The following USCIS response was received as part of a collective response to several recommendations submitted by the CIS Ombudsman. The following response has been extracted from the original document received by the CIS Ombudsman for display and readability purposes.

Recommend that USCIS provide customers with a single forms package per type of petition/application regardless of which district office or service center will process the petition/application.

The USCIS agrees with the intent of this recommendation. Standardized filing via the lockbox as the single point of entry for applications will discourage the need and the use of unique instructions previously designed by local offices. It must be understood that the unique instructions were aids for customers that local offices had developed that included such information as particular office hours that certain application types were reviewed, instructions on how to access certain locations because of security requirements in a particular building, and other such unique filing instructions that may have developed because of space and information technology challenges in a particular office. In other situations, USCIS offices developed addendums to forms and variances in processes because of court decisions that necessitated a special procedure in specific locations, or because a local office had uncovered a fraud pattern in its geographic area and instituted specific actions to deal with that issue. Although USCIS strives to standardize processes such as forms packages, it must retain the flexibility to support the integrity of processes and the systems needs. It must be noted that these additional forms instructions were provided in the best interest of the customer and are meant to enhance customer service not hinder it.

However, USCIS believes lock box filing will result in a reduction of local variations in forms and procedures, and we encourage suggestions concerning local variations that may or should continue under the lockbox procedure.