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Fact Sheet

Proposal to Require Replacement of Permanent Resident Cards Without an Expiration Date

A Permanent Resident Card is evidence that the person to whom it was issued is a permanent resident of the United States, with the right to live and work in the U.S. Permanent residents are required to carry their cards, often called “green cards,” at all times while in the United States.

Since August 1989, Permanent Resident Cards have been issued with a ten-year validity period, at which point the cardholder is required to apply to renew the card. Renewal is an opportunity to update the photograph and other biometrics on the card. It also means that the cardholder has a modern, more secure card, and that fewer different versions are in circulation.

Prior to August 1989, “green cards” were issued with no expiration date. Cards issued prior to 1977 were recalled some time ago. Cards issued between 1977 and 1989 are still in circulation.

The newest of the remaining cards without an expiration date is almost 18 years old; the oldest among that group is 30. To ensure that the Permanent Resident Cards in circulation effectively serve their purpose as proof of identity and work-authorized status, USCIS now proposes to require lawful permanent residents to replace cards without an expiration date and terminate the validity of these cards.

At right is an example of the older cards that USCIS would like to terminate. The simplest way to determine if your card is the subject of the proposed rule is to look at the front of your card and see if it does not contain an expiration date.

Under the proposed rule published in the Aug. 22, 2007 *Federal Register*, affected cardholders will need



to replace their “green cards” by filing Form I-90 with the filing and biometric fees.

Under Form I-90 processing procedures, we would schedule an appointment at one of our Application Support Centers upon receipt of a Form I-90. There, we would update your photograph and take your fingerprints for identity verification and a background check. Your new and more secure Permanent Resident Card would then be mailed to you.

The rule proposes a 120-day filing period for applications. Those who file within that timeframe would receive their new cards before we would terminate the old cards. The rule also proposes to give USCIS the authority to announce the termination date of the old cards in a separate *Federal Register* notice. Under the proposed rule, cardholders who choose to delay and file Form I-90 late would risk a delay before they receive their new cards – which could affect their ability to travel and work.