

Recommendation #19
Asylum Pickup

On October 12, 2005, the Ombudsman recommended to USCIS *that all asylum decisions, whether referrals to the immigration judge of conditional/final grants, should be sent certified return/receipt or regular mail via the US Postal Service to all asylum applicants, thereby eliminating the existing 'pick up' decision delivery process.*

On December 12, 2005, USCIS responded to the Ombudsman's recommendation. We clearly explained why we could not agree with the recommendation. Requiring an applicant to come into the office to pick up his/her decision helps to ensure the security and integrity of the immigration system and promotes customer service and efficiency. The current process reduces litigation over sufficiency of service of decisions. It promotes the security and integrity of the immigration process, including the ability of Asylum Offices to conduct required security checks and take necessary follow-up action. Finally, in-person service ensures that decisions are completed in a timely manner and provides several additional customer service benefits, including immediate issuance of employment authorization to applicants who are granted asylum.

The Ombudsman did not have any follow-up to the USCIS response and we consider this recommendation closed.