

Process for Getting a Green Card [L] (USCIS)



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[Topics](#) [Forms](#) [Newsroom](#) [Citizenship](#) [Green Card](#) [Laws](#) [Tools](#)

Green Card

[Green Card Eligibility](#)
[How to Apply for a Green Card](#)

Green Card Processes and Procedures

[Adjustment of Status](#)
[Consular Processing](#)
[Concurrent Filing of Form I-485](#)
[Visa Availability & Priority Dates](#)
[Travel Documents](#)
[Employment Authorization Document](#)
[Finding a Medical Doctor](#)
[Affidavit of Support](#)
[Public Charge](#)
[Child Status Protection Act](#)[While Your Green Card Application is Pending with USCIS](#)[After Receiving a Decision](#)[After We Grant Your Green Card](#)[Home](#) > [Green Card](#) > [Green Card Processes and Procedures](#)

Green Card Processes and Procedures

ALERT: There are an exceptionally high number of employment-based visas available this fiscal year (October 2021 through September 2022).

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Each Green Card category have specific steps and procedures to follow. Listed below are some general processes and procedures to help you apply either while in the United States (known as "adjustment of status") or while outside the United States (known as "consular processing").

Page Title	Summary
Green Card Eligibility Categories	Determine if you are eligible for permanent resident status. Review the eligibility requirements needed before applying for your Green Card.
Adjustment of Status	Adjusting your status to a permanent resident is the process immigrants use to get a Green Card while in the United States.
Consular Processing	Consular processing is the method immigrants use to get their Green Card when outside the United States or when ineligible to adjust status in the United States.
Concurrent Filing	When getting a Green Card through employment, family, or as a special immigrant, someone may need to file a petition for you. Concurrent filing is generally when the immigrant petition is filed at the same time you file your application to get a Green Card. Learn what concurrent filing is and what categories are eligible to concurrently file.
Visa Availability and Priority Dates	In general, a visa must be available for you before you can apply for a Green Card. In some categories, visas are always available, while in others, there are a limited number. Priority dates are given to immigrants waiting in line to get an immigrant visa and determine when a visa becomes available. Learn how to tell if a visa is available to you.
Travel Documents	Learn more about if and when you can travel outside the United States after applying for a Green Card or once you have a Green Card. You can also learn how to apply for advance parole, a Refugee Travel Document, and a re-entry permit.
Employment Authorization Document	Learn more about if you are eligible for work authorization in the United States and how to apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).
Immigration Medical Examinations	Most applications for a Green Card require a medical exam. Learn about who must complete a medical exam and the specific forms and procedures that you must follow.
Affidavit of Support	An affidavit of support is a form that a sponsor files on your behalf when you are applying for a Green Card or immigrant visa. It is required for some (but not all) categories of immigrants before they can become a permanent resident of the United States. The purpose of the form is to show you have the financial means to live in the United States without needing welfare or financial benefits from the U.S. government.
Public Charge	To get a Green Card, most immigrants must show that they will not become a public charge. Learn more about public charge .
Child Status Protection Act	Your age can determine whether you are eligible for a Green Card as a "child." The Child Status Protection Act, often referred to as CSPA, allows certain children who have aged out (become 21 years or older) after an immigrant petition has been filed to still be eligible for a Green Card through their parents.
Transfer of Underlying Basis	An adjustment of status applicant occasionally prefers to have their pending application considered under a different immigrant category. For more information about transferring, see the USCIS Policy Manual . To transfer the basis of your pending adjustment of status application to a different eligibility category, you generally must submit a written request to the USCIS office with jurisdiction over the application. Through September 30, 2022, USCIS has established a new location that should be used for submitting transfer requests between employment-based categories. See Green Card for Employment-Based Immigrants: Transfer of Underlying Basis .

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