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USCIS Office of Communications  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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Fact Sheet

USCIS Operations After Hurricane Katrina FAQ

Status of USCIS Facilities

\* What is the physical status of USCIS facilities in the affected area?

On Friday, September 2, 2005, USCIS surveyed the status of the USCIS District Office in New Orleans (NOL) at 701 Loyola Avenue. There was no window damage, no water damage, and the office was secure. It appears that nothing was disrupted, and the files and security items are safe. Two USCIS employees in the affected region remain unaccounted for. All other USCIS facilities in the Gulf Coast Region are secure.

Back up Status

\* Which USCIS locations should affected customers go to for service?

Due to the high volume of displaced persons, ALL USCIS offices will be assisting hurricane victims in any way possible.

New Orleans customers who have filed, or intend to file an application with USCIS should visit the New Orleans About Us page for details about the following topics:

Filing procedures if you have not been displaced by Hurricane Katrina Replacing Lost/Destroyed Documents Filing Applications Status of Pending Applications or Cases Problems Receiving Documents Through the Mail

\* Where has the NOL office set up temporary operations?

The NOL District Director is conducting business from the USCIS Sub-office at 1341 Sycamore View Road in Memphis, Tennessee. The Continuity of Operations (COOP) site for NOL is the ASC facility at 100 West Capitol Street in Jackson, Mississippi. The COOP site in Jackson is open for business and will be staffed by NOL personnel in the coming days.

\* Where are the NOL office files going to be centralized?

Planning is underway to centralize the files from the NOL district office. However, it may be sometime before USCIS will be able to enter the NOL office to remove and relocate files.

USCIS Customer Service

\* Has USCIS cancelled naturalization ceremonies in the affected areas?

All naturalization ceremonies in the affected areas have been cancelled until further notice and will be rescheduled. Customers with pending appointments for naturalization interviews and adjustment of status interviews will be contacted as soon as information becomes available.

\* Are there plans to shift jurisdiction for customers from the New Orleans District?

It will be necessary to shift jurisdiction for customers from the New Orleans office to other local offices throughout the country. USCIS Regional Directors are working together to develop a plan that maintains our commitment to customer service and efficiency. Operational activities continue to Fort Smith, Arkansas, Memphis, Tennessee, and now, Jackson, Mississippi.

\* How do affected customers go about replacing lost immigration documentation?

All USCIS field offices will be prepared to assist hurricane victims in any way possible and work to replace official documentation while adhering to security policies and procedures. USCIS will verify the identity and immigration status of all customers before re-issuing any immigration related document. Such verification can be achieved by using our electronic systems.

New Orleans customers who need more information on replacing lost documentation should visit the New Orleans About Us for more information.

#### Entry of relief workers

\* What steps is USCIS taking to facilitate the deployment of relief workers from abroad?

USCIS is working closely with officials at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to consider options to parole certain foreign skilled technicians, i.e. electricians, general contractors, construction and recovery specialists.

Under these regulations, the new parolees will need to apply for an Employment Authorization Document since the activity is considered employment in the United States.

#### Student Visa issues

\* How will USCIS handle foreign students who will not be able to maintain continuous enrollment in affected universities?

The Student and Exchange Visa Program (SEVP), housed at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), is in the process of issuing guidance to students and schools, addressing individual scenarios.

#### More Information

\* USCIS will post all hurricane related information on our Hurricane Katrina webpage.

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