gotten monies. 15 U.S.C. § 53(b).

19 **DEFENDANTS**

20 8. Defendant Forms Direct, Inc. (“Forms Direct”), also doing business as  
21 Immigration Direct, is a Nevada corporation with its principal place of business at 311 N. Pecos  
22 Road, Henderson, NV 89052. On January 1, 2016, Forms Direct merged with two related entities  
23 —United Immigration Inc. (“United Immigration”) and US Immigration Technology LLC (“US  
24 Immigration Technology”)—to form one remaining entity, Forms Direct. On January 1, 2018,  
25 Forms Direct merged with two other related entities—American Immigration Center Inc. (“AIC”) and  
26 File Right, LLC (“File Right”) —to form one remaining entity, Forms Direct.

27 9. From 2010 through 2015, United Immigration, doing business as  
28 uscitizenship.info, was a Nevada corporation with its principal place of business at 311 N. Pecos

1 Road, Henderson, NV 89052. From November 2014 through 2015, US Immigration Technology,  
2 doing business as usimmigration.us, was a Delaware corporation with its principal place of  
3 business at 311 N. Pecos Road, Henderson, NV 89052. From 2010 through 2017, File Right,  
4 doing business as Immigration Direct, was a Delaware corporation with its principal place of  
5 business at 311 N. Pecos Rd, Henderson, NV 89052.

6 10. From 2010 through 2017, AIC, doing business as us-immigration.com, was a  
7 Florida corporation with its principal place of business registered as 2520 SW 22nd Street, Suite  
8 2-077, Miami, FL 33145. AIC, however, had no corporate offices at that address but conducted  
9 its operations at 311 N. Pecos Rd, Henderson, NV 89052 where it shared office space and  
10 employees with File Right; Forms Direct; United Immigration; and US Immigration Technology.

11 11. Defendant Forms Direct, along with its related merged entities AIC, File Right,  
12 United Immigration, and US Immigration Technology (“Corporate Defendant”), transacts or has  
13 transacted business in this district and throughout the United States. At all times material to this  
14 Complaint, acting alone or in concert with others, Forms Direct has advertised, marketed,  
15 distributed, or sold immigration and naturalization form preparation services to consumers  
16 throughout the United States.

17 12. Defendant Cesare Alessandrini has been the primary actor behind the Corporate  
18 Defendant’s deceptive scheme. He is the owner, Director, President, Secretary, and Treasurer of  
19 Forms Direct. Defendant Alessandrini was also the owner, Director, President, and Secretary of  
20 dissolved entity United Immigration Inc.; the owner, manager, and President of dissolved entity  
21 US Immigration Technology LLC; the owner and President of dissolved entity File Right; and a  
22 managing member of dissolved entity AIC. Defendant Alessandrini has overseen much of the  
23 operations and business activities of the Corporate Defendant, including but not limited to  
24 overseeing the customer service department, directing the marketing and sales practices, and  
25 entering into relevant licensing, financing, and marketing contracts. At all times material to this  
26 Complaint, acting alone or in concert with others, he has formulated, directed, controlled, had the  
27 authority to control, or participated in the acts and practices of the Corporate Defendant,  
28 including the acts and practices set forth in this Complaint. Defendant Alessandrini resides in this

1 district and, in connection with the matters alleged herein, transacts or has transacted business in  
2 this district and throughout the United States.

### 3 **COMMERCE**

4 13. At all times material to this Complaint, Defendants have maintained a substantial  
5 course of trade in or affecting commerce, as “commerce” is defined in Section 4 of the FTC Act,  
6 15 U.S.C. §44.

### 7 **DEFENDANTS’ DECEPTIVE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES**

#### 8 **DEFENDANTS’ PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

9 14. Since at least 2010, Defendants have used deceptive marketing methods and sales  
10 tactics to tempt consumers into purchasing their products and services. Throughout this time,  
11 Defendant Alessandrini has been the primary leader of the Corporate Defendant’s actions.

12 15. Defendants have advertised, marketed, and sold immigration and naturalization  
13 form preparation services to consumers nationwide through a myriad of websites owned and  
14 operated by Defendants. Defendants’ websites have included: us-immigration.com,  
15 immigrationdirect.com, uscitizenship.info, usimmigration.us, and usimmigrationcitizenship.com  
16 (collectively, “Sales Websites”).

17 16. Defendants have typically sold the same types of immigration and naturalization  
18 form preparation products on all Sales Websites. The main product sold has been what  
19 Defendants call an “online immigration software solution” or “intelligent Do-It-Yourself  
20 Immigration Wizard” that has provided “step-by-step” guidance to consumers on how to fill out  
21 the applicable immigration or naturalization government form. The software has asked  
22 consumers a series of questions related to information required by the applicable government  
23 immigration or naturalization form and has used the information that consumers have provided to  
24 populate that form.

25 17. The most popular form preparation products on the Sales Websites have been the  
26 online software wizard Green Card Renewal/Replacement Application, or Form I-90 product, and  
27 the online software wizard U.S. Citizenship Application, or Form N-400 product. Defendants  
28 have claimed that the online software wizard Green Card Renewal/Replacement Application

1 product has helped consumers complete the USCIS's "Application to Replace Permanent  
2 Resident Card" or "Form I-90." Defendants have also claimed that the online software wizard  
3 U.S. Citizenship Application product has helped consumers complete the USCIS's "Application  
4 for Naturalization" or "Form N-400."

5 18. Defendants have charged consumers a fee that has ranged from approximately  
6 \$120 to \$300 to use their products and services. The cost of Defendants' products and services  
7 has not included the applicable fees charged by the relevant U.S. government agency. For  
8 example, USCIS has charged consumers a fee ("USCIS Fee") ranging from \$135 to \$1,170 to  
9 submit the immigration or naturalization forms for which Defendants have offered form  
10 preparation services on their Sales Websites.

11 19. While Defendants have claimed that their main product is an online software  
12 wizard product, Defendants have not clearly and conspicuously marketed their main product as  
13 such. Instead, Defendants' Sales Websites and advertisements have led consumers to believe that  
14 the Sales Websites are affiliated with the U.S. government and that any fees consumers pay  
15 Defendants are to cover the relevant U.S. government agency fee.

#### 16 **DEFENDANTS' DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING**

17 20. Defendants have primarily advertised their Sales Websites through online search  
18 engine marketing, using search engines such as Google, Yahoo!, and Bing. The majority of  
19 Defendants' search engine advertisements have contributed to the net impression that the Sales  
20 Websites are affiliated with USCIS or the U.S. government.

21 21. For example, in three search engine advertisements placed on Bing in or around  
22 August 2015, Defendants used headlines such as "USCIS Forms – Easy Online Forms for Green  
23 Card & Citizenship," "USCIS Forms & Services – USCIS Forms Online," and "USCIS  
24 Immigration Service" to advertise their websites: us-immigration.com, usimmigration.us, and  
25 uscitizenship.info, respectively. All three search engine advertisements purchased by Defendants  
26 relied on the prominent display of the U.S. immigration government agency name USCIS. (See  
27 Figure 1 below.)  
28

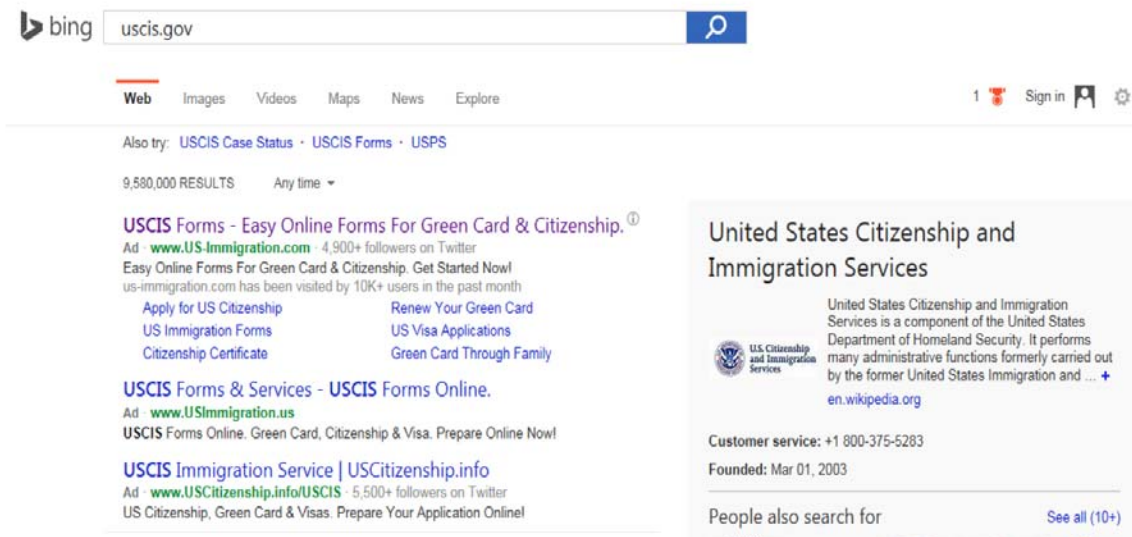


Figure 1: search results for keyword “uscis.gov” on Bing search platform on August 19, 2015.

22. Similarly, in four search engine advertisements placed on Yahoo! in or around August 2015, Defendants used headlines such as “USCIS Forms – Easy Online Forms for Green Card & Citizenship,” “USCIS Immigration Service – US Citizenship, Green Card & Visas,” “USCIS Forms & Services – USCIS Forms Online,” and “USCIS Forms & Immigration” to advertise their Sales Websites. All four of these search engine advertisements also relied on the prominent display of the U.S. immigration government agency name USCIS. (See Figure 2 below.)

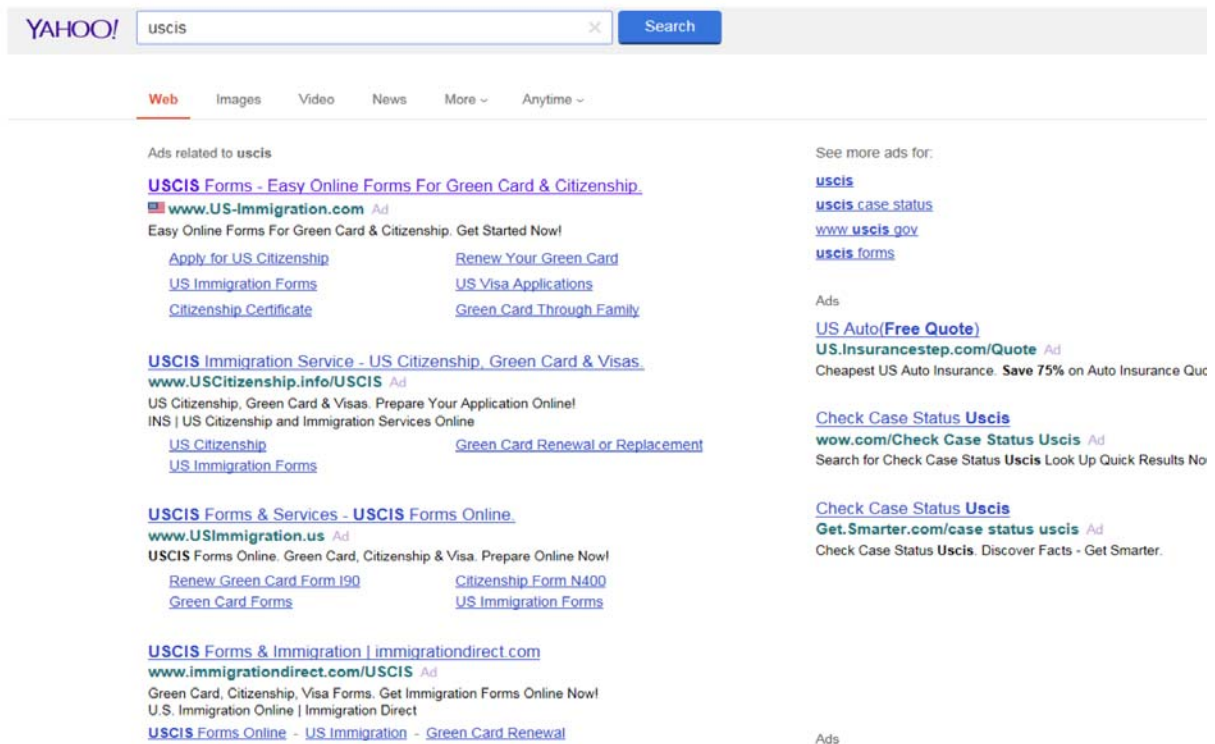


Figure 2: search results for keyword “uscis” on Yahoo! search platform on August 17, 2015.

23. Defendants’ search engine advertisements, including those depicted in Figures 1 and 2, have conveyed the impression that the advertisements will direct consumers to a website owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.

24. Defendants have made no clear and conspicuous statement in their search engine advertisements to correct the false impression that the advertisement will direct consumers to a website owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.

25. In placing most of their search engine advertisements, Defendants have typically targeted consumers searching for immigration and naturalization services provided by the U.S. government. To increase the likelihood that such consumers would see their ads, Defendants have submitted bids on immigration- and government-related keywords to place their ads at the top of the search engine’s results page that appears after a consumer completes a search using those keywords. These immigration- and government-related keywords have included terms such as “USCIS,” “USCIS.gov,” “USCIS forms,” “US Immigration,” “INS,” “department of homeland security,” and “travel.state.gov.”



1           26.     A consumer searching for the keyword “USCIS.gov” on Bing’s search platform in  
2 August 2015, for example, would have seen the search advertisements described in paragraph 21.  
3 (See Figure 1 above.) Similarly, a consumer searching for the keyword “USCIS” on Yahoo!’s  
4 search platform in August 2015 would have seen the search advertisements described in  
5 paragraph 22. (See Figure 2 above.)

6           27.     When consumers have clicked on a link in Defendants’ search engine ads, the  
7 advertisement has typically directed consumers to one of the Sales Websites.

### 8                           **DEFENDANTS’ MISLEADING SALES WEBSITES**

9           28.     The majority of consumers have reached the Sales Websites through Defendants’  
10 search engine advertisements as described above. Upon clicking a link in Defendants’ search  
11 engine ads, consumers have typically been directed to the Sales Website’s homepage or a  
12 webpage of the Sales Website that describes a particular product (“Product Page”) such as the  
13 Citizenship Application or Form N-400 product webpage.

14          29.     The Sales Websites’ designs have implied that the websites are owned, operated  
15 by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.

16          30.     In some instances, the Sales Websites’ web addresses or URLs have used  
17 variations of “U.S.” and general immigration terms that have contributed to consumers’  
18 impression that the websites are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.  
19 These URLs have included usimmigration.us, us-immigration.com, uscitizenship.info, and  
20 usimmigrationcitizenship.com.

21          31.     In many instances, the Sales Websites have used variations of two titles at the top  
22 of their webpages: “U.S. Immigration” and “United States Citizenship.” For example, from  
23 approximately 2010 to 2015, us-immigration.com has used “U.S. Immigration” as the title of its  
24 website. Similarly, in or around 2014 to 2015, immigrationdirect.com and usimmigration.us have  
25 also used “U.S. Immigration” as the title on their websites. In another instance, in or around 2012  
26 to 2017, uscitizenship.info has used “United States Citizenship” as the title of its website. In  
27 2017, usimmigrationcitizenship.com has used “US Immigration Citizenship Online” as the title of  
28 its website.

1           32.     The Sales Websites have also used images and color schemes that contribute to the  
2 net impression that the websites are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.  
3 The images used have included depictions of the Statue of Liberty, the American flag, a U.S.  
4 passport, a U.S. green card, then-President Obama, the U.S. Capitol building, and an image that  
5 resembles a government seal with the Statue of Liberty in the center. The Sales Websites have  
6 also typically utilized color schemes that emphasize the colors red, white, and blue.

7           33.     The Sales Websites have referred to Defendants' online software wizard products  
8 by the corresponding USCIS form number or an abbreviated version of its form name. For  
9 example, from approximately 2012 through 2017, us-immigration.com has generally referred to  
10 its online software product—that it contends will assist consumers to fill out USCIS's  
11 "Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card" or "Form I-90"—simply as "Green card  
12 Renewal Form I-90." The Sales Websites have not provided any clear and conspicuous statement  
13 that "Green card Renewal Form I-90" and Defendants' other products are software wizard  
14 products to help consumers fill out the form rather than the relevant USCIS forms.

15           34.     The Sales Websites have not provided any clear and conspicuous statement  
16 regarding the identity of the Defendants who own and operate the Sales Websites or that the  
17 Defendants are not affiliated with the U.S. government. Instead, the only place where the  
18 corporate entity name has generally appeared on the homepage or Product Page of the Sales  
19 Websites is in small font within the circle of the government-like seal that appears next to the title  
20 of the Sales Websites.

21           35.     None of the Sales Websites has provided any clear and conspicuous statement  
22 regarding the cost of the Defendants' products or services on their homepages or Product Pages or  
23 that their fees have not included any applicable USCIS Fee. In fact, the Sales Websites have  
24 generally lacked any prominent pricing information regarding the costs of the Defendants'  
25 products or services on the majority of their webpages.

26           36.     From approximately 2014 to 2015, the portion of the Product Pages that  
27 consumers likely saw without scrolling down the webpage (i.e., the "Top Portion")<sup>1</sup> for the

28 <sup>1</sup> What portions of a webpage display without requiring a consumer to scroll down the page, i.e. "above the fold,"

Citizenship Application software product for us-immigration.com, uscitizenship.info, immigrationdirect.com, and usimmigration.us has appeared at times as depicted below in Figures 3-6. (See Attachment A for complete versions of the Product Pages depicted in Figures 3-6.)



Figure 3: Top Portion of the Citizenship Application Product Page for us-immigration.com captured on May 31, 2014.

will vary depending on many technological factors including the type of browser used, the device used, and the resolution of that device.



Figure 4: Top Portion of the Citizenship Application Product Page for [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov) captured on June 6, 2014.



Figure 5: Top Portion of the Citizenship Application Product Page for [immigrationdirect.com](http://immigrationdirect.com) captured on Dec. 11, 2014.



Figure 6: Top Portion of the Citizenship Application Product Page for usimmigration.us captured on March 20, 2015.

37. The most prominent features on the Product Pages have generally been the title at the top of the page, the government-like seal next to the title, and the images and text below the title. For example, the most prominent features on us-immigration.com's Citizenship Application Product Page have been: (1) the title "U.S. Immigration;" (2) the image of the government-like seal with the Statue of Liberty in the middle placed to the left of the title; (3) the images of the American flag, a U.S. passport, and a U.S. social security card; and (4) the tag line "Click below to start your Citizenship application" with a large red button with "Start Your Application" below the tag line. (See Figure 3 above.)

38. The mobile versions of the Sales Websites have used the same design schemes that create the net impression that the websites are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government. For example, the most prominent features in the mobile version of us-immigration.com's Citizenship Application Product Page have been: (1) the title "United States Immigration;" (2) the image of the government-like seal with the Statue of Liberty in the middle placed to the left of the title; (3) the images of the American flag and Statue of Liberty; and (4)

1 the tag line “U.S. Citizenship Application” with a large red button with “Start Your Application”  
2 below the tag line (see Figure 7 below).



Figure 7: Citizenship Application Product Page  
for mobile version of us-immigration.com  
captured on August 10, 2015.

39. Once consumers have clicked on the “Start My Application” button on a Product  
Page of a Sales Website, consumers typically have the option of completing a “Qualification  
Quiz” that asks a series of questions to determine if the consumer is eligible to submit that  
particular immigration or naturalization application. Once a consumer has either skipped or  
completed the Qualification Quiz, the Sales Website has usually directed consumers to create an  
account. To create an account, consumers have been required to provide personal information  
such as full name, email address, and phone number.

40. After creating an account, the consumer usually has been directed to an order page.  
In some instances, the order page has been the first webpage of the Sales Website that provided  
consumers with any pricing information on the cost of Defendants’ products and services. The  
order page has typically referenced the product by the general application name. Typically, the



order page has not stated that Defendants' product is an online software wizard that helps consumers fill out the relevant government form. For example, in or around 2013, the website us-immigration.com has referenced the U.S. Citizenship Application or Form N-400 software product as "Application for Naturalization" (See Figure 8 below).

The screenshot shows the 'Payment' section of the U.S. Immigration website. The header includes the U.S. Immigration logo and the text 'Guiding You Through Citizenship, Green Card and Visas Applications'. The main heading is 'Complete Your Payment Information to Sign Up'. There are two tabs: 'Credit Card' (selected) and 'PayPal'. Under 'Credit Card Information', it says 'Please enter your credit card information below.' and 'All fields are required unless otherwise noted.' The form fields include: 'Card Type' (a dropdown menu), 'Card Number' (a text input), 'Expiration Date' (Month and Year dropdowns), 'First Name' (text input, with a note 'Exactly as it appears on card'), 'Last Name' (text input, with a note 'Exactly as it appears on card'), and 'Security Code' (text input). To the right, a 'Preparation Fee' table shows 'Application for Naturalization' for \$199 and an 'Order Total' of \$199. Below the payment fields is the 'Billing Address' section with fields for 'Street Number and Name', 'City or Town', 'Province or State' (a dropdown menu with 'Canadian and U.S. Addresses Only'), 'Country' (a dropdown menu), and 'Postal or Zip Code'. A warning box states: 'Use of a stolen or fraudulent credit card number is illegal and results in permanent disqualification! We will prosecute all cases of fraud.' Below this, it says 'Your IP Address has been recorded to prevent fraud: 10.0.102.39'. At the bottom, there is a checkbox for 'I agree to the Terms and Conditions' and a 'Submit' button. A small disclaimer at the very bottom states: 'Site Disclaimer: This website does not offer any form of legal advice, but general information on immigration forms, applications and procedures. You may download blank government forms for free at www.uscis.gov. US-Immigration.com offers self-help services at a customer's own specific direction and does not offer any legal advice or represent to its customers about the choice of forms, answers to specific application questions, or their legal rights. US-Immigration.com is not a law firm, and is not a substitute for a law firm or an attorney, and is not affiliated with the U.S. government. By using this website, you are agreeing to its Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy. Purchase price does not include application or filing fees that may be charged by any U.S. government agency, including without limitation the USCIS.' The footer text reads: 'Copyright © 1996-2013 American Immigration Center Inc. All Rights Reserved.'

Figure 8: order page for U.S. Citizenship Application software product of us-immigration.com in 2013.

41. Once a consumer has clicked on the submit button on the order page, Defendants have charged the consumer's credit card. Then, Defendants have directed the consumer to answer a series of questions to obtain the information necessary to populate the applicable

1 government form. At the end of the questions, Defendants generally have directed consumers to  
2 print and sign their applications.

3 42. In some instances, the Sales Websites have provided consumers with instructions  
4 directing them to mail their applications to the relevant government agency along with any  
5 applicable government fees. In those cases, upon receiving these instructions, many consumers  
6 have discovered for the first time that the Defendants' websites are not owned, operated by, or  
7 affiliated with the U.S. government and that the fees they paid do not include the USCIS Fee.

8 43. In those instances, Defendants' refund policy has stated that consumers who have  
9 "printed" their applications are not eligible to receive a refund. Consumers, however, have not  
10 discovered the Defendants' deception until after they have already "printed" their applications.

11 44. In other instances, Defendants have filed the consumer's immigration application  
12 on his or her behalf with USCIS. In those cases, some consumers have only discovered that the  
13 Defendants' websites were not owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government when  
14 they noticed two separate charges on their credit card statements. The first credit card charge has  
15 reflected the Defendants' fee for their service, while the second charge has reflected the USCIS  
16 Fee.

17 **DEFENDANTS' DISCLOSURES ARE NOT CLEAR AND CONSPICUOUS**

18 45. At times, Defendants have included language on the Sales Websites that addressed  
19 the fact that the Sales Websites are not owned by a government agency or affiliated with the U.S.  
20 government and that the fees they charge do not include the USCIS Fee. Defendants typically  
21 have placed their purported disclosures on the Sales Websites such that consumers have stated  
22 they do not see them. In some instances, Defendants have directed consumers through their  
23 search advertisements to webpages of the Sales Websites that only displayed a purported  
24 disclosure at the bottom of the webpage, requiring consumers to scroll down the webpage before  
25 they could see it. In other instances, Defendants have directed consumers to webpages of the  
26 Sales Websites that displayed the purported disclosure below more prominent features on the  
27 Sales Websites. In either case, consumers have reported that they never saw the disclosures.  
28



46. In or around 2017, the Top Portion of the usimmigrationcitizenship.com homepage has appeared at times as depicted below in Figure 9. From approximately 2014 to 2015, the Top Portion of the immigrationdirect.com, usimmigration.us, and us-immigration.com homepages have appeared at times as depicted below in Figures 10-12. (See Attachment B for complete versions of the homepages depicted in Figures 9-12.)

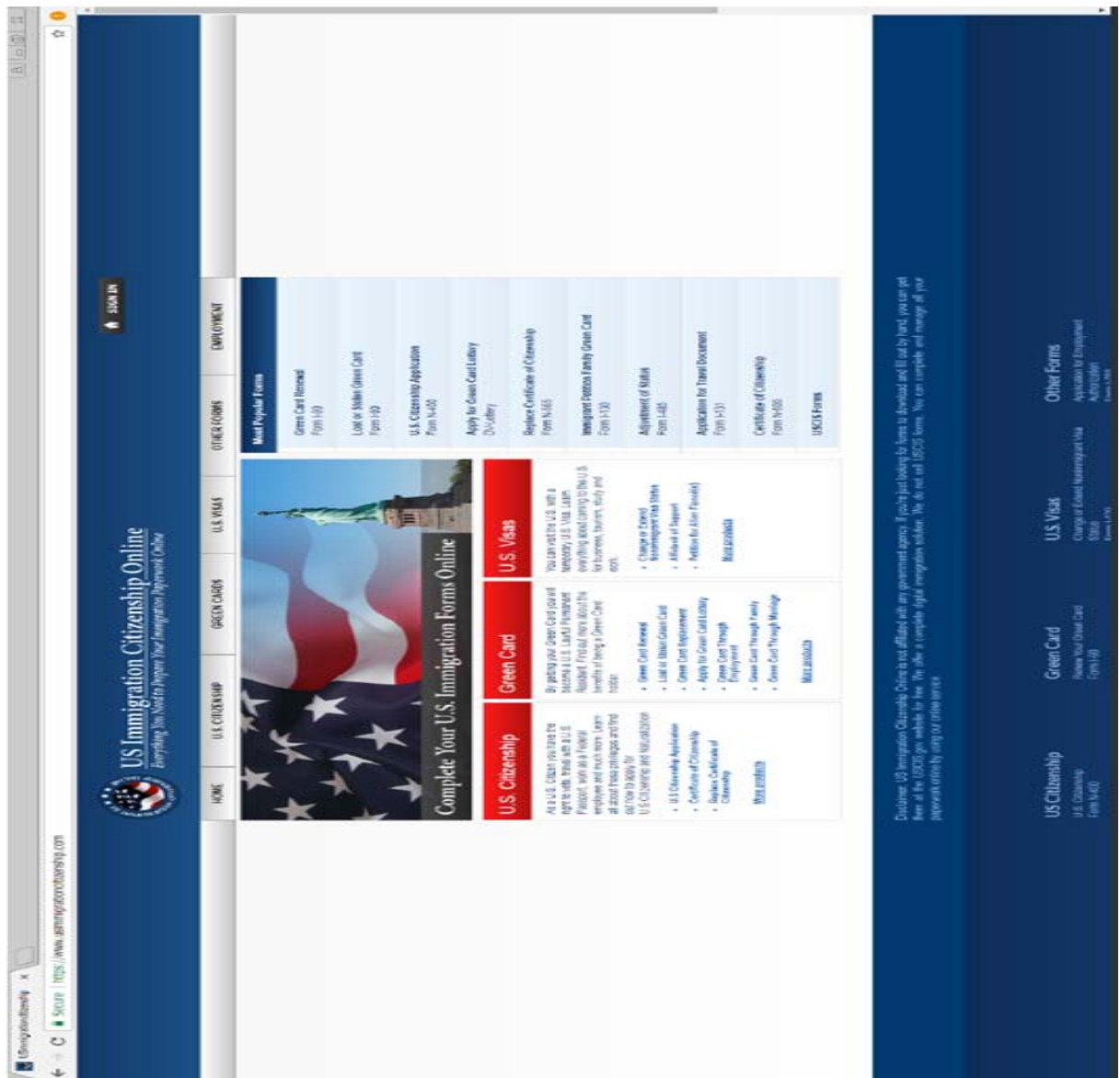


Figure 9: Top Portion of homepage of usimmigrationcitizenship.com captured on November 27, 2017.



Figure 10: Top Portion of homepage of uscitizenship.info captured on November 14, 2014.



# U.S. IMMIGRATION

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## Citizenship and Immigration Applications

### Prepare your applications online

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**Be Prepared For Obama's Executive Order On Immigration!**  
Get Your FREE Undocumented Immigrants: Prepare for Action Guide

#### Most Searched Forms

- Green Card Renewal I-90
- Apply for Citizenship N-400
- Green Card for Family I-130
- Replace Citizenship Certificate N-565
- Apply for a Green Card I-485
- Certificate of Citizenship N-600
- Application for Travel Document I-131
- Visitor Visa

[More Forms Below](#)

#### Citizenship

- Apply for U.S. Citizenship
- Replace your Certificate of Citizenship
- Apply for Citizenship Certificate
- How to Pass the Citizenship Test & Interview

#### Green Card

- Renew or Replace Green Card
- Remove Conditions on my Green Card
- Green Card Lottery
- Green Card Through Employment
- Green Card Application

#### Family

- Fiancé Visa
- Get Green Card for Family Member
- Apply for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals - DACA

#### Inmigración en Español

- Renovación de Green Card
- Obtener Ciudadanía Americana
- Acción Diferida

#### Visit the U.S.

- Apply for B-2 Visitor Visa
- Change or Extend Visa Status
- Replace my I-94 Card
- U.S. Visa Options

#### Working in the USA

- Apply for B-1 Business Visa
- Get your Work Authorization in the U.S.
- Get an H1B Visa

Figure 11: Top Portion of homepage of immigrationdirect.com captured on December 10, 2014.





Figure 12: Top Portion of homepage of us-immigration.com captured on August 6, 2015.

47. Similar to the Product Pages (Figures 3-6), the most prominent features of the Sales Websites' homepages generally have been the title at the top of the page and the image of a government-like seal next to the title, the image(s) and text in the box directly below the title, and the navigation menu bars next to the box. For example, in Figure 9, the most prominent features of the usimmigrationcitizenship.com's home page have been: (1) the title on the webpage, "U.S. Immigration Citizenship Online;" (2) the image of the government-like seal depicting the American Flag placed to the left of the title; (3) the images of the Statute of Liberty and the American flag, with the tag line "Complete Your Immigration Forms Online;" and (4) the list of forms in the navigation bar to the right of the box entitled "Most Popular Forms."

1           48.     The Sales Websites have not provided any clear and conspicuous statement to  
2 correct the false impression that the Sales Websites are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the  
3 U.S. government. Instead, consumers have typically clicked on one of the links in the navigation  
4 bar on the homepages, which has directed them to the Sales Websites' applicable Product Page,  
5 believing that the Sales Websites are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.  
6 Indeed, over a thousand consumers have reported that they believed the Sales Websites were  
7 owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.

#### 8                                   **PRIOR STATE ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS**

9           49.     In or around March 2013, the Attorney General of Texas ("Texas AG") initiated  
10 an investigation of two of Defendants' Sales Websites—us-immigration.com and  
11 immigrationdirect.com. Defendant Alessandrini had knowledge of, and was responsible for  
12 providing information in response to, this investigation. On June 2, 2014, the Texas AG filed suit  
13 against now-dissolved entity AIC alleging that us-immigration.com led consumers "to think that  
14 Defendant is affiliated with or endorsed by the United States government due to the lack of  
15 adequate disclosures listed on its website." The complaint also alleged that Defendants failed to  
16 "make clear and conspicuous disclosures regarding consumers' ability to obtain the immigration  
17 forms and instructions for free from USCIS." It further alleged that Defendants failed to "make  
18 clear and conspicuous disclosures regarding cancellation and refund policies."

19           50.     On June 12, 2014, a Texas court entered a stipulated final judgment and  
20 permanent injunction under which AIC agreed to pay civil penalties and state attorneys' fees.  
21 The permanent injunction prohibits Defendants from, among other activities: (1) "[m]aking  
22 deceptive or misleading representations, in any manner, on their website or on any other format  
23 that is accessible by consumers which could reasonably lead consumers to believe that  
24 [Defendants] are affiliated with or endorsed by the United States Citizenship and Immigration  
25 Services;" (2) "[m]aking deceptive or misleading representations, in any manner, on their website  
26 or on any other format that is accessible by consumers which could reasonably lead consumers to  
27 believe that [Defendants] are affiliated with or endorsed by any United States or State  
28 governmental entity unless such affiliation or endorsement actually exists;" (3) "[f]ailing to make

1 clear and conspicuous disclosure that all forms which may be completed using [Defendants']  
2 services for a fee are available *and* come with written instructions *for free* from USCIS; and (4)  
3 “[f]ailing to make clear and conspicuous statement of cancellation, termination or refund/return  
4 policies available to consumers before consumers purchase [Defendants'] services.”

5 51. In or around April 2013, the Attorney General of Florida (“Florida AG”) initiated  
6 an investigation of Defendants’ website us-immigration.com. Defendant Alessandrini also had  
7 knowledge of this investigation. AIC entered into an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance  
8 (“AVC”) on September 21, 2013. In the AVC, AIC agreed to: (1) “clearly and conspicuously  
9 disclose on [us-immigration.com] that [AIC] is not affiliated with the United States government;”  
10 and (2) “clearly and conspicuously disclose on [us-immigration.com] that the immigration and  
11 naturalization forms provided on the Website are available free of charge via U.S. Citizenship and  
12 Immigration Service.” AIC further agreed to pay state attorneys’ fees.

13 52. Since 2013 and 2014, Defendants’ Sales Websites have continued to create the  
14 false impression that they are owned, operated by, or affiliated with the U.S. government.  
15 Defendants’ Sales Websites have continued to fail to disclose clearly and conspicuously that the  
16 Defendants are not affiliated with the U.S. government, or that the fees they charge do not include  
17 the USCIS fee.

### 18 **VIOLATIONS OF THE FTC ACT**

19 53. Section 5(a) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a), prohibits “unfair or deceptive acts  
20 or practices in or affecting commerce.”

21 54. Misrepresentations or deceptive omissions of material fact constitute deceptive  
22 acts or practices prohibited by Section 5(a) of the FTC Act.

### 23 **COUNT I**

#### 24 **Deceptive Marketing in Violation of the FTC Act**

25 55. Through the means described in Paragraphs 20-52, Defendants have represented,  
26 directly or indirectly, expressly or by implication, that the Defendants’ Sales Websites are owned,  
27 operated by, or affiliated with the United States government.  
28

56. In truth and fact, the Defendants' Sales Websites are not owned, operated by, or affiliated with the United States government, but are commercial websites that sell immigration and naturalization form preparation services to consumers throughout the United States.

57. Therefore, the making of the representations as set forth in Paragraphs 20-52 of this Complaint constitutes a deceptive act or practice in or affecting commerce in violation of Section 5(a) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a).

**COUNT II**

### Failure to Disclose or Disclose Adequately Material Terms

58. In numerous instances in connection with the advertising, marketing, promotion, offering for sale, or sale of immigration and naturalization form preparation services, Defendants have represented, directly or indirectly, expressly or by implication, that consumers could apply for citizenship and prepare other immigration-related applications through their Sales Websites.

59. In numerous instances in which Defendants have made the representation set forth in Paragraph 58 of this Complaint, Defendants have failed to disclose, or disclose adequately to consumers, that after consumers have used Defendants' form preparation services: 1) consumers must submit their final citizenship and immigration-related applications to the U.S. government, and 2) consumers must pay any applicable government fees to the U.S. government. This additional information would be material to consumers in deciding to purchase the form preparation services that Defendants sell.

60. Defendants' failure to disclose, or disclose adequately, the material information described in Paragraph 59, above, in light of the representation described in Paragraph 58, above, constitutes a deceptive act or practice in violation of Section 5(a) of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a).

## CONSUMER INJURY

61. Consumers have suffered and will continue to suffer substantial injury as a result of Defendants' violations of the FTC Act. In addition, Defendants have been unjustly enriched as a result of their unlawful acts or practices. Absent injunctive relief by this Court, Defendants are likely to continue to injure consumers, reap unjust enrichment, and harm the public interest.

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