YELLOW LAW GROUP

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730 E Park Blvd, Suite 100, Plano, TX 75074
+1 (201) 899-6194 · yellow.law

IR-5 Parent Green Card Document Checklist

For U.S. citizens age 21 or older who are sponsoring a mother or father

How to use this checklist

- Every case starts with Part 1 (Form I-130). After approval, a parent who lives abroad continues with Part 2 (consular processing). A parent who is lawfully in the U.S. may use Part 3 (adjustment of status) instead, and Parts 1 and 3 can often be filed together.
- Prepare a separate set for each parent: one I-130 covers one parent.
- Any document that is not in English needs a complete English translation, with the translator's signed statement that they are competent to translate and that the translation is accurate.
- Send copies, not originals, unless a form's instructions ask for an original. Bring the originals to the interview.

1 The petition: Form I-130

Filed with USCIS by the U.S. citizen son or daughter (the petitioner).

- [ ] **Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative**
  One per parent, signed by the petitioner, with the current filing fee (see uscis.gov/g-1055). Form I-130A is not needed: it is only for spouses.

- [ ] **Proof of the petitioner's U.S. citizenship**
  One of: U.S. birth certificate, U.S. passport (biographic page), Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship, or Consular Report of Birth Abroad (FS-240).

- [ ] **Proof that the petitioner is 21 or older**
  Usually shown by the birth certificate or passport.

- [ ] **Proof of the parent-child relationship**
  - [ ] Mother: the petitioner's birth certificate showing the mother's name.
  - [ ] Father, parents married: the birth certificate showing both parents' names, plus the parents' marriage certificate.
  - [ ] Father, parents not married: the birth certificate showing the father's name, plus proof of legitimation before age 18, or of a genuine father-child relationship before the petitioner turned 21 or married.
  - [ ] Stepparent: the birth certificate, the marriage certificate showing the stepparent married the petitioner's parent before the petitioner turned 18, and proof that any earlier marriages ended.
  - [ ] Adoptive parent: the adoption decree showing the adoption took place before age 16, plus proof of at least 2 years of legal custody and shared residence.

- [ ] **Proof of any name change**
  Marriage certificate, divorce decree or court order, if a name differs between documents (for the petitioner or the parent).

- [ ] **The parent's identity and history**
  Passport biographic page (recommended), full name, date and place of birth, current address, and any earlier U.S. visas, A-number or immigration filings.

2 Consular processing: the parent lives outside the U.S.

After USCIS approves the I-130, the case moves to the National Visa Center (NVC). Documents are uploaded to the Consular Electronic Application Center (CEAC); the originals go to the interview.

A. National Visa Center (NVC) stage

- [ ] **NVC case number and invoice ID**
  From the NVC welcome letter or email; used to sign in to CEAC.

- [ ] **NVC fees paid in CEAC**
  The immigrant visa application processing fee (one per parent) and the Affidavit of Support fee.

- [ ] **Form DS-260, Immigrant Visa Electronic Application**
  Completed online for each parent; keep the confirmation page.

- [ ] **Form I-864, Affidavit of Support**
  Signed by the petitioner, who must show household income of at least 125% of the HHS Poverty Guidelines. If you sponsor both parents, count both in the household size.
  - [ ] Most recent federal income tax return or IRS transcript, with all W-2s and 1099s
  - [ ] Proof of current income: an employer letter and recent pay stubs
  - [ ] If the petitioner lives abroad: proof of U.S. domicile, or of plans to re-establish it

- [ ] **If the income falls short**
  - [ ] Proof of assets (for a parent, generally worth at least 5 times the income shortfall)
  - [ ] Form I-864A from household members whose income is counted
  - [ ] A joint sponsor's own Form I-864, tax return and proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent residence

- [ ] **Civil documents for each parent**
  - [ ] Birth certificate
  - [ ] Marriage certificate, plus the divorce, annulment or death records that ended any earlier marriage
  - [ ] Court and prison records for any conviction, and military records where the country requires them
  - [ ] Passport biographic page; the passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the planned entry date
  - [ ] Country-specific document names and issuing offices: the U.S. Department of State Reciprocity Schedule

- [ ] **Police certificates (age 16 and older)**
  From the country of nationality and the current country of residence if the parent lived there more than 6 months, from any other country where they lived more than 12 months, and from any country where they were arrested, however long they stayed.

B. Interview at the U.S. embassy or consulate

- [ ] **Medical exam**
  With a panel physician designated by the embassy, before the interview. Bring vaccination records; results usually go to the embassy directly.

- [ ] **Interview appointment letter and DS-260 confirmation page**

- [ ] **Valid passport**
  Plus two identical 2x2-inch (5x5 cm) color photos if the embassy asks for them.

- [ ] **Originals or certified copies of every civil document uploaded to CEAC**
  With their translations.

- [ ] **Copy of the I-864 package and the petitioner's latest tax return**
- [ ] **After the visa is issued: the USCIS Immigrant Fee**
  Pay it online before travel, so the Green Card is produced and mailed after entry.

3 Adjustment of status: the parent is lawfully in the U.S.

Because parents of U.S. citizens are immediate relatives, the I-130 and I-485 can usually be filed together. Eligibility depends on how the parent entered and on their status history.

- [ ] **Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status**
  With the current filing fee.
- [ ] **Form I-130 (filed together), or its I-797 receipt or approval notice**
- [ ] **Form I-864, Affidavit of Support**
  With the same financial evidence as in Part 2, plus Form I-864A or a joint sponsor if needed.
- [ ] **Form I-693, Report of Immigration Medical Examination and Vaccination Record**
  Completed by a USCIS-designated civil surgeon, in the sealed envelope, and submitted with the I-485.
- [ ] **The parent's birth certificate**
  With a certified English translation.
- [ ] **Passport biographic page and the U.S. visa used to enter**
- [ ] **Form I-94 arrival/departure record**
  Proof of lawful admission or parole; download it from i94.cbp.dhs.gov.
- [ ] **Two identical 2x2-inch passport-style photos**
- [ ] **Copy of a government-issued photo ID**
- [ ] **Marriage and divorce records**
  If the parent's name has changed.
- [ ] **Certified court records**
  For any arrest, charge or conviction, in the U.S. or abroad.

Optional, filed with the I-485

- [ ] **Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization**
  A work permit while the I-485 is pending.
- [ ] **Form I-131, Application for Travel Document (advance parole)**
  Leaving the U.S. without it while the I-485 is pending generally abandons the application.

> If the parent entered on a visitor visa or under the Visa Waiver Program (ESTA), or has ever overstayed, get advice before filing: entry history and timing can affect eligibility.

Official sources

- USCIS, Form I-130: uscis.gov/i-130
- USCIS, Form I-485: uscis.gov/i-485
- USCIS, Form I-864: uscis.gov/i-864
- USCIS, Form I-693: uscis.gov/i-693
- USCIS, Fee Schedule (G-1055): uscis.gov/g-1055
- U.S. Department of State, The Immigrant Visa Process (NVC): travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/the-immigrant-visa-process.html
- U.S. Department of State, Reciprocity Schedule: travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country.html

Questions about your parent's case?

Yellow Law Group handles IR-5 cases from the I-130 to the interview. Call +1 (201) 899-6194 or visit yellow.law/contact for a free case evaluation.

This checklist is general information, not legal advice, and does not create an attorney-client relationship. Requirements change and depend on each family's facts; always follow the current USCIS form instructions and NVC or embassy guidance. Updated October 27, 2026.