

# IS YOUR PROGRAM READY FOR THE NEW USCIS **FEE CHANGES?**

***Prior fee increases resulted in surges of applicants seeking legal services ahead of the fee change.***

## **What you need to know:**

- The new USCIS fee schedule is being reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget, which means that fee increases are likely coming within the next few months.
- The date when final fee increases will be published or implemented is not yet known.
- Fees for the most common application types are likely increasing.
- See CLINIC's [Fee Schedule Changes](#) page for details of proposed changes that may be in the final version.
- Possible changes of concern include nearly doubling the cost of green cards and naturalization, and drastically reducing the availability of fee waivers.



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# TOP 10 TIPS FOR PRACTITIONERS

1. Stay up-to-date on potential fee changes.
2. Assess your program's current capacity and resources, and prepare for the surge. Affiliates report significant spikes in application rates prior to previous fee schedule changes.
3. Consider service delivery models that will allow your program to respond to an increased volume of applications, such as workshops. Activate volunteers to maximize services.
4. Get the word out! Don't assume your clients and your community are aware of the upcoming fee changes.
5. Review your client list to identify clients and cases that may be impacted by the potential fee and fee waiver changes to encourage them to apply at the most beneficial time.
6. USCIS has proposed to eliminate fee waivers for naturalization, green card renewals and other benefits. Research other sources of funds or safe short-term loans to assist clients who will need assistance with filing fees.
7. Utilize CLINIC's tools to help identify individuals who may benefit from currently available fee waivers and encourage them to apply before the new fee changes go into effect.
8. Remember that USCIS may deny or reject certain application types that are filed too early:
  - Note that this does not apply to DACA applications. While USCIS recommends filing between 150-120 days prior to expiration, USCIS advises that it will not reject earlier filed applications.
  - Your client must qualify for naturalization when the application is submitted. It will otherwise be rejected or denied by USCIS.
9. Once the new fees are announced, be sure to note the deadlines for filing under the former fee rule. Check CLINIC resources frequently.
10. Once the new fees are announced, revise your client agreements, checklists and resources to update all references to USCIS fees and fee waivers.