



# Fact Sheet

February 4, 2008

## **PRESIDENT'S FY 2009 BUDGET REQUEST FOR USCIS** *Continuing to Build an Immigration Service for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

President Bush has requested a \$2.7 billion budget for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in Fiscal Year 2009, the agency announced today. USCIS is the Federal agency responsible for granting or denying immigration benefits to individuals seeking to reside or work in the United States, and processing millions of immigration benefit applications and petitions annually.

Over \$2.5 billion of the agency's budget will be funded through fees and includes resources necessary to ensure the security and integrity of the immigration system; improve service delivery, and modernize business infrastructure. USCIS' largest fee funding source, the Immigration Examinations Fee Account (IEFA), includes fees collected from immigration benefit applications and petitions. Funding in this account reflects activities planned in tandem with changes to the USCIS fee structure put in place in the summer of 2007. The new fee structure and spending were implemented to strengthen national security requirements, ensure appropriate funding to meet customer service needs, and modernize an outdated business infrastructure.

The budget will also continue support for substantial growth in human and capital infrastructure underway in 2008 that will enable USCIS to aggressively address last summer's application surge. USCIS is working to add nearly 1,300 temporary and permanent application adjudicators this year both to address surge workload and permanently improve processing time performance.

To improve the integrity of our immigration system, the budget includes \$100 million for the employment authorization status verification system called "E-Verify," to include an increase of over \$17 million for program enhancements. This system will be a cornerstone that enables and supports long-term immigration reform. Through voluntary efforts with private employers, participation is growing rapidly. In one year, the number of employer participants has more than tripled from 14,000 employer participants to the more than 50,000 employers currently enrolled in the program. On average, 1,000 more employers are signing up each week.

In addition to expanding E-Verify, the budget includes \$50 million in new funding that will be used to develop an electronic information sharing and verification "hub" capability. The hub will help States, in complying with the REAL ID Act, to verify quickly document information with source Federal agencies and other State databases.

The budget also continues a dedicated funding source in premium processing revenue for continuing modernization of USCIS business operations. USCIS anticipates collecting at least \$139 million in premium processing revenue in FY 2009.

## **Budget at a Glance**

- Immigration Examinations Fee Account (\$2.495 billion and 10,234 federal employees)
- Fraud Prevention and Detection Account (\$31 million and 124 federal employees)
- Salaries and Expenses Account (\$150.5 million and 262 federal employees)
- H1-B Nonimmigrant Petitioner Account (\$13 million)

Every day, on average, nearly 16,000 USCIS professionals (federal and contractor) process 30,000 immigration applications and petitions; naturalize 3,000 new citizens (including 27 new citizens who are members of the United States Armed Forces; issue 7,000 permanent resident cards and adjudicate 200 refugee applications. On a daily basis, USCIS employees process more than 135,000 national security background checks and capture more than 11,000 sets of fingerprints at 129 Application Support Centers.

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