

## Congressional Relations



Sarah T. Taylor is the Chief of the Office of Congressional Relations (OCR). The main responsibility of OCR is to advise the USCIS Director and senior management on legislative and operational matters of interest to Members of Congress. OCR serves as the primary point of contact for Members of Congress and their staff, handling inquiries on immigration policy, individual cases and USCIS operations. OCR coordinates closely with the Office of Legislative Affairs at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to ensure that USCIS issues and

concerns are represented in DHS legislative strategies. OCR is responsible for ensuring that USCIS has a uniform congressional relations strategy that is consistent with USCIS core values. OCR implements the National Congressional Strategic Plan for over 100 USCIS congressional liaisons nationwide. The plan provides guidance, standards and best practices.

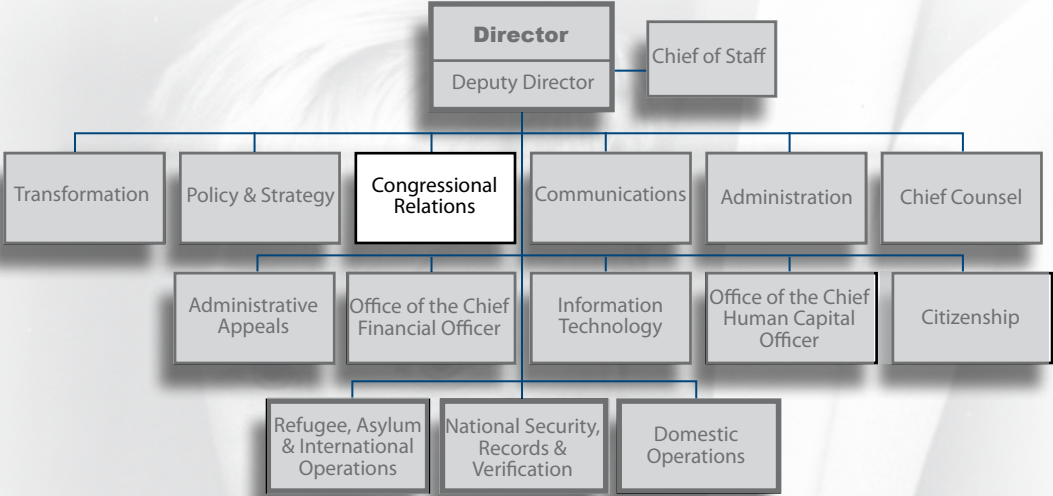
Within headquarters, the Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) functions are divided into two branches. The **Operations Branch** focuses primarily on handling congressional inquiries relating to specific cases, educating field liaisons and Congressional staff, identifying trends and problems in immigration practice and procedures facilitating changes to policies and procedures as necessary. The **Legislative Branch** works with Congress and Executive Branch agency officials on immigration policy and legislation, including the preparation of testimony for hearings and briefings for Members of Congress and their staff.

The Operations Branch staff fielded approximately 10,500 congressional calls, responded to over 2,300 formal written inquiries and answered about 3,000 electronic mail messages, while consistently meeting its internal and external deadlines. The staff has repeatedly been recognized by both Department of Homeland Security and USCIS leadership for having no overdue congressional correspondence. Nationwide, USCIS staff has handled approximately 118,600 congressional calls, responded to over 42,000 formal written inquiries, and answered more than 168,500 electronic mail messages, consistently meeting their internal and external deadlines.

The Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) staff has also been instrumental in focusing the agency's attention on issues. The Legislative Branch facilitates discussions and briefings with members and Congressional staff on a host of issues, such as inter-country adoption, family and employment-based visas, refugee and asylum processing, employment verification, protection of trafficking victims, military naturalization, backlog elimination, background checks and temporary protected status. OCR has coordinated testimony and prepared agency officials for five oversight hearings, and organized more than 88 formal meetings and briefings with Members of Congress and their staff. The team facilitates discussions on legislative issues, coordinates agency views and provides technical drafting assistance on legislation.

USCIS

# Organizational Chart



# Congressional Relations

