

The USCIS Genealogy Program uses indices unlike any immigration or naturalization index available to the public. The unique Master Index system is a combination of index tools—partially automated and partially manual—that work together to identify and locate old agency files and records.

Whose Records And Files Are Indexed?

If a person is in our index this means that the agency:

- Created and maintained a record or file at Agency Headquarters in Washington, DC, between 1893 and 1975.
 - o This does not include ship passenger lists or border arrival manifests, all of which were created and maintained in our field offices (ports of entry).
- Maintained a file in any agency office between 1955 and 1975.
 - o This includes Chinese Exclusion Act case files now at the National Archives.

Another way to describe the persons in our index are those who:

- Had a Board of Special Inquiry decision appealed to Washington between 1893 and 1944 (not everyone held for Special Inquiry);
- Were the subject of a warrant for deportation between 1903 and 1950;
- Were naturalized in any court (federal, state, territorial, or local) between September 27, 1906 and 1975;
- Were admitted as an immigrant between July 1, 1924 and 1975;
- Were granted Registry (later called Lawful Entry) between March 2, 1929 and 1975;
- Were issued a Certificate of Derivative Citizenship or Repatriation between 1929 and 1975;
- Registered as an alien between 1940 or between 1940 and 1975; or
- Are unique individual cases.

The USCIS Genealogy Program is authorized to make five (5) series of the agency's historical records available to requesters. They are:

- Naturalization Certificate Files (C-Files), September 27, 1906 to March 31, 1956
- Alien Registration Forms (Form AR-2), August 1940 to March 1944
- Visa Files, July 1, 1924 to March 31, 1944
- Registry Files, March 1929 to March 31, 1944
- A-Files, April 1, 1944 to May 1, 1951

Index Search Request is \$20.00

The Record Request fee for a microfilmed file is \$20.00. The fee for a hard copy (paper) file is \$35.00.

Important: A single immigrant may have several USCIS records. For example, an immigrant who entered the US in 1924 and naturalized in 1930 may have both a Visa File and a C-File. Researchers who wish to know about all of an immigrant's USCIS records should file an Index Search request. An Index Search returns citations for all of an immigrant's records, while a Records Request without Case ID will return only the specific file(s) requested.

Since 1893, the federal immigration and naturalization agencies created and maintained a variety of records for immigrants. These agencies often converted an immigrant's records from one kind to another; because of this you will need an index search unless you are certain that:

- USCIS has only one file for the immigrant; and
- You can provide the only accurate file number to identify that file.

About the Fees for a US_CIS search

- Be advised, there are no refunds for a search request where no records are located.