Update 2010-13: Common Place Handbook
Redesigned Permanent Resident Card (I-551)

Background
The Permanent Resident Card (I-551) - commonly known as a “Green Card” - establishes both identity and employment eligibility for noncitizens lawfully admitted for permanent residence. I-551s are issued by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to legal immigrants after their arrival and to refugees after one year of residence. Other noncitizens are eligible to apply for an I-551 subject to the limitations of their specific legal status.

Changes
The USCIS has redesigned the I-551 to incorporate several major new security features. State-of-the-art technology prevents counterfeiting, obstructs tampering, and facilitates quick and accurate authentication of the card.

USCIS started issuing new I-551s on May 11, 2010, to newly approved lawful permanent residents (LPRs) and to those who sought renewal or replacement cards. The I-551s are valid for ten (10) years for LPRs and two (2) years for conditional residents. It must be renewed once it expires.

Old I-551 with Expiration Date
Previous versions of the I-551 that have expiration dates will remain valid until they expire. Holders of those cards will receive the redesigned version when seeking a renewal or replacement.

Old I-551 Without Expiration Date
The old I-551s that do NOT have expiration dates also remain valid. USCIS recommends that holders of those cards apply to replace their cards with the redesigned version.

Renewal Cost
The current cost of renewing or replacing the I-551 is $370.00.
The following are features of the redesigned I-551:

- Special ink creates color shifts in visual designs (e.g., eagle’s head).
- Fine-lined artwork and complex architecture incorporate patterns that are nearly impossible to reproduce.
- Card materials resist tampering. Attempted tampering becomes immediately visible to the naked eye.
- Standard card design and personalized features are integrated to deter fraud attempts (e.g., alteration of the photograph).
- Greater detail in photograph makes for easier identification of the bearer.
- Ultra-violet technology and tactile clues allow accurate card authentication at border crossings.
- Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) allows inspectors to read unique, 192-bit serial number (192-bits) from a distance and link the information to the personal data on file.
- Personalized return address on the back of the card doubles as a security feature and a customer-service enhancement to facilitate easy return of lost cards to USCIS.
- In keeping with its nickname, the redesigned I-551 is now green.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Previous</th>
<th>New</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Front of Card</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optical Variable Ink</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holographic Image</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embedded Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID)</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laser Engraved Fingerprint</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unique Background Design</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Back of Card</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamper Resistant Border</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optical Media Stores All Digital Files, Including Biometrics</td>
<td></td>
<td>x x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Micro-image, High Resolution Pictures of State Flags and U.S. Presidents</td>
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<td>x</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Sample I-551

Below is a sample of the redesigned I-551:

[Refer to Common Place Handbook, “I-551 “Permanent Resident Card”,” page 16-9, for more information.]

Implementation

USCIS began issuing the redesigned I-551 on May 11, 2010, to newly approved LPRs and to those who sought renewal or replacement cards.

Documentation

Workers are reminded to document all pertinent actions in the Maintain Case Comments window.

Copies of the I-551s must be scanned in the Integrated Document Management (IDM) under Permanent Verification.
Other Programs

This Update affects the CalWORKs, Refugee Cash Assistance, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, Foster Care, General Assistance and CAPI programs.

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