

I-130 & I-485 Guide: Getting Your Green Card

You are closer to adjusting your status to a lawful permanent resident and getting your green card. While you wait, please keep the following in mind.

Processing Times

Check <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/> to see how long it is taking USCIS to process your I-130 and I-485.

Check Your Case Status

You can check your case status at <https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do>. You will need to input the receipt number you received from USCIS.

Address Changes

It is very important that you promptly update your address when you move. If you don't, your green card may be sent to the wrong address. You can update your address here:

<https://egov.uscis.gov/coa/displayCOAForm.do>

Medical Exam (Form I-693)

You need a medical exam unless you have had an immigration medical exam abroad in the last year. A special doctor called a civil surgeon must do the exam and give you a completed Form I-693 in a sealed envelope. Don't open it! Include this sealed envelope with your I-485 when you mail it to USCIS. You can download the I-693 form at uscis.gov/i-693 and find a civil surgeon at uscis.gov/tools/find-a-civil-surgeon.

Travel Rules

You can't travel outside the U.S. while your I-485 is pending unless you get permission, called Advance Parole. To get this, file Form I-131. If you travel without this approval,

USCIS may deny your I-485 for abandonment, and you won't get your green card. If you have Advance Parole, you can travel, but when you return, officials may check your immigration history, criminal record, or other details. If they think you're not allowed to enter, you could be stopped at the border. Please contact us to set up a time to speak to a lawyer if you have additional questions about this.

Working While Waiting

If you want to work legally while waiting, file Form I-765 to get a work permit (called an Employment Authorization Document or EAD). Wait until USCIS approves it before starting a job. Depending on your circumstances, working without permission could hurt your chances of getting a green card. Once approved, show your EAD to your employer to prove you can work.

What to Bring to Your I-485 Interview

If USCIS schedules an interview, bring these items to help prove you're eligible for a green card:

- Your spouse, if your I-130 is based on being married to a US citizen or a lawful permanent resident spouse.
- The interview appointment notice from USCIS.
- A government-issued photo ID, like a passport, driver's license, or state ID.
- All immigration documents, like:
 - Your current and old passports (with visas)
 - I-94 Arrival/Departure Record
 - Any current visa documents (like H-1B or F-1)
 - Your EAD or Advance Parole, if you have them
- Originals of documents you sent with your I-485, like:
 - Marriage certificate (if applying through marriage)
 - Birth certificates for you and your kids
 - Divorce papers or death certificates (if you were married before)

- If your I-130 is based on being married to a US citizen or lawful permanent resident, you should bring updated evidence of your bona fide marriage. Some examples include:
 - Updated lease or mortgage agreements
 - Joint bank account statements
 - Tax returns filed together
 - Shared utility bills (like electricity or water)
 - New photos of you and your spouse together
 - Travel plans or tickets from trips you took together
 - Messages or communication records between you and your spouse

For more information, you can schedule an appointment with one of our attorneys by visiting <https://www.myimmigration.com/services/immigration-lawyer-consultation/> or calling us at 385-955-4711.