



Special Immigration Alert: USCIS Changes I-797 Notice Procedures

On September 12, 2011, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (“USCIS”) suddenly announced that it would start sending the original I-797 receipt and approval notices for all immigrant and nonimmigrant petitions and applications *directly to applicants and petitioners*. If a Form G-28 (Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative) is submitted, the USCIS will now send the courtesy copy of these I-797 notices to an attorney or accredited representative. Prior to this announcement, the USCIS had sent the original I-797 notices to the attorney or accredited representative and the courtesy copy to the applicant or petitioner identified in the application or petition.

The USCIS’s sudden policy reversal came without any advance warning and may require sponsoring employers, especially large organizations, to implement policies and procedures quickly to ensure that these notices can be identified in the mail and routed to the proper person in their organizations. Employers also must be more careful in choosing who will be identified as the organizational representative in the application or petition and must make sure that he or she understands what these notices are and how they should be handled.

For more information or questions regarding the above, please contact:

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