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USCIS Announces Transfer Of Records To National Archives

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Approximately 44,000 Files to be transferred to Archives Facility in San Bruno, Calif.

WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced the transfer of approximately 44,000 additional alien registration records, known as “A-Files,” to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

USCIS transferred the historical records from its San Bruno Federal Records Center to the permanent custody of the National Archives Pacific Region facility in San Bruno, Calif. It is anticipated that the transferred files will be available to the public beginning today. This is the fourth in a series of immigration file transfers initiated in June 2009, when USCIS and NARA formalized a schedule to relocate eligible A-Files for permanent preservation in the National Archives.

“It is imperative that we protect and treasure America’s immigration history,” said USCIS Director Alejandro Mayorkas. “The very fabric of our nation can be found in these files and we are pleased to work with our partners at NARA to ensure their preservation and access for future generations.”

The United States Government first began keeping the individual case files in 1944 to document the interactions between individual aliens and the U.S. government. A-Files are unique because they contain not only demographic information, but in many cases also include a number of other personal and historical documents, such as photographs, foreign birth certificates, marriage licenses and interview transcripts.

The A-Files being moved to the National Archives Pacific Region facility represent immigrants born between the 1860s and 1910. The top three countries of origin represented are Japan (42 percent), the Philippines (34 percent) and China (6 percent). A number of other countries

are represented in the A-Files, including Mexico, Portugal and Canada.

In keeping with the 2009 schedule, A-Files located at the San Bruno Federal Records Center will be added to the holdings of the National Archives Pacific Region in San Bruno; all other A-Files will be transferred to the National Archives in Kansas City, Mo. as they become eligible.

USCIS currently maintains approximately 59 million A-Files. In addition to the A-Files that have been transferred to San Bruno, about 477,000 have been transferred to the permanent custody of the National Archives in Kansas City. About 90 percent of those files represent immigrants who came to the United States before 1960.

Once the A-Files are in NARA custody, they will be available to the public in National Archives research rooms and indexed in NARA's online [Archival Research Catalog](#).^[2] Copies of the A-Files can also be requested by mail.

For more information about A-File research at the National Archives, visit [their website](#)^[3]. Additional immigration information and links to resources related to genealogical research are available on [USCIS's website](#)^[4].

Agency:

[USCIS](#)^[5]

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[2] <http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/>

[3] <http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/index.html>

[4] <http://www.uscis.gov/genealogy>

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