

December 8, 2017

Below are the unofficial minutes from our meeting with USCIS on November 17, 2017. In response to our question of whether we would receive official minutes, we were informed “maybe.”

Also below is the list of questions we submitted. The unofficial responses are in red.

Before USCIS addressed our questions, they informed us that effective immediately after 12:30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (and after 12:00 pm on Wednesdays) they would be “restricting” building access to those with appointment notices. For example, unless a person had an Infopass appointment notice or interview notice, he or she (including attorneys) may not enter the building after 12:30 pm.

We were told that this was being done to assist USCIS in its efficiency. And, over our objection, this will also apply to attorneys seeking to fee-in Motions to Reopen for Immigration Court.

In addition to the responses to the questions below, USCIS also informed us that they will accept walk-ins for I-551 stamps for emergencies, such as if a driver’s license is expiring and the affected party/parties could not obtain an Infopass appointment.

#### Questions for November 17, 2017 Meeting

##### A. Attorney Scheduling Conflicts

1. At our last meeting the Atlanta Field Office (ATL) offered to consider revising the current protocol for attorney scheduling conflicts at interviews. Please give us an update on what ATL has decided since the last meeting.

USCIS continues to require attorneys to submit SRMTs online to notify them of the conflicts at least five days in advance of the affected interviews, and to follow up with Triage upon arrival. However, they are open to suggestions to alternative solutions. Feel free to send any suggestions to [ailaatlantaliaison@gmail.com](mailto:ailaatlantaliaison@gmail.com).

2. When such scheduling conflicts occur, members continue to report applicants being "pressured" by officers to attend their interviews pro se instead of waiting for their attorneys. Can ATL please explain its policy on speaking with applicants who are represented by counsel without counsel being present?

USCIS explained that officers should not be “pressuring” applicants in this way. If members have specific examples, please provide the details (including the affected A-number(s)) to [ailaatlantaliaison@gmail.com](mailto:ailaatlantaliaison@gmail.com).

##### B. Parole-in-Place

3. A member reports that his client, who lives in the metro-Atlanta area, is having his parole-in-place (PIP) application adjudicated by the Montgomery Field Office (MGA), due to jurisdictional changes. How is USCIS determining where to send PIP requests, and how do members know whom to contact regarding these cases?

USCIS responded that jurisdiction is determined by the applicants' ZIP codes. This information is available online by searching for a Field Office by ZIP code.

4. Does the Atlanta USCIS Field Office entertain PIP requests when there has been a prior removal order?

USCIS responded by saying "no;" jurisdiction lies with EOIR in such instances.

### C. Interviews

5. When another attorney from the same firm as the attorney listed on the G-28 on file will be representing an applicant at an interview may that attorney simply sign his/her name to the existing G-28 on file instead of providing an entirely new G-28 at the time of the interview?

USCIS responded that a new G-28 is always needed whenever there is a change of attorney.

6. Although it only happens rarely, members occasionally report unpleasant encounters with officers during interviews. Is there a protocol for how ATL wishes to handle this issue?

USCIS asked that the general public (including attorneys, if they wish) should always ask to speak with a Supervisor or Branch Chief immediately, during the interview, in such instances.

USCIS also replied that attorneys should report such encounters immediately by providing detailed information (including the affected A-number(s)) to [ailaatlantailiaison@gmail.com](mailto:ailaatlantailiaison@gmail.com). USCIS also requested specific examples from attorneys from this Fiscal Year.

### D. Processing Times

7. Could you please provide processing times for the following case types that are not listed online?
  - a. Humanitarian Deferred Action
  - b. I-751s

c. I-212s

USCIS explained that there is no posted processing time for these applications. They also explained that they only interview I-751s once per month and that they will be working on I-212s in December and will also handle those once per month. USCIS suggested following up on such applications after they had been pending for four to six months.

8. The USCIS has issued RFEs at interviews merely seeking updated I-693s that include the new requirement for gonorrhea testing. When nothing other than an updated I-693 is required, what is the current processing time following USCIS's receipt of the updated I-693?

USCIS explained that there is no posted processing time for this situation. USCIS also explained that officers have been instructed to keep only approximately 20 files in their offices.

9. How is ATL folding-in interviews for employment-based adjustment of status applications? How have the processing times for I-485s changed overall since the reduction in cases eligible for an interview waiver? What kinds of delays should we expect moving forward?

USCIS responded that they have already been interviewing employment-based I-485s and that SISOs are handling such cases. USCIS also requested examples of "lingering Service Center issues" that arise during these interviews. Please send any information to [ailaatlantailiaison@gmail.com](mailto:ailaatlantailiaison@gmail.com).

USCIS further explained that any applicant otherwise subject to an interview may be interviewed if he or she is 14 years of age or older.

10. Could you please provide an update on electronically converted N-400s (IOE cases)? At a recent InfoPass appointment, a member was told that there were still ongoing ELIS problems from last year impacting adjudications, despite interviews already being conducted. Is this accurate? If so, when can we anticipate these cases being moved along to an oath ceremony?

USCIS responded by directing us to see the posted processing times.

E. InfoPass

11. Members continue to report frustration in limited InfoPass appointment availability. One member witnessed the triage desk field numerous requests from applicants frustrated about the same issue. So, it appears to membership as if this is a significant issue, not just to membership. Can ATL provide any more information

about when new InfoPass appointments are made available? Can ATL please explain whether it is fully staffed for InfoPass appointments, and whether the officers handling InfoPass appointments are fully trained?

USCIS responded by explaining that appointments are created on a monthly basis. They informed us that over 2,000 appointments were scheduled in October and approximately 1,950 appointments were scheduled in November.

12. A member reports overhearing an InfoPass officer explain to an applicant that ATL only has one I-551 stamp. Thus, if one InfoPass officer is using the stamp, customers at all of the other InfoPass windows may not receive an I-551 stamp until the officer with the stamp has finished with the customer at his window. Can ATL please comment on its I-551 stamp inventory and ways to make this stamping process more efficient?

USCIS would not comment on its inventory of I-551 stamps, but confirmed that they indeed have more than one.

#### F. Miscellaneous

13. Please explain how you would like us to handle I-212 filings if someone has a prior order of removal, but is otherwise adjustable. Should we file the I-212 prior to the I-485 filing or can they be concurrently filed?

USCIS directed us to see the form instructions at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

14. Members report that the triage desk no longer checks a box on a cover page to indicate the type of documentation submitted at the counter. Has there been a change in policy on this topic? Please explain the training provided for these employees on receiving and routing documents received for continued cases?

USCIS responded that there has not been a change in policy and that Triage is still trained to check the applicable box(es).

15. On continued N-400 applications may AILA submit inquiries to the ATLADJ mailbox after only 120 days instead of six months to coincide with the applicable statute and regulation for processing of N-400 applications?

USCIS agreed to accept such inquiries after only 120 days.

16. Can ATL please explain the time given to officers to work on continued cases?

USCIS did not provide any specific information in response to this question.

