



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Regional Directors
District Directors
Officers-in-Charge
Administrative Appeals Office Director

From: William R. Yates /S/
Associate Director of Operations

Date: September 13, 2005

Re: Naming Conventions; Use of Full Legal Name on All USCIS Issued Documents

Revisions to *Adjudicator's Field Manual (AFM)* Chapter 51.4, April 26, 2005
(*AFM* Update AD05-18)

This memorandum provides guidance to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officers in the field regarding naming conventions on CIS issued documents.

This guidance is effective immediately. Please direct any questions concerning these changes through appropriate supervisory channels to Frances A. Murphy, Office of Program and Regulations Development, via electronic mail.

Accordingly, the AFM is revised as follows:

1. The *AFM* currently contains Chapter 51, Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card. That chapter has been revised to add a new sub-chapter 51.4 Revised Chapter 51.4 reads:

(a) Use of Full Legal Name on USCIS Issued Documents. April 26, 2005; *AFM* 15.18. Any USCIS document is to be issued to the individual in his or her full legal name. Regulations that support using full legal names rather than names selected due to personal preference include: 8 C.F.R. Sec. 204.2, 320.3, 322.3; 32 C.F.R. Pt. 270, App. A. For example, the instructions for completing Form I-90 explicitly state:

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Correction or change in biographic data. If you are applying to replace a card because of a name change, you must submit a copy of a court order or marriage certificate reflecting the new name. To replace a card due to a change in any other biographic data, you must submit copies of documentation to prove that this new data is correct.

(Emphasis in original.)

A married woman may choose a legal married name (husband's surname), a legal pre-marriage name (retention of maiden name), or any form of either (e.g., hyphenated name, maiden name and husband's surname) on Form I-551 and corresponding Form I-90 (Application to Replace Permanent Resident Card.) Legal documentation, such as that listed below, must be provided to support the choice.

- Civil Marriage Certificate
- Divorce Decree
- Family Registry
- Country Identity Document
- Foreign Birth Certificate
- Certificate of Naming
- Court Order
- See Foreign Affairs Manual for Country Specific Guidelines

(b) Construction of Foreign Names. Construction of foreign names varies from culture to culture. Appendices 51-2, Construction of Arabic Names; 51-3, Construction of Hispanic Names; 51-4, Family Registry; and, 51-5, Notarial Certificates, provide additional guidance and examples for clarification.

(c) Related subjects. For information pertaining to use of full legal name see Chapter 52, Reentry Permits; Chapter 53, Refugee Travel Documents; Chapter 54, Advance Parole Documents and Boarding Letters; Chapter 55, Employment Authorization Documents; and Chapter 56, Other USCIS and DHS Documents, of this manual.