



NEW USCIS FEE RULE: AN UPDATE ON IMMIGRATION FILING FEES

A breakdown of changes to application filing fees made by
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS)

FEBRUARY 2024

USCIS, the fee-funded agency that processes and adjudicates applications for various immigration benefits, just announced that they are raising application fees for the first time since 2016. Most immigration forms require an application fee (filing fee), which usually costs hundreds of dollars. Sometimes, the applicant might be able to request a **fee waiver** if they cannot pay the filing fee. There is also a **reduced fee** option for low-income applicants for naturalization (U.S. citizenship).

WHEN ARE FEES GOING UP?

April 1, 2024. Any applications postmarked (mailed) on or after that date must include the new fee.

HOW MUCH ARE IMMIGRATION FEES GOING TO GO UP?

Listed on the following page are current fees and the new fees starting April 1, 2024 for some common immigration applications. Note while most are going up, not all are (for instance, green card renewal on Form I-90 will actually have a *lower* fee starting April 1, 2024).

Starting April 1, 2024 there will **no longer be a separate biometrics fee for most applications**, so applicants will pay just one fee per application. Where online filing is available for your application (indicated by an **asterisk*** in the chart), there is a \$50 discount if you file online beginning April 1, 2024.

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FORM	CURRENT FEE	FEES STARTING APRIL 1, 2024
N-400* Application for Naturalization (U.S. Citizenship)	\$640 + \$85 biometrics = \$725	\$760 (includes biometrics), \$710 if filed online
I-485 Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status	\$1,140 (includes fees to request travel and work permission) + \$85 biometrics = \$1,225	\$1,440 (includes biometrics but <i>no longer</i> <i>includes</i> fees to request travel and work permit; however, the work permit application is half-price if filed with I-485)
I-90* Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card (green card renewal)	\$455 + \$85 biometrics = \$540	\$465 (includes biometrics), \$415 if filed online
I-765* Application for Employment Authorization (work permit)	\$410 + \$85 biometrics = \$495	\$520 (includes biometrics), \$470 if filed online, \$235 if filed as part of pending adjustment
I-601 Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility	\$930 (no biometrics fee required) = \$930	\$1,050 (includes biometrics)
I-601A Application for Provisional Unlawful Presence Waiver	\$630 + \$85 biometrics = \$715	\$795 (includes biometrics)

WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION ON WHAT CURRENT IMMIGRATION APPLICATION FEES ARE?

The USCIS webpage for every individual application form always lists the current filing fee, for example go to <https://www.uscis.gov/n-400> for the current N-400 naturalization application fee.

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In addition, <https://www.uscis.gov/g-1055> has the current “Fee Schedule” that lists all the application fees in one place and <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees> has more information on immigration filing fees, the status of any changes to fees, and other information like instructions on how to submit payment by check, credit card, money order, etc. and information on fee waivers.

In all cases, and especially if you are filing your application on or after April 1, 2024, make sure you are using the currently accepted version of the form. The webpage for the application form indicates which version(s) are being accepted.

ARE FEE WAIVERS CHANGING?

Not really—the same criteria will continue to apply; applicants may be able to file for free if they can show that they cannot afford to pay the fee based on any one of the following:

- ▶ Receipt of a means-tested benefit, e.g. food stamps;
- ▶ Household income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG); or
- ▶ Other financial hardship

Also, same as before, after April 1, 2024 individuals can continue to request a fee waiver using the I-912 request for fee waiver form, or by written request (without using an official form).

However, the fee waiver requirements are being codified, which will protect an applicant’s ability to file a fee waiver in the long term.

In addition, as part of the changes going into effect on April 1, 2024, USCIS will accept evidence that a child who lives in the household receives a means-tested benefit as proof of the parent’s inability to pay.

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WHAT ELSE IS CHANGING ON APRIL 1, 2024 RELATED TO IMMIGRATION APPLICATION FEES?

- ▶ Starting April 1, 2024, more types of applicants will qualify for a fee “exemption,” meaning they can file for free without needing to request a fee waiver. Such applicants include: special immigrant juveniles and survivors of human trafficking (T nonimmigrants), crime (U nonimmigrants), and domestic violence (VAWA), when submitting all applications through adjustment of status. In the past, applicants in these categories routinely would apply for and receive fee waivers; starting April 1, 2024 they will be able to skip the step of submitting the fee waiver request and file for free to begin with.
- ▶ There will no longer be a separate biometrics fee (\$85) for most applications, instead this will be incorporated into the overall application fee.
- ▶ Applicants for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will still pay a separate biometrics fee **but the fee has been lowered to \$30.**
- ▶ Applicants for adjustment of status on Form I-485 (green card application filed with USCIS) must now pay for work permission (I-765) and travel permission (I-131) while their green card application is pending separately; before April 1, 2024 these applications could be submitted by adjustment applicants at no additional cost. Adjustment of status applicants will have to pay half of the fee for the work permit application and the full fee for the travel permission application.
- ▶ Starting April 1, 2024, more low-income naturalization applicants will be able to take advantage of a half-price fee reduction. Currently, the fee reduction is only open to naturalization applicants whose income is between 150% and 200% of the FPG (those with income at or below 150% qualify to request a full waiver of the fee). Beginning April 1, 2024, those with income between 150% and 400% of the FPL will be able to apply for a fee reduction. The new reduced fee is

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\$380 (half the full fee). Also, before April 1, 2024 you had to submit a separate application to request the reduced fee, starting April 1, 2024 naturalization applicants can request the fee reduction on your N-400 application without needing to submit an additional form.

- There will be a \$50 discount for filing your application online if online filing is available (online filing is not currently available for all applications; to see which applications you can file online, go to <https://www.uscis.gov/file-online/forms-available-to-file-online>). Naturalization applicants applying for the fee reduction will still have to file their applications on paper and not online.

WHO SHOULD FILE NOW, BEFORE APRIL 1, 2024? WHO IS BETTER OFF WAITING UNTIL APRIL 1, 2024?

Most application fees are going up, so in general if you're planning to file soon anyway, you may want to make sure you get your applications in before April 1, 2024 to take advantage of the lower fee.

This is especially true if you're planning to apply for adjustment of status, since on or after April 1, 2024 you will have to pay for travel and work permission separately, if desired (half price fee for the work permit application, full fee for travel authorization); currently these applications can be submitted at no cost if you have a pending adjustment application. Since adjustment applications take over a year to get a decision, it is helpful to have work permission during that time and also travel permission, in case a need for travel arises. If a person with a pending adjustment application leaves without travel permission, their application will be considered abandoned.

People who may want to wait until **AFTER** April 1, 2024 to submit their applications include:

- Those who are filing as U or T nonimmigrants, special immigrant juveniles,



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VAWA self-petitioners, etc. Starting April 1, 2024 you will qualify to file for free, without needing to submit a fee waiver request.

- Naturalization applicants whose income is between 150% and 400% of the FPG. Starting April 1, 2024, these applicants will also qualify for a reduced (half price) naturalization fee. Prior to April 1, 2024, these applicants do not qualify for a fee waiver or reduced fee and must pay the full fee.

MAKE SURE TO SUBMIT SEPARATE PAYMENTS FOR EACH APPLICATION FORM!

USCIS **no longer accepts** a single check, money order, etc. for combined fees when a person is submitting multiple applications at once. For example, if filing for adjustment of status with a family petition and a waiver, you must submit **separate payments** for the adjustment application, family petition, and waiver application.

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