

## Types of Cases the CIS Ombudsman Can and Cannot Help With

The Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CIS Ombudsman) assists individuals and employers in resolving difficulties they are experiencing with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This tip sheet explains the types of cases we can and cannot help with.

**We only accept case assistance requests in English.** Your DHS Form 7001, *Request for Case Assistance*, must be completed in English. Any supporting documentation in another language must include an English translation.

### Key Information

- It is important to **know the types of cases we can and cannot help with** so you are best able to resolve the issue you are experiencing.
- We are an **independent office** and are **not part of USCIS**.
- We are an **office of last resort**. Before you request assistance from us, you must have [contacted USCIS](#) in the last 90 days and given the agency at least 60 days to try to resolve your problem. See our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page for more information and exceptions.
- For the most up-to-date information, go to our [How to Submit a Case Assistance Request](#) page and see our [Case Assistance Alerts](#) for recent updates that may affect you if you want to request case assistance.

### Types of Cases We Can Help With

If your only issue is a USCIS processing delay and USCIS has not approved an expedite request, we can help with this type of case assistance request *only if*:

- You submitted a case inquiry to USCIS through one of its [customer service tools](#) in the last 90 days and have given the agency at least 60 days to respond, *and*
- Your case inquiry date (which may be different from the [processing times](#) USCIS posts on its website) has already passed.

These are some of the most common types of issues we can help with if you have been unable to resolve the issue by contacting USCIS.

- ✓ **Undelivered USCIS notices or decisions**  
Such as receipt notices, requests for evidence, appointment notices, or denial notices where USCIS systems indicate that it issued one, or instances where the U.S. Postal Service returned a card or document to USCIS as non-deliverable.
- ✓ **Aging out of eligibility**  
Certain cases where the beneficiary may “age out” of eligibility for the requested immigration benefit. See USCIS’ [Child Status Protection Act \(CSPA\)](#) page for additional information.
- ✓ **U.S. military personnel**  
Certain cases involving U.S. military personnel and their families.

- ✓ **Improper rejections**  
Applications and petitions that were improperly rejected by USCIS due to clear errors of fact or obvious misapplication of the relevant law.
- ✓ **Typographical errors**  
[Typographic errors](#) (such as the wrong name or date of birth) in immigration documents, such as Green Cards or employment authorization documents.
- ✓ **Emergency or hardship**  
Certain cases involving an emergency or a hardship that fall under the [USCIS expedite criteria](#).
- ✓ **Expedites**  
Expedite requests approved by USCIS more than 2 months ago.
- ✓ **Transfers to the Department of State**  
Delays in sending approved petitions to the Department of State.
- ✓ **Form I-134A (only three types of issues)**  
We can help with only these three issues for Form I-134A cases for the Uniting for Ukraine (U4U) and Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans (CHNV) parole processes. See our [case assistance alert](#) for more information.
  - Correcting certain typographical errors (such as an email address or name) on your pending Form I-134A before U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issues the travel authorization;
  - Assisting when some family members have received their travel authorization, but other family members are still waiting; or
  - Getting a copy of the previously issued confirmation notice that was emailed to the beneficiary so they can set up their USCIS online account.

## Types of Cases We Cannot Help With

With few exceptions, we **cannot** help if:

- ✗ **It is before the case inquiry date for your case**  
You can find your case inquiry date on USCIS' [Check Case Processing Times](#) page under the "When can I ask about my case?" section after choosing your form category and USCIS location.
  - The two exceptions (cases we can help with) are:
    - If there is a statutory or regulatory processing time requirement (such as Form I-360, *Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant*, for Special Immigrant Juveniles; Form N-400, *Application for Naturalization*; and Form I-129, *Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker*, for L-1 petitions), or
    - USCIS approved your expedite request more than 60 days ago.
- ✗ **There are no published processing times and you have not waited 6 months**  
We cannot help if there is no published processing time for the form type, and less than 6 months have passed since you filed your form with USCIS and submitted a case inquiry to USCIS.
- ✗ **You are asking about Form I-134A delays, expedites, or overturning a decision**  
We cannot help if your concern is related to a Form I-134A processing delay or expedite request, or you want to overturn (or get an explanation for) a decision not to confirm or authorize travel. USCIS is not accepting expedite requests and does not provide explanations for these decisions.

- ✘ **Your expedite request was denied**  
We cannot help if USCIS recently denied your [expedite request](#).
- ✘ **You want legal advice**  
We cannot give you legal advice.
- ✘ **You want help with issues that do not involve USCIS**  
We only have the authority to work on issues involving USCIS.
- ✘ **A congressional representative is currently inquiring for you**  
We cannot help if it has been fewer than 45 calendar days since your congressional representative made an inquiry to USCIS.

We also cannot:

- ✘ Replace the formal **appeal or motion process** or **change the deadline for submitting an appeal**.
- ✘ **Communicate with anyone other than the benefit requestor** (the individual who signed the submitted form to USCIS) or the attorney without written consent from the benefit requestor.
  - If you are applying, or applied, for T, U, VAWA, or refugee status and do not have an attorney or accredited representative, your address must match the address in USCIS systems. We can only communicate with you via U.S. postal mail to comply with the law and keep your case confidential.
- ✘ **Compel USCIS to take action** on a pending application, petition, or request.
- ✘ Fix actions resulting from **bad information given by third parties**, such as legal representatives or designated school officials (DSOs).

*Remember!* Our office is not a part of USCIS. Submitting a case assistance request to our office does not pause or delay the time you have to respond to a request for evidence or other notice for information, appeal a USCIS decision, or file a motion to reopen or reconsider with USCIS. You must file by the due date listed on USCIS' notice. If you do not, USCIS may deny your case for abandonment or you may lose your right to appeal.