

Publications

Immigration Alert: U.S. Employment and Immigration Update

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I-9 Update

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that it will defer the requirement for employers to review Form I-9 documents in person. The change applies only to those employers that have instituted remote work. The physical documentation review requirements will not be excused if any employees are physically present at a work location.

Premium Processing Update

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) also announced the immediate and temporary suspension of premium processing service for all Form I-129 and I-140 petitions until further notice.

Effective March 20, 2020, USCIS will not accept any new requests for premium processing. USCIS will process any petition with a previously accepted [request for premium processing service](#), in accordance with the premium processing service criteria. Petitioners who have already filed a [Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker](#), or [Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Workers](#), using the premium processing service and who receive no agency action on their case within the 15-calendar-day period will receive a refund of the premium processing fee. USCIS will reject the I-907 and return the \$1,440 filing fee for all petitions requesting premium processing that were mailed before March 20 but not yet accepted.

Photocopied Signatures

USCIS also announced that, due to the ongoing COVID-19 National Emergency announced by President Trump on March 13, 2020, it will accept all benefit forms and documents with reproduced original signatures, including the Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker, for submissions dated March 21, 2020, and beyond.

This means that a document may be scanned, faxed, photocopied, or similarly reproduced provided that the copy must be of an original document containing an original handwritten signature, unless otherwise specified. This temporary change only applies to signatures. All other form instructions should be followed when completing a form.

Individuals or entities that submit documents bearing an electronically reproduced original signature must also retain copies of the original documents containing the “wet” signature. USCIS may, at any time, request the original documents, which if not produced, could negatively impact the adjudication of the immigration benefit.

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Vorys COVID-19 Task Force

Vorys attorneys and professionals are counseling our clients in the myriad issues related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We have also established a comprehensive Coronavirus Task Force, which includes attorneys with deep experience in the niche disciplines that we have been and expect to continue receiving questions regarding coronavirus. Learn more and see the latest updates from the task force at [vorys.com/coronavirus](https://www.vorys.com/coronavirus).