

## **USCIS Releases I-485 Inventory Data - Green Card Applicants See Their Places in Line**

**September 29, 2009** - On September 23, 2009, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) released information about its inventory of pending employment-based I-485 "green card" applications to its website. The inventory list allows individuals with pending employment-based green card applications to estimate more accurately how long they will have to wait for final processing. The move was part of the agency's efforts to meet the mandate of President Obama in June to improve not only the USCIS.gov public website but also to help customers navigate the immigration system and remain up-to-date regarding their case status.

For most individuals pursuing employment-based green cards, filing the Form I-485 is the final part of the process towards U.S. lawful permanent residency. It requires an approved company petition as well as a current "priority date." Priority dates are updated monthly based upon demand, and vary by countries of birth and preference categories. Some categories are backlogged by several years. As such, the applicants whose I-485 applications were affected by backward movement in the priority dates after their cases were filed need to wait for their priority dates to become current again before their cases are processed to conclusion. The USCIS inventory list clearly shows how many applications are pending by month and year, as well as by immigrant visa category and priority date preference category.