

USCIS to Start Sending Separate EAD and AP Approvals

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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has confirmed it will be decoupling the standard employment authorization document (EAD) and advance parole (AP) “combo card” and sending out separate EAD and AP documents in an effort to expedite EAD processing times. The EAD and AP are typically requested along with the Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Status or Adjust Status, when applying for permanent residency in the United States. The EAD provides employment authorization and the AP provides travel authorization while an adjustment-of-status application is pending.

Current EAD processing times have increased dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Texas Service Center and the Nebraska Service Center are currently reporting [processing times](#) of between 11.5 to 13.5 months for EADs based on a pending adjustment of status application. During a recent USCIS webinar, agency officials stated that USCIS has been trying to work through the EAD backlog to avoid a gap in employment authorization for foreign nationals relying on the EAD for employment.

An EAD card that does not have the notation “Serves as I-512 Advance Parole” is valid only for employment and may not be used for travel. A separate AP document will be required for international travel. USCIS will issue the stand-alone AP approval notice separately.

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