

# Immigration By Marriage

## Document Checklist

The following items are required to successfully complete your immigration application. Compile **copies** of the following documents and return them to our office through our web portal, by email, postal mail, or by dropping them off. If you have any question or concerns, contact us.

### Government Fee

- Check or Money Order for \$535 made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security

### Documents Required From Both Spouses

- Passports of Both Spouses
- Birth Certificates of Both Spouses - **must be translated into English if necessary**
- Certified Copy of Marriage Certificate
- (8) Passport-Style Photos of the Immigrating Spouse and (2) of the American Spouse
- Divorce Decrees or Death Certificates of any Previous Spouses
- If you have children together (including adopted children), provide their Birth Certificates

### Documents Required From the American Spouse

- Driver's License or State-Issued ID

If the American Spouse was not born in the U.S., please supply one of the following:

- Certificate of Citizenship
- or
- Green Card (front and back)

### Work Permit

- A front and back copy of the Immigrant Spouse's Work Permit, if you have one

# Documents That Help Establish A Real Marriage

The following documents help the government determine whether they believe your marriage is real or fake. You don't need every single items on this list, but the more evidence you provide, the stronger your case and the more likely they are to approve it. Many of these items show the government that you live and share a life together.

## Personal

- Wedding invitations or announcements
- Wedding photos
- Photographs of both spouses from your life together - with friends and family
- Greeting cards written between spouses or addressed to spouses (e.g., holiday, birthday, anniversary)
- Testimonial letters from family and friends about your marriage and relationship

## Finances

- Tax returns filed jointly as spouses
- Joint bank account statements
- Joint savings account statements
- Joint credit card statements
- Joint investment accounts
- Life insurance policies listing each other as beneficiaries
- Lease or rental agreements with both of your names
- Mortgage statements showing joint ownership of home

## Debts, Bills and Mail

- Cable, water, power, gas, phone or any other utility bills
- Auto insurance and registration showing both spouses' names
- Medical insurance policies with both names
- Medical bills
- Regular or junk mail addressed to either spouse (showing that you live at the same address)

## Purchases

- Emails from online stores showing that you live at the same address
- Receipts from items purchased together, like furniture or appliances

## Travel

- Plane tickets
- Hotel reservations

# Green Card

## Document Checklist

Qualifying for a Green Card means proving to the government that you are who you say you are. These additional documents are required to complete your application.

### Government Fee

- Check or Money Order for \$1,225 made payable to U.S. Department of Homeland Security

### Medical Exam

The Immigrant Spouse is required to attend and pass a medical exam with a USCIS-approved doctor. Please visit a doctor from this list: <https://my.uscis.gov/findadoctor>. The cost ranges from **\$200-\$500**, so call around. If you recently had immunizations, bring the record to the doctor. Once you attend the exam, they will give you the sealed I-693 medical report we need to proceed with your application. *Please do not open the sealed report!*

- A sealed I-693 medical report for the Immigrant Spouse

### Criminal History

If the Immigrant Spouse has ever been arrested, charged with a crime or convicted of a crime, we need the related criminal records. Visit any Live Scan office and request a background check through the California Department of Justice and the FBI. This costs around **\$150** and you can find an office near you here: <https://oag.ca.gov/fingerprints/locations>

- California Department of Justice Background Check Results
- FBI Background Check Results

If you've ever been in criminal court, we need the court's final order on your case. If you are unable to get it, we will be able to obtain it on your behalf for a small fee.

- Final Court Order, Certified by the Court, for each criminal case

# Financial Support

## Document Checklist

As an American spouse, you must be able to provide financial support for your immigrating spouse equal to or above 125% of the Federal Poverty Guideline. If your income falls below that amount, you must find a joint sponsor or show other assets (like a house) that can meet that requirement. The government wants a clear picture of your income and assets, and the documents below will show that.

### Taxes & Income

- Tax Returns for the past (3) years from the American Spouse with W-2s or 1099s *or* Tax Transcripts for the past (3) years
- (6) Months of Pay Stubs from the American Spouse *or* a letter of employment stating their current salary, position, and length of employment

If you have not filed taxes for the past three years, we need to provide an explanation. Some of the reasons people don't file taxes are because they're unemployed, disabled, or don't make enough money. These reasons do not disqualify you, but we may need more information depending on your specific situation.

- A statement from the American Spouse explaining why they have not filed taxes

### Joint Sponsor

If you have insufficient income or assets, you will need a Joint Sponsor. It can be anyone over the age of 18. They don't have to be related to you. They do need to be a U.S. Citizen or a Green Card Holder. If you have a Joint Sponsor, below is a list of documents we will need from them. Please tell the joint sponsor that their documents and personal information are kept completely confidential within our office and are never shared with anyone except the government.

- (3) years of Tax Returns with W-2s or 1099s *or* Tax Transcripts for the past (3) years
- (6) Months of Pay Stubs *or* a letter of employment from the Joint Sponsor's job stating their current salary, position, and length of employment
- A copy of their U.S. Birth Certificate *or* their Certificate of Citizenship *or* their Green Card