USCIS TO INCREASE FILING FEES

Wednesday, October 6, 2010

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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has increased the fees for visa petitions filed on or after November 23, 2010.

• The fee for the regular I-129 petition for a nonimmigrant worker will increase from $320 to $325.

• The fee for the I-907 premium processing form will increase from $1,000 to $1,225.

• The fee for the I-539 petition to extend/change status (used for spouses and dependents) will decrease from $300 to $290.

• The fee for the I-824 petition for action on an approved application or petition (usually used to request a duplicate I-797 notice of approval) will increase from $340 to $405.

Petitions mailed, postmarked, or otherwise filed on or after November 23, 2010 must include the new fee. To avoid delays in processing, please note the fee change and plan accordingly. USCIS will likely return any petitions that are filed with the new fee before November 23 or with the old fee after November 23.

When the fee increase was proposed earlier this summer, individual arts-related petitioners and the national performing arts community filed comments with USCIS urging the agency to make much needed improvements to the regular petition process and objecting to the significant increase in the already unaffordable Premium Processing fee. In their September 24 notice regarding the final fees, USCIS reiterated its recent commitment to speed up and improve the quality of regular O and P artist visa processing with the intent that fewer petitioners would need to resort to the Premium Processing Service.

While USCIS has once again confirmed its intent to process regularly-filed petitions within 14 days, please continue to file arts-related petitions as far in advance of a performance as possible and closely monitor the level of service you receive:

• If a petition filed through the regular filing process exceeds 14 days in processing times, immediately call the National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 800-375-5283 to initiate an inquiry into the status of your case.

• Please report your experience with the petition process to the government affairs director of your national arts service organization. National performing arts service organizations will be closely monitoring trends in processing times and the information you provide will help ensure that USCIS fulfills its promise to improve the efficiency and quality of the artist visa process.