



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

History Office & Library



OUR HISTORY

Our library was founded to track the history and implementation of federal immigration policy from the creation of the Immigration Bureau in 1891 to the activities of USCIS today.

The library does not keep individuals' immigration or naturalization records.

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

The History Office and Library is available to researchers with an appointment, Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 4 pm, excluding federal holidays.

To schedule, please email us at cishistory.library@uscis.dhs.gov

BUILDING ACCESS

Visitors must present a valid photo ID and enter through a building security check.

All foreign nationals must submit identification 30 days in advance for security clearance.



GETTING HERE

We are located at 5900 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, Maryland. The easiest way to arrive is by Metro. The library is located at the end of the **Green Line** (Branch Ave Station).

Parking is available for a daily fee at the Metro station.

OUR COLLECTION

The USCIS History Office and Library collection consists of books, publications, reports, periodicals, microfilm, legal material, and secondary works by and about USCIS and its predecessor agencies.

Our collection:

- General Collection - agency publications, reports, handbooks, and other materials documenting agency operations.
- Periodicals - 20th century agency periodicals (*Monthly Review*, *Reporter*, *Commissioner's Communique*)
- Photograph Collection - depicts agency facilities and operations throughout the country from the 1890s to the present.
- Video Collection - covers major changes in immigration, conferences, and other topics from the 1980s to the present.
- Vertical/Subject Files - immigration topics arranged alphabetically from A-Files to Zero Population Growth
- Legal History Resources - Immigration Laws and Regulations, Opinions of the Solicitor, secondary sources, and more.

[Search the Library's Catalog](#)



AMMENITIES

Wi-Fi

The library does not have public Wi-Fi. However, use of your cell phone as a hot spot in the library is permitted.

Food and Drink

Only water is allowed in the library's researcher area, but not near library materials. The USCIS Market Place is available for sandwiches, snacks, coffee, and drinks. Eating areas are available in the courtyard or the breakroom. [Other restaurants are available nearby.](#)

Copying and Scanning

Reproduction and scanning services are available.

History Office and Library Reading Room Guidelines

Since much of the material in the library is rare, often unique, and sometimes fragile or brittle, it is essential that particular care be taken in handling each book and manuscript. Persons found to be involved in the mutilation, destruction or theft of materials are subject to prosecution. We request your cooperation in preserving these valuable and irreplaceable collections by observing the following procedures and regulations:

1. Arrive at the reading room with clean hands, washed only with soap and water. Lotions and hand sanitizers are to be avoided before handling materials as they contain harmful residues.
2. Only those items necessary for researchers (sheets of paper, pencil, laptop) are permitted in the reading room. Personal camera/scanner use is permitted with permission of staff members. Ink and correction fluid is prohibited to avoid damage to materials.
3. Coats, umbrellas, purses, briefcases, backpacks, carrying cases, portfolios, and other items not needed for research must be deposited in the lockers. As a security measure, staff reserves the right to inspect all personal items brought into the building.
4. Reading room tables are reserved for the use of repository materials and other items necessary for research and note taking.
5. Researchers must leave the reading room to make or receive calls.
6. All repository materials are non-circulating and must be used only in the reading room.
7. Repository materials are housed in stacks, vertical files, and a closed preservation room. Researchers are permitted to browse through the stacks for materials. A request must be made for each item in the vertical files or preservation room. Researchers should not reshelve materials in the stacks but should place materials on the shelving cart when finished.
8. Materials shall not be written on, leaned on, altered, folded anew, traced, or handled in any way likely to inflict damage. Notify staff of anything needing preservation attention.
9. When closing a folder/binder, check to make certain all papers are clear of the crease to avoid damage to papers.
10. The records must be kept in the same order in which they are given to you. If folders in a box or pages in a folder appear to be out of order, do not rearrange the records yourself. Alert staff instead.
11. All materials should be returned to staff 10 minutes prior to closing time.
12. Do not attach paper clips of any kind for any reason. The best way to mark your place is with a slip of paper – not with a pencil or other bulky object which distorts the binding. Do not turn down the pages to mark a place.
13. Handle microfilm, CDs, and DVDs by the edges; smudges and scratches obliterate images. Fingerprints cause chemical changes which can affect the data stored on these items.
14. Permission to publish or display copies of our holdings must be requested in writing. Researchers are responsible for obtaining permission from the copyright holder of any materials used.