

For general information about immigration issues, visit the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services website at <http://www.uscis.gov> .

Can Congressman Walz's office help to expedite my application to become a United States citizen?

The USCIS processes millions of naturalization applications each year. As part of the process, your application must undergo a security clearance. The FBI states that the majority of name checks clear electronically within 48-72 hours. The remaining applications must undergo a manual search which can take an extended period of time. The FBI has informed my office that expedited requests for name checks can only be made by the FBI's customer agencies. Therefore, my office is not able to contact the FBI regarding your name check. To view more information about the FBI security check process, please visit the FBI's FAQ website [here](#) .

I have filed an application for an immigration benefit but have not received any information. Can Congressman Walz's office assist me?

If you have a pending claim with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, my office can check on the status of your case. If the priority date on your application is not current, USCIS and the Department of State are unable to process your case ahead of other cases. To obtain a list of processing dates, please visit the [USCIS application status webpage](#) .

My relative or friend was denied a visa to travel to the United States. Can Congressman Walz's office help my relative or friend to obtain a visa?

Applicants for visitor visas must prove that they have a residence outside the United States which they have no intention of abandoning. Cases that do not unequivocally establish the applicant's intention to return to their home country are routinely denied and are extremely difficult to overcome in later applications.

Unfortunately, there is no appeal process for denials of visitor visa applications. If your relative or friend plans to reapply for a visa and can demonstrate evidence of strong ties to his or her homeland, my office can send a letter to the Embassy or Consulate requesting due consideration of the application.

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Travel Outside of the U.S.

The U.S. State Department offers excellent resources for citizens traveling outside the U.S. You should check <http://travel.state.gov> before you depart for information about required documentation for entry into a particular country, travel warnings and alerts, information on international adoptions and emergency contact information should you require the services of an American embassy while you're traveling.

What do I need to do in order to meet the requirements for travel to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda?

Effective January 1, 2009 all U.S. citizens are now required to present a passport book, passport card, or [Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative](#) -compliant document when entering the United States.

Make sure to find out what the entry requirements are for the country you are visiting. In some cases, you may need to contact the Embassy of the country you are visiting. Travel information is available at <http://travel.state.gov> .

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Passport Assistance

How long does it currently take to get a passport?

According to the Department of State, passport applications (first time applications and renewals) are taking 10 to 12 weeks, and expedited applications and renewals are taking approximately 3 weeks.

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I am a U.S. Citizen traveling to Mexico, Canada, Bermuda or countries in the Caribbean region by air and I have NOT APPLIED for a passport yet, or, I have not applied to renew my expired passport. What should I do?

You will need to apply for a passport or renewed passport and wait for your application to show up in the in Department of State's online tracking system. Please be aware that it can take up to

10 business days for your passport application status to be available online.

To apply for a passport for the first time, you will need to go to a passport acceptance facility (i.e. government center), fill out the application for a passport and present acceptable proof of U.S. citizenship and passport photos. If you are renewing your passport, you can apply in person or by mail. Detailed information about requirements, locations, and instructions is available on the Department of State's [passport website](#) .

If you applied more than 10 business days ago and your passport status is not available online, contact my Rochester office by phone at (507) 206-0643 for assistance.

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I am a U.S. citizen traveling to somewhere other than Mexico, Canada, or the Bermuda and Caribbean regions. Do I need a passport, and if so, what should I do?

You still need a passport to exit and re-enter the U.S. when traveling to any country other than those listed above. Countries listed above require a [Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative](#) -compliant document.

For a complete list of travel document requirements, visit <http://travel.state.gov> .

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How can Congressman Walz's office assist me with my passport?

If you depart for your trip within two weeks and you applied for a passport more than 10 business days ago and your application status is not available online, my office can help.

Before contacting my office, please check on the current status of your application and get your locator number, then, contact my Rochester office by phone at (507) 206-0643 for further assistance.