



General Information...

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How Do I...Financially Sponsor Someone Who Wants to Immigrate?



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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Under the law, every person who immigrates based on a relative petition must have a financial sponsor. If you choose to sponsor your relative's immigration by filing a **Form I-130, *Petition for Alien Relative***, then when the time comes for actual immigration you must agree to be the financial sponsor and file an affidavit of support. If you do not meet the financial qualifications at that time, you must still file a **Form I-864, *Affidavit of Support***, and accept responsibility, but you and your relative must also find other individuals who meet the requirements and are willing to make this commitment and also file affidavits of support.

What is the purpose of the affidavit of support?

The affidavit of support helps ensure that new immigrants will not need to rely on public benefits such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. If a person for whom you file an affidavit of support becomes a permanent resident and is later given certain public benefits, the agency that gave the benefits can require that you repay that money.

Who has to have an affidavit of support in order to immigrate?

Anyone applying to be a permanent resident through a family member must have a financial sponsor. A sponsor is also required for a family member coming to work for a relative, or for a company in which a relative owns 5 percent or more of the company.

The person filing the petition sponsoring the person's immigration must file an affidavit of support. If he/she does not, then their sponsorship is not complete, and the person will not be given permission to immigrate based on that petition.

What are the financial qualifications for an affidavit of support?

The law requires a sponsor to prove an income level at or above 125% of the Federal poverty level. (For active duty military personnel, the income requirement is 100% of the poverty level when sponsoring his/her husband, wife, or children.) If your income does not meet the requirement, your assets such as checking and savings accounts, stocks, bonds, or property may be considered in determining your financial ability.

Federal poverty levels are updated each year by the Department of Health and Human Services. You can check current minimums at their website at www.aspe.hhs.gov.

I filed the I-130 immigrant petition for my relative but I do not meet the minimum income requirement. Can anyone else be a financial sponsor?

If you do not meet the financial qualifications, the income of certain other household members can be added in to your income level if they sign a contract on **Form I-864A, *Affidavit of Support Contract Between Sponsor and Household Member***, agreeing to make their income and/or assets available for the support of the relative applying for permanent residence.

If you still cannot meet the financial qualifications, another person must complete a separate affidavit of support to become a joint financial sponsor of the person's immigration. The joint sponsor must meet all sponsorship requirements separately, including the minimum income requirements for his/her household, and must be willing to assume, along with you, financial liability for the sponsored immigrant(s).

All sponsors must be United States (U.S.) citizens or permanent residents, be at least 18, and be living in the U.S. (including territories and possessions) when they file the affidavit of support.

When and how do I file the affidavit of support?

You do *not* need to file it with your petition. When the person reaches the front of the line to immigrate based on your I-130 petition (which often will be years after the petition was filed), he or she will have to submit the affidavit of support with an application for an immigrant visa or permanent residence. Just follow the instructions for the affidavit and submit all the necessary supporting documents with the visa or residence application at that time.



Do I need to notify USCIS if I move?

If you financially sponsor someone, you are legally required to keep USCIS informed of your address until your financial responsibility ends. If you change your address, you will need to file a **Form I-865, Sponsor's Notice of Change of Address**, within 30 days after the date your move. Please read the instructions on the form carefully.

What if a person I financially sponsor gets public benefits after becoming a permanent resident?

If a sponsor does not provide basic support to the immigrants they sponsor, the sponsored immigrants, or the Federal or State agency that gave the benefits to the family members, can seek reimbursement of the funds through legal action against the sponsor.

When does my financial responsibility end?

An affidavit of support is enforceable against the sponsor until the person they sponsored either:

- Becomes a U.S. citizen; or
- Is credited with 40 quarters of work in the U.S. (usually 10 years); or
- Leaves the United States permanently; or
- Passes away.

Key Information

Key forms referenced in this Fact Sheet	Form #
Petition for Alien Relative	I-130
Affidavit of Support	I-864
Affidavit of Support Contract Between Sponsor and Household Member	I-864A
Sponsor's Notice of Change of Address	I-865

USCIS

• On the Internet at: uscis.gov

For more copies of this Fact Sheet, or information about other citizenship and immigration services, 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 library. If you can't find what you need, call customer service.

• Customer Service: **1-800-375-5283**

- Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service: 1-800-767-1833

Disclaimer: This Fact Sheet is a basic guide to help you become generally familiar with our rules and procedures. For more information, or the law and regulations, see 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.

Other U.S. Government Services—click or call

In general	www.firstgov.gov	1-800-333-4636
U.S. Department of State	www.state.gov	1-202-647-6575

