

ASK USCIS TO IMPROVE THE ARTIST VISA PROCESS!

Thursday, July 15, 2010

Ask USCIS to Improve the Artist Visa Process!

By Performing Arts Alliance

► [Share](#) | [Print](#) | [Download](#)

Ask USCIS to Improve the Artist Visa Process!

Dear Michelle,

July 15, Washington, DC - Performing arts

organizations experiencing difficulty obtaining

artist visas have a new opportunity to weigh in

with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

(USCIS) as the agency proposes an across-

the-board fee increase. The USCIS proposes

a \$5 increase in the fee for the regular I-129

visa processing form (which would bring the

fee to \$325), and a \$225 increase in the

Premium Processing fee (bringing the total fee

to \$1,225). The performing arts community is

urging USCIS to immediately make long-

overdue improvements to the regular artist visa

process and to refrain from increasing the

already-unaffordable Premium Processing fee.

Comments to USCIS are due by July 26.

The Performing Arts Alliance will submit

detailed comments in collaboration with our

national colleagues in the Performing Arts Visa

Working Group: American Federation of

Musicians, Association of Performing Arts

Presenters, Dance/USA, League of American

Orchestras, North American Performing Arts

Managers and Agents, OPERA America, and

Theatre Communications Group.

Please note: Until the USCIS issues a final rule

regarding the proposed fee change, the filing

fee for the I-129 form remains \$320 and the

fee for Premium Processing Service remains

\$1,000. We will inform you immediately when

and if fee changes are made. In the

meantime, do not adjust the fees that

accompany your petition, as overpayment will

result in serious delays.

Sample Message to Personalize

If your performing arts organization has

recently encountered a visa challenge, please

participate in the USCIS comment process.

We have prepared sample comments that

should be personalized with details of your

organization's experience, along with some

[background information](#) you may find helpful.

Personalizing your message is extremely

important. Each comment is read and

documented by the agency, and "cookie

cutter" messages have less impact than those

including specific details. Remember to

include the first line noting the DHS docket

number!

Re: DHS Docket No. USCIS-2009-0033

The following comments are in response to the

proposed rule to adjust the U.S. Citizenship

and Immigration Services (USCIS) immigration

and naturalization benefit application and

petition fee schedule.

- We call upon USCIS to make immediate and long-overdue improvements to the regular visa process, including meeting the current 14-day statutory requirement for processing times of regularly-filed O and P petitions, and improving the quality of petition adjudication. Any increase in the regular processing fee must be accompanied by these improvements.
- USCIS failure to make improvements in the regular petition process has resulted in

File Comments!

Instructions:

[Click here to file](#)
[comments with USCIS](#)

What's At Stake:

The Performing Arts

Alliance is joining national

performing arts sector

colleagues in submitting

detailed comments to

USCIS to a proposed

rule to increase fees for

visa processing. The

USCIS proposes a \$5

increase in the fee for the

regular I-129 visa

processing form (which

would bring the fee to

\$325), and a \$225

increase in the Premium

Processing fee (bringing

the total fee to \$1,225).

To give greater voice to

the concerns performing

arts organizations have

about the visa process, we

encourage you to submit

comments on behalf of

your organization.

Comment Filing Deadline:

July 26, 2010

delays and unwarranted requests for evidence or denials, which force some organizations to pay the \$1,000 Premium Processing Service (PPS) fee. This \$1,000 fee is already unaffordable -- particularly in this difficult economy -- therefore we oppose the USCIS proposal to increase the PPS fee to \$1,225. Given the harmful inefficiencies of the regular petition process, this increase in Premium Processing would impose an extreme burden on nonprofit performing arts organization petitioners.

By inviting foreign artists to perform, performing arts organizations provide American audiences the opportunity to experience a diversity of artistic talent and encourage a supportive climate for U.S. performing arts organizations to perform abroad. Arts organizations in every area of the country must rely on the U.S. visa process to be affordable, reliable, and efficient.

How to Submit Comments

Comments may be filed by the July 26 deadline through the federal government's regulation web portal. Visit the following [link](#) and follow the instructions for submitting comments, double-checking that comments are in response to "U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Fee Schedule." [Submit Your Personalized Comments to USCIS Today!](#)