**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

News Release

March 17, 2004

USCIS LAUNCHES INFOPASS IN LOS ANGELES
Online Appointment System Eliminates Need to Wait in Line for Immigration Information

LOS ANGELES – Calling InfoPass a customer service milestone, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today formally opened the Internet-based appointment system to residents of the Los Angeles area. With InfoPass, the public can now go online to schedule a date and time to meet with immigration information officers at three of the area's busiest USCIS offices, avoiding the need to wait in line.

Eduardo Aguirre, Director of USCIS, attended today's launch and predicted that InfoPass will ultimately mean the end of the line for long lines outside Los Angeles area USCIS information rooms, which serve more than 500,000 people a year. In addition to the downtown location, the USCIS offices in Santa Ana and San Bernardino are also scheduling appointments using InfoPass.

"This is another important stride in our commitment to bring USCIS customer service into the 21st century," Director Aguirre said. "InfoPass debuted last year in Miami where we faced challenges similar to those in Los Angeles. In a matter of weeks, we saw a dramatic decrease in the lines and wait times for our clients and we're optimistic we'll have similar results here."

At the USCIS office in downtown Los Angeles, people typically begin lining up every day before dawn to ensure they have an opportunity to speak with an immigration information officer about their case. Because of the overwhelming demand, some days people must be turned away.

"Using InfoPass, people who come to our busiest offices can be assured they'll get the assistance they need," said Jane Arellano, USCIS District Director in Los Angeles. "And they can schedule their appointments for a date and time that is convenient for them."

To use the Internet scheduling system, customers log on to the InfoPass Web site at uscis.gov. After typing in their zip code, users are directed to the appropriate USCIS office. The Web site then displays a range of dates and times for appointments. Once the customer selects an appointment time, the system generates an electronic appointment notice. Customers must print out that notice and bring it with them to their appointment.

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Customers who log on to InfoPass today can schedule appointments for as early as March 22. Initially, USCIS plans to make a total of 1,140 daily InfoPass appointments available among the three offices. As the system gains popularity, the number of appointments will be increased.

Residents who do not have access to the Internet can make appointments using touch-screen InfoPass kiosks at any of the participating USCIS offices. Public Internet access is also offered by most libraries and many community based organizations. For the time being, USCIS plans to continue assisting walk-in clients, but InfoPass users will receive priority.

USCIS, one of the new agencies established under the Department of Homeland Security, is committed to modernizing and enhancing the delivery of immigration services. InfoPass, for example, is just one of several services offered on the agency's secure Web site. Other conveniences available on uscis.gov include "e-filing" for certain immigration applications, including the renewal and replacement of "green cards," (Form I-90). As a further time saver, the USCIS Web site is now set up to accept credit cards for the payment of application fees. Finally, the public is encouraged to use the Internet to check the status of applications filed with any of the agency's service centers. To use this feature, the public should go to uscis.gov and select Case Status Online.

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