

The following USCIS response was received as part of a collective response to several recommendations submitted by the CIS Ombudsman. The following response has been extracted from the original document received by the CIS Ombudsman for display and readability purposes.

Recommendation that USCIS issue national policy guidance on the implementation of InfoPass to ensure equitable access to immigration services. Specifically, the guidance should direct that:

- 1. All districts should schedule as many InfoPass appointments as possible.**
- 2. Each field office must either reserve some time each week for walk-in appointments or implement clear procedures for emergency, same-day appointments due to exigent circumstances. To ensure standard implementation nationwide, USCIS Headquarters should promulgate a definition of “exigent circumstances” and provide examples of situations that would warrant same-day appointments.**
- 3. Each field office must either have a kiosk or computer available to help customers make an InfoPass appointment. If the local offices are not immediately capable of providing this service they must at least compile and provide a list of public libraries, legal services providers, and/or community-based organizations that can help immigration customers make InfoPass appointments. Local offices should *not* simply use their current list of immigration legal service providers, but should compile a new list with the prior consent of each listed entry.**

The InfoPass Program is a recent innovation at the USCIS and is now in place at all of our domestic district offices. It has been in place nation-wide for only a few months. Despite positive feedback, the USCIS has a team that is working on InfoPass policy and procedures and other improvements relating to InfoPass so that continuous improvements may be implemented as necessary.

USCIS is preparing formal guidance that address issues raised by items 1 and 2 in this recommendation and will share that guidance with the Ombudsman when it is disseminated.

It is the policy of USCIS that field offices will (1) provide the necessary opportunities for customers to schedule appointments through InfoPass and (2) have a process in place to provide services to customers who have not scheduled appointments, but, due to exigent circumstances, appear at our offices without appointments and request services.

The Ombudsman’s recommendation is consistent with many of the ideas that our team is working on and the feedback we are receiving from our customers. It is our intent to encourage community service providers such as community-based organizations, public libraries, and legal service providers to accommodate those without Internet access to make appointments when necessary. This effort is part of our ongoing efforts to interact with our customers and our local communities.