



July 12, 2024

PA-2024-19

Policy Alert

SUBJECT: Determining a Benefit Requestor's Legal Name

Purpose

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is updating policy guidance in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to address how officers determine a benefit requestor's legal name.

Background

As part of the adjudication of immigration benefit requests, USCIS reviews evidence, including biographical and biometrics information submitted by the benefit requestor, as well as DHS systems, to verify identifying information, including the requestor's name. Prior guidance in determining a legal name did not address common law names assumed through usage, or other situations USCIS encounters when adjudicating benefit requests such as variations in name order and individuals who use mononyms (that is, a one-word name). USCIS is now updating its guidance to address such scenarios.

This guidance, contained in Volume 1, Volume 11, and Volume 12 of the Policy Manual, is effective immediately and applies prospectively to applications filed or pending on or after the publication date. The guidance contained in the Policy Manual is controlling and supersedes any related prior guidance.

Policy Highlights

- Expands upon guidance on how USCIS determines a legal name for purposes of adjudication and issuance of secure identity documents with the requestor's legal name, including addressing common law names, name order, and mononyms.

Summary of Changes

Affected Section: Volume 1 > Part E > Chapter 5, Verification of Identifying Information

- Revises introductory paragraph.
- Replaces existing text in Section A (Full Legal Name) with new content.

Affected Section: Volume 11 > Part A > Chapter 2 > Section A, Personal Information Used on Secure Identity Documents

- Replaces existing text in Subsection 2 (Full Legal Name) with new content.

Affected Section: Volume 12 > Part K > Chapter 3 > Section B, Contents of Certificate of Naturalization

- Changes title of Subsection 3 and replaces existing text with new content.

Affected Section: Volume 12 > Part K > Chapter 4, Replacement of Certificate of Citizenship or Naturalization

- Changes title of chapter and updates the table (Basis for Requests of Replacement Certificate of Citizenship or Naturalization | Form N-565)
- Revises Section B, Subsection 1 (Certificates of Naturalization)

USCIS may also make other minor technical, stylistic, and conforming changes consistent with this update.

Citation

Volume 1: General Policies and Procedures, Part E, Adjudications, Chapter 5, Verification of Identifying Information [[1 USCIS-PM E.5](#)]

Volume 11: Travel and Identity Documents, Part A, Secure Identity Documents Policies and Procedures, Chapter 2, USCIS-Issued Secure Identity Documents [[11 USCIS-PM A.2](#)]

Volume 12: Citizenship and Naturalization, Part K, Certificates of Citizenship and Naturalization, Chapter 3, Certificate of Naturalization [[12 USCIS-PM K.3](#)]; Chapter 4, Application for Replacement of Naturalization/Citizenship Document [[12 USCIS-PM K.4](#)].