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Press Release

USCIS INTRODUCES NEW EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENT WITH ENHANCED SECURITY FEATURES

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will soon begin issuing a new version of the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) or Form I-766. The EAD serves as proof to employers that an individual is authorized to work in the United States. The new card is designed with numerous security features to prevent counterfeiting and fraud. The card includes a magnetic strip, a two-dimensional barcode, and several features that can be used in forensic examination to determine the card's authenticity.

"USCIS is continuously looking for new ways to enhance national security to maintain the integrity of the immigration system," said Eduardo Aguirre, Director of USCIS. "Including these new security features into one of the most widely used immigration document allows USCIS to make sure the right applicant receives our country's benefits."

The new EAD eliminates all references to the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and includes only markings that identify it as a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and USCIS document. On March 1, 2003 USCIS became one of the three former INS components to join DHS. USCIS is charged with fundamentally transforming and improving the delivery of immigration and citizenship services.

An EAD is normally valid for up to one year, although there are some cases in which a longer validity period is authorized. An EAD is typically produced and mailed within three days after an individual's application for benefits is processed and approved. The current production rate of the EAD is about 24,000 per week. USCIS expects to issue the new cards in early June 2004.