



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Green Card Through Family

Many people become permanent residents (get a green card) through family members. The United States promotes family unity and allows U.S. citizens and permanent residents to petition for certain relatives to come and live permanently in the United States. You may be eligible to get a green card through a family member who is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, or through the special categories described below. For more information on the categories below, see the links to the left.

There are two distinct paths through which you can get your green card. Many family members who are already in the United States may qualify for adjustment of status to permanent residence in the United States, which means they are able to complete their immigrant processing without having to return to their home country. Those relatives outside the United States or those who are not eligible to adjust status in the United States may be eligible for consular processing through a U.S. embassy or consulate abroad that has jurisdiction over their foreign place of residence. For more information on these processes, see the links to the left under "Green Card Processes & Procedures."

If Your Family Member is a U.S. Citizen

You may be able to get a green card as an immediate relative or as a family member in a preference category if your U.S. citizen relative files a Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative, for you. For more information on immigrant petitions, see the "Family" link to the right.

- **Immediate Relative of a U.S. Citizen**

You are an immediate relative of a U.S. citizen if you are:

- The child (unmarried and under 21 years old) of a U.S. citizen
- The spouse (husband or wife) of a U.S. citizen
- The parent of a U.S. citizen (if the U.S. citizen is 21 years or older)

- **Family Member of a U.S. Citizen in a Preference Category**

You are a family member of a U.S. citizen in a preference category if you are:

- An unmarried son or daughter (21 years or older) of a U.S. citizen
- A married son or daughter (any age) of a U.S. citizen
- A sibling (brother or sister) of a U.S. citizen

If Your Family Member is a Permanent Resident

You may be able to get a green card as a family member in a preference category if your family member filed a Form I-130 on your behalf. For more information on immigrant petitions, see the "Family" link to the right.

- **Family member of a permanent resident in a preference category**

You are a family member of a permanent resident in a preference category if you are:

- The spouse of a permanent resident
- The child (unmarried and under 21 years old) of permanent resident
- The unmarried son or daughter (21 years or older) of a permanent resident

Green Card Through Special Categories of Family

You may also be eligible to get a green card if you:

- Are a battered child or spouse of a U.S. citizen
- Entered the United States with a K visa as the fiancé(e) or spouse of a U.S. citizen or an accompanying child
- Obtained V nonimmigrant status
- Are a widow(er) of a U.S. citizen
- Are born to a foreign diplomat in the United States

For more information on "Adjustment of Status" and "Consular Processing" see links to left under "Green Card Processes & Procedures."

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