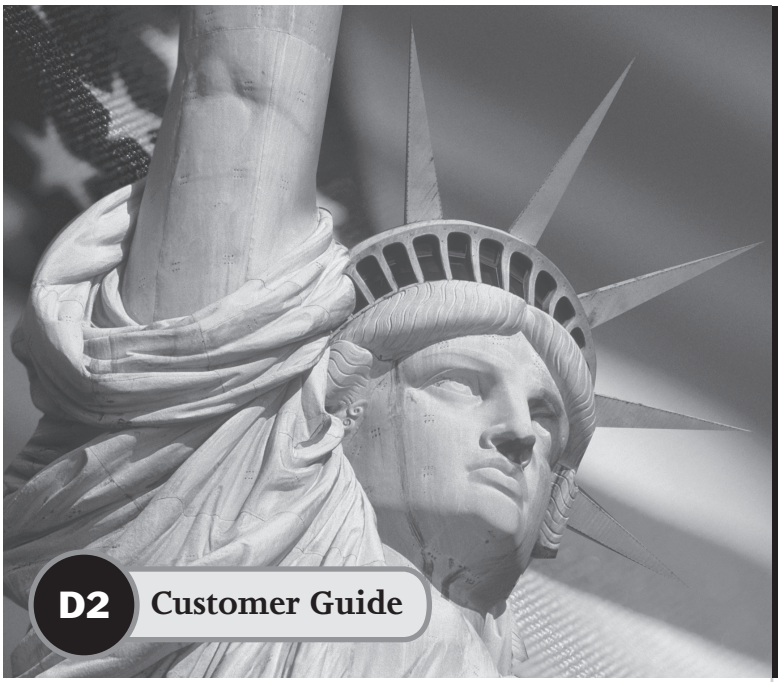

I Am a Refugee or Asylee

How Do I...
Show My Employer That I Am Authorized to Work in the United States?

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

M-576 (August 2008)

To legally hire any employee in the United States, an employer must be able to verify that the applicant is eligible to work in the United States. You must prove that you are eligible to work. Employers are required to complete a **Form I-9**, *Employment Eligibility Verification*, to record verification that you showed the employer documents that prove you are authorized to work in the United States.

If you would like to see what an I-9 looks like, please visit our website at **www.uscis.gov**.

Refugee

If you entered the United States as a refugee, you are authorized employment as part of your refugee status. The inspector at the port of entry where you entered the country should have issued you a **Form I-94**, *Arrival-Departure Record*, stamped to indicate "Employment Authorized." U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will issue you an employment authorization document (EAD) either at the port of entry or as soon as possible after your entry into the United States.

A refugee can apply for a Social Security card with the Form I-94 and an official government-issued identification document containing a photo (such as an unexpired foreign passport or driver's license). Once you have your Social Security card, you can use it to show your employer that you are eligible to be employed. You can also use an EAD issued to you by USCIS to prove your eligibility.

When you first apply for a job in the United States, your Form I-94 is proof of your work authorization, for up to 90 days. If you use your I-94 to prove eligibility, you are required to present to your employer other evidence of eligibility within 90 days.

Asylee

If you are an asylee, you are authorized employment as part of your asylee status. An EAD will be issued to you after the Asylum Office, an immigration judge, or the Board of Immigration Appeals grants you asylum.

You may also apply for a Social Security card with the asylum approval notice or the Form I-94 that USCIS issued to you showing that you are an asylee, along with an official government-issued identification document containing a photo (such as an unexpired foreign passport or driver's license). Once you have your Social Security card, you can also use it to show your employer that you are eligible to be employed.

I am a refugee. How do I get an employment authorization document (EAD)?

As a refugee, you are entitled to work upon admission to the United States. An application for an EAD is prepared as part of your refugee travel packet that you bring with you to the United States. This application is taken at the port of entry and routed for expeditious processing so that an EAD is issued. The card will be delivered to you through the voluntary agency that is responsible for your refugee resettlement in the United States. You do not need to apply for an EAD.

I am an asylee. How do I get an EAD?

As an asylee, you do not necessarily need to have an EAD issued by USCIS to prove eligibility to work in the United States. If you have been granted asylum by USCIS, the Asylum Office will begin processing your EAD automatically, and you do not need to file an application for work authorization.

However, if you have been granted asylum by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), you will receive post-order instructions on how to obtain an EAD from USCIS, either as a separate handout or in your BIA decision. As indicated in those instructions, you may make an appointment through the InfoPass program on the USCIS website to visit your local USCIS office to be processed for your EAD, which will be mailed to you promptly. You may also submit an application for an EAD by mail if you do not wish to do visit a USCIS office. You must take your Immigration Court order or the BIA decision to your appointment, or provide it with your EAD application, if you are filing an application by mail. If you already received an EAD after you were granted asylum by either USCIS or an immigration judge and you want to **renew** your EAD, you must apply on USCIS **Form I-765**, *Application for Employment Authorization*.

Key Information

Key USCIS forms referenced in this guide	Form #
Employment Eligibility Verification	I-9
Arrival-Departure Record	I-94
Application for Employment Authorization	I-765

USCIS

- **On the Internet at: www.uscis.gov**

For more copies of this guide, or information about other citizenship and immigration services, please visit our website. You can also download forms, e-file some applications, check the status of an application, and more. It's a great place to start!

If you don't have Internet access at home or work, try your local library. If you cannot find what you need, please call Customer Service.

- **Customer Service: 1-800-375-5283**
- Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service: 1-800-767-1833

Other U.S. Government Services–Click or Call		
General Information	www.usagov.gov	1-800-333-4636
New Immigrants	www.welcometoUSA.gov	
U.S. Dept. of State	www.state.gov	1-202-647-6575

Disclaimer: This guide provides basic information to help you become generally familiar with our rules and procedures. For more information, or the law and regulations, please visit our website. Immigration law can be complex, and it is impossible to describe every aspect of every process. You may wish to be represented by a licensed attorney or by a nonprofit agency accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals.