

## DACA RENEWAL DELAYS – WHAT YOU CAN DO

Created: March 1, 2026

Updated: April 16, 2026

*Please note: The following is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. We recommend you seek legal assistance to help you prepare your renewal, especially if your circumstances have changed or have had interactions with immigration or law enforcement since your last renewal.*

DACA renewals are taking much longer for USCIS to process and in some cases, we are seeing significant delays. More often, DACA renewal applicants are receiving biometrics (fingerprinting) appointments, “requests for evidence”, and extra levels of examination and vetting, all of which extend processing times.

We know this situation affects many of you. To help, here are steps to file your renewal as timely as possible—and what to do if the processing is delayed.

### USCIS PROCESSING TIMES

According to USCIS [“Case Processing Times,”](#) DACA renewals (form I-821D) are taking an estimated 3.5 months in 80% of cases.

While USCIS recommends on its website that applicants submit their DACA renewal between 120 and 150 days (4 to 5 months) before it expires, we are already seeing that 120 days may be too late to prevent your DACA status and work permit from lapsing.

It is therefore crucial to submit your DACA renewal **as close to but not more than 150 days (5 months)** before your current DACA and employment authorization document (EAD, work permit) expires.

- Filing as close to 150 days as possible helps prevent your work permit from lapsing while you wait for a decision.
- Note, however, that filing earlier than 150 days will not speed up the process. In fact, USCIS warns on page 1 of the [instructions for form I-821D](#) the following:

*“CAUTION: If you file this request more than 150 days prior to the expiration of your current period of deferred action, USCIS may reject your submission and return it to you with instructions to resubmit your request closer to the expiration date.*

**TIP:** To identify the dates that are between 150 and 120 days before your DACA expires, use [NILC's DACA Renewal Calculator](#).

## POTENTIAL DELAYS IN YOUR DACA RENEWAL: WHAT TO DO

*If your DACA renewal is taking longer than it should, please take these steps:*

**TIP: Have all these ready when following any of the steps:**

- Your full name
- Your alien registration/USCIS number (A-number)
- Your application receipt numbers and receipt dates
- The expiration date of your DACA and employment authorization document (EAD)
- Information you provided in the renewal application forms (I-821D and I-765) (If you made copies of the forms before you submitted them, have them on hand so you can refer to them.)

### Step 1:

#### Check your case status online.

Monitor your case's status by using USCIS's online "[My Case Status](#)" tool.

Create a USCIS Electronic Immigration System ([USCIS ELIS](#)) online account to track the progress of your case.

#### Check whether you have ever been ordered removed.

This may impact the processing and outcome of your DACA renewal request. Check the EOIR Automated Case Information System (ACIS) online at [acis.eoir.justice.gov](#) or via phone at 1-800-898-7180. You will need your A-number to get information on court dates, the location of the court, and final decisions. If you do have an old deportation order, it is important that you consult an attorney (see Step 5).

### Step 2:

#### Place an inquiry into your case with USCIS

*If your DACA renewal has been pending for more than 105 days (3.5 months) you can submit an "outside normal processing time" inquiry by contacting USCIS at 1-800-375-5283 or by submitting a [service request inquiry](#) online. **Form I-821D is not listed in the menu options, so use your Form I-765 receipt number to submit the request.***

### Step 3:

#### Reach out to your elected official for help

Contact your U.S. Senator or your U.S. Representative who represents you in Congress.

**TIP:** You can find out who your congresspeople are and get their contact information by entering your zip code at [www.house.gov/representatives/find/](http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/) (to find your representative) and entering your state at [www.senate.gov/senators/index.htm](http://www.senate.gov/senators/index.htm) (to find your senators).

- **File an online request with your Senator/Representative**, usually found under “help with a federal agency” on their website. Be prepared to provide information about your case, as well as your name, A-number, receipt numbers and dates, type of case, etc. You will have to share your address to confirm you live in their state/district and sign a privacy release form.
- **Follow up by phone:** If you don't hear back within a few days (or sooner if it's urgent), call their local office. If they still don't respond, call their Washington, D.C. office. (Numbers are available on their website.)
- **Ask for specific help:** Clearly explain your situation. Ask them to check your case status with USCIS and request USCIS to expedite your application if it is urgent. If you have one, include a [letter](#) from your employer.

#### Step 4:

##### Place your own expedite request

On an increasingly limited basis, USCIS entertains [requests to expedite application processing](#) on a case-by-case basis, subject to discretion and supporting documentation. Qualifying criteria include severe financial loss, urgent humanitarian situations, nonprofit interests, government needs, or clear agency error. Please read USCIS guidance on this before submitting the expedite request. To include a letter from your employer, please see [this template](#). While not required, seek legal assistance if you want help preparing the expedite request (see Step 5).

#### Step 5:

##### Reach out to a legal services provider.

If the previous steps haven't worked, you should seek legal help. Identify a local legal service provider [here](#).

#### **NOTE: NEW POLICY AFFECTING DACA APPLICANTS FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES**

USCIS has paused processing certain immigration applications for people from 39 countries, citing security concerns. We are also monitoring whether similar pauses are affecting individuals from 75 countries the administration has flagged as higher risk for using public benefits. Please see more information about this [here](#).

We believe this is wrong and likely unlawful and are working with attorneys, congressional offices, and others to find a resolution. However, please follow the same steps above and alert us about your situation by sending us an email to [Susan.Collins@thedream.us](mailto:Susan.Collins@thedream.us).

*(Updated 4/16/26)*

***IMPORTANT: Even though DACA renewals are taking longer, or are delayed or paused in some cases, you should still apply as early as possible. Not renewing before your DACA expires may increase your risk for immigration enforcement.***

***If your DACA has been expired for over a year, do not apply without first consulting an immigration attorney or a trusted legal services provider.***

### **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR URGENT CASES**

If you are experiencing hardship due to your DACA expiring or you need additional support, please contact [susan.collins@thedream.us](mailto:susan.collins@thedream.us)

### **DACA FEES SUPPORT**

Through our partnership with Mission Asset Fund (MAF), TheDream.US is providing DACA renewal fee grants for current Scholars and Alumni. To apply, please visit: <https://forms.missionassetfund.org/t/kKnoPdEcXQus> If you are having trouble with your application you can email them at: [programs@missionassetfund.org](mailto:programs@missionassetfund.org)

### ***Sources for this Guidance***

Information above was referenced from the following: USCIS website, [Immigrants Rising, CLINIC](#), and NILC's [Steps to Take if Your DACA Renewal is Delayed](#).