

PUBLICATION

Immigration Update: New Form I-9 Version Mandatory in January 2017; Immigration Filing Fees to Increase in December 2016; Pack Up Your Glasses Before Applying for a Passport or Visa USCIS: New Form I-9 Version Mandatory in January 2017

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Tracking newsworthy developments in the ever-changing world of business immigration and its impact on employers and employees.

USCIS: New Form I-9 Version Mandatory in January 2017

On September 12, 2016, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that the Office of Management and Budget approved a revised Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification. USCIS must publish a revised form version by November 22, 2016. Employers may continue using the current version of the Form I-9 with a revision date of 03/08/2013 N until January 21, 2017, when all prior versions of the form will be invalid.

For more information (and to access the new I-9 Form once available), [click here](#).

Immigration Filing Fees to Increase in December 2016

On October 24, 2016, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that increased fees for most immigration applications and petitions will be effective December 23, 2016. The fees will increase by an average of 21 percent, although fee increases for some filings will be more substantial.

The filing fee for Form I-129, Nonimmigrant Worker Petition for the H-1B and L-1 visa categories, among others, will increase from \$325 to \$460. The fee for Form I-140, Immigrant Worker Petition, will increase from \$580 to \$700. The fee for Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, will increase from \$985 to \$1,140.

Applications under the EB-5 Immigrant Investor Visa Program will be subject to the most substantial fee increases. Regional Centers applying for designation under the program (Form I-924) will pay a filing fee of \$17,795, up from \$6,230, and will pay an annual fee of \$3,035 (up from no filing fee) to certify their continued eligibility for the designation (Form I-924A). The fee for an investor's petition to remove conditions on residence (I-829) will not change.

For family-based petitions, the filing fee for Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative, will increase from \$420 to \$535. For those pursuing citizenship, the filing fee for Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, will increase from \$595 to \$640.

To view the summary of the revised fees, [click here](#).

"No Eyeglasses Policy" Issued by the Department of State

For those renewing passports or visas to gear up for holiday travel, be sure to take those photos without your glasses! Effective December 1, 2016, Consular Affairs will no longer accept photographs of visa and passport applicants wearing eyeglasses, unless rare circumstances make such eyeglasses medically necessary (e.g., recent ocular surgery). This policy goes into effect on November 1, 2016, but with a soft enforcement period until November 30, 2016 during which applications will continue to be processed even with a glasses-wearing applicant. This prohibition is intended to enhance the performance of facial recognition systems and to decrease the likelihood of misidentification of an applicant.

If an applicant seeks to keep his or her eyeglasses on due to a medical necessity, the application must be accompanied by a signed medical statement from a medical professional or health practitioner.