



E-Filing OAW Affirmative Asylum Applications: A Quick Guide

Afghan asylum applications (I-589) may be filed by **paper** or **electronically via myUSCIS portal**.

CLINIC advises filing OAW affirmative asylum applications electronically, given the long delays in issuing receipt notices for paper-filed cases.

VECINA offers simple instructions and practice pointers from USCIS and AILA on e-filing affirmative asylum applications on their E-Course, section: [Submitting the Asylum Application Electronically](#) (**must be logged into VECINA's course to view the page**).

Key highlights from VECINA's guidance on e-filing affirmative asylum applications:

- **Marking "OAW" for expedited processing (paper or e-filing):** It is very important to make it abundantly clear on your client's application that he/she was an OAW (Operation Allies Welcome) parolee. This is what will make your client eligible for expedited processing, so it should be **noted in giant bold letters on the top of your cover letter, cover sheet, etc.**
- VECINA states that they have been hearing that **electronic submissions are being processed much more quickly than paper submissions**, and strongly recommends filing electronically unless there is a reason that you cannot.
- AILA reports: **The system is buggy - attorneys report problems trying to upload items after submission and accessing correspondence from USCIS through myUSCIS - but overall, it is worth applying online because you get a receipt notice almost instantly upon submission.** No waiting for months for a service center to process the filing. And USCIS will (hopefully) work out the system bugs over time.
- **Note:** While there's usually a *receipt notice* within 24 hours for online filing, that doesn't necessarily result in as immediate of an *interview notice* (which may still be subject to a general backlog for interview scheduling, particularly at Asylum/USCIS Field Offices with large demand).