

# USCIS Delayed Adjudications: The GAO Report

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DALLAS, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, November 12, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a new report urging U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to do more to reduce its pending caseload, which has seen an 85-percent rise in recent years. The watchdog called for a more proactive approach to tackling the backlog.

The GAO report, released on September 20, 2021, found that USCIS has neither updated its plans nor implemented them to address the backlog. The agency has also failed to identify funding and other resources necessary to get the delays under control.

“Our office has seen delays balloon to unacceptable levels. For example, E-2 or L-2 spouses seeking employment authorization must wait up to or even more than one year to obtain it, depending on which service center is processing their application. Surely USCIS can do better than that, and it has done better than that in the past,” said Stewart Rabinowitz of the Dallas and Frisco law firm of Rabinowitz & Rabinowitz, P.C.

The GAO noted that multiple factors have contributed to longer USCIS case processing times and a reduced ability to adjudicate cases, including policy changes, longer forms, staffing issues and delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the report, USCIS received between 8 million and 10 million applications and petitions from 2015 to 2020. The agency’s median processing times grew for six out of the seven forms the watchdog examined.

The GAO issued six recommendations after reviewing USCIS data and interviewing agency officials. One of those urged USCIS to develop performance measures to track the processing timelines for certain forms that comprise a substantial portion of the agency’s pending caseload. Another suggestion was to create a long-term strategic workforce plan for hiring, training and retaining staff.

The Department of Homeland Security agreed with all but one of the recommendations. USCIS officials claimed that developing a long-term workforce plan was unnecessary because the current system is sufficient given the ever-changing work environment.

To learn more, talk to an immigration attorney in Dallas at Rabinowitz & Rabinowitz, P.C.  
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