

**This FAQ provides general information, not legal advice.
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IMMIGRATION LEGAL CLINIC FAQ

This FAQ is provided to help you prepare for your consultation. Please read carefully before your appointment.

WORK PERMITS (EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENTS, “EADS”)

What is a work permit?

A work permit (EAD) is a document issued by USCIS that allows certain noncitizens to work legally in the United States.

Who can apply for a work permit?

- Asylum applicants with pending cases (after 150 days)
- TPS recipients
- DACA recipients
- Applicants for certain family or employment-based benefits
- Adjustment of status applicants (green card applicants)
- Individuals granted withholding of removal or CAT protection

How long is it valid?

Most EADs are valid for 1–2 years, depending on category.

What if my work permit is about to expire?

File for renewal 180 days before expiration. Some categories have automatic 540-day extensions if renewal is filed on time.

Does a work permit give me legal status?

No. A work permit allows you to work lawfully but does not give permanent status.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS)

What is TPS?

TPS is a temporary protection that allows nationals of designated countries to stay in the U.S., work legally, and receive protection from deportation.

Who qualifies?

- Nationals of a designated country
- Must have been continuously present in the U.S. since the date set by DHS
- Must meet filing and criminal background requirements

Does TPS lead to a green card?

Not directly. Some TPS holders may adjust status if they have another qualifying path.

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Can TPS holders travel?

With advance parole, TPS holders may travel abroad and re-enter legally.

Updated TPS Status (as of August 2025):

Country	Status / End Date	Notes
Afghanistan	Ended July 14, 2025	Expired
Burma (Myanmar)	Ends Nov 25, 2025	Ongoing
Cameroon	Ended Aug 4, 2025	Expired
El Salvador	Sept 9, 2026	Still valid
Ethiopia	Dec 12, 2025	Ongoing
Haiti	Feb 3, 2026	Pending litigation
Honduras	Sept 8, 2025	Ended
Lebanon	May 27, 2026	Ongoing
Nepal	Ended Aug 20, 2025	Expired
Nicaragua	Sept 8, 2025	Ended
Somalia	Mar 17, 2026	Ongoing
South Sudan	Nov 3, 2025	Ongoing
Sudan	Oct 19, 2026	Ongoing
Syria	Sept 30, 2025	Ends soon
Ukraine	Oct 19, 2026	Ongoing
Venezuela (2021 designation)	Sept 10, 2025	Ending
Venezuela (2023 redesignation)	Ended Apr 7, 2025	Expired
Yemen	Mar 3, 2026	Ongoing

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DALE (DEFERRED ACTION FOR LABOR ENFORCEMENT)

Status:

- As of August 2025, **DALE has officially ended**. USCIS terminated it without notice.
- Between 8,000–13,000 people benefitted; UFCW helped over 1,000 members obtain deferred action and work permits.
- Existing DALE work permits remain valid until expiration if the labor agency “statement of interest” is still active.

Warning:

New DALE applications are no longer accepted. Do not provide sensitive information to immigration agencies expecting new DALE protections.

ASYLUM

What is asylum?

Protection for people who fear persecution in their home country based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

When must I apply?

Generally within one year of entering the U.S., unless an exception applies.

Process:

- File Form I-589 with USCIS or immigration court
- Interview or court hearing
- If granted, may apply for green card after one year

Work eligibility while pending:

May apply for work permit after 150 days pending.

Protection from deportation:

While asylum is pending, you generally cannot be removed.

REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS

What are removal proceedings?

Court hearings before an immigration judge where the government seeks deportation.

How do I check my case status?

- EOIR Automated Case Portal: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- By phone: 1-800-898-7180 (enter your A-Number)
- ICE Detainee Locator (if detained): locator.ice.gov
- USCIS Case Status: egov.uscis.gov

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Master Calendar Hearing (MCH):

- First type of hearing, often with many people scheduled at once
- Judge reviews NTA, explains rights, sets deadlines, schedules Individual Hearing
- No full testimony or evidence presented

Individual Calendar Hearing (ICH):

- Also called the merits hearing
- Evidence, testimony, and witnesses presented
- Judge decides whether to grant relief (e.g., asylum, cancellation) or order removal

What happens if I miss court?

The judge can order removal in your absence. Always update your address and attend every hearing.

ICE RAIDS AND ENFORCEMENT

Current situation:

- ICE enforcement has increased, including home and workplace arrests.

Your rights during enforcement:

- Right to remain silent
- Right to ask for a lawyer
- Do not open the door without a judicial warrant
- Do not consent to searches
- Do not lie, but do not volunteer information

Safety planning:

- Keep important documents (passports, IDs, court papers) accessible
- Memorize important phone numbers (lawyer, family, emergency contacts)
- Arrange care plans for children in case of detention
- Prepare a family meeting place if separated
- Store medical information and medications securely
- Keep a written power of attorney or emergency authorization if possible

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NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Eligibility for Naturalization:

- Must have been a lawful permanent resident (green card holder) for 5 years, or 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen.
- Must show “good moral character” during the required period.

New Policy Change:

USCIS is now applying stricter standards for “good moral character.” Applicants must not only avoid disqualifying conduct but also show positive attributes, such as community involvement and family care.

When can the exam be taken in your native language?

- Age 50+ and 20 years as a green card holder: exempt from English requirement (test in native language, civics test required).
- Age 55+ and 15 years as a green card holder: exempt from English requirement (test in native language, civics test required).
- Age 65+ and 20 years as a green card holder: exempt from English requirement and eligible for simplified civics test.

Other citizenship FAQs:

- You must pass both the English and civics tests unless you qualify for an exemption.
- Continuous residence and physical presence requirements must be met.
- Any trips outside the U.S. longer than 6 months may disrupt eligibility.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Do I need to bring documents to my consultation?

Yes. Bring immigration notices, work permits, passports, criminal court documents, and union employment records.

Is the consultation confidential?

Yes. Conversations with the attorney are confidential.

Does union membership affect immigration status?

No. Union membership is separate but unions can connect you to resources.

Can employers retaliate based on immigration status?

No. Labor law protects all workers from retaliation for union activity.

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HELPFUL RESOURCES

- **EOIR Automated Case Portal:** Check immigration court case status and hearing dates.
 - English: <https://acis.eoir.justice.gov/en/>
 - Spanish: <https://acis.eoir.justice.gov/es/>
- **ICE Detainee Locator:** Find where someone detained by ICE is being held.
 - <https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/search>
- **USCIS Case Status Online:** Track your case status with a receipt number.
 - <https://egov.uscis.gov/>
- **USCIS Case Inquiry:** Request help with lost receipts, errors, delays, or accommodations.
 - <https://egov.uscis.gov/e-request/Intro.do>
- **Check USCIS Processing Times:** See average times for different case types.
 - <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>

PREPARING FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT

- Write down your main questions
- Gather your documents
- Review this FAQ so the consultation can focus on your personal situation