

Immigration Information

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3.1 Terminology.

USCIS organization has undergone internal restructuring in several phases and continues to evolve. As a result, some of the terminology by which various components are known has changed. The current organization outlined in [8 CFR100](#) bears little resemblance to the actual structure now in place. There are differing views on which organizational structure can most effectively achieve the dual and sometimes conflicting goals of enforcement of the Act and administration of the benefits provided by the Act. Because of this fluid organizational structure there are a variety of names for organizational components. For the sake of clarity within this section, the following definitions apply:

- The term "Adjudications" refers to the activity responsible for the administration of all applications and petitions. In the field, "Adjudications" is the program which is responsible for the administration of naturalization and citizenship as well as all other immigration benefit applications and generally encompasses the information functions (administered by immigration information officers, formerly titled Contact Representatives). At the Headquarters level, "Adjudications" refers to the organization within the Contact Center Programs (currently operating as a component of the Office of Policy and Planning) which is responsible for policy development (but not execution) involving applications for benefits under the Act, *except* those related to naturalization and citizenship. Headquarters Office of Program and Regulatory Development is responsible for policy matters relating to the immigration information officer function. The functions of the Headquarters component are described below, in [section 3.5\(a\)](#).
- The term "Immigration Services" is, at the field office level, used interchangeably with "Adjudications" in some offices "Benefits." At the Headquarters level, however, the "Immigration Services Division" is a separate component from Adjudications, reporting to the Office of Field Operations. The functions of the Headquarters component are described below, in [chapter 3.5\(b\)](#).
- The term "Examinations" refers to the activities of the Office of Examinations. However, that office exists only on paper (see [8 CFR100](#)). Formerly, the Office of Examinations was responsible, at IN Headquarters, for supervision of the Inspections Program, the Adjudications Program, the Office of Administrative Appeals, the Office of Service Center Operations and the Office of Records. The responsibilities of the Office of Examinations have been split as described above. In field offices the term "Examinations" may be used interchangeably with Adjudications or it may be used to refer collectively to Adjudications and Inspections.

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