

Asylum Application Fees Explainer

General Information:

Asylum seekers in the United States (US) who could previously file a claim at no cost will now be required to pay a **\$100 initial filing fee** and a **\$102 annual asylum fee** (AAF) for each additional year the application is pending. The price of the AAF is adjusted based on inflation and is subject to change every year. In 2025, the average wait time for a pending asylum application was about [3 years](#).

Background Context:

When [H.R.1](#) was signed in July 2025, new fees for asylum applications were created. As such, an [Interim Final Rule](#) followed; this rule carried out the changes to the law and became effective on May 29, 2026; however, certain individuals were required to make payments as early as last fall.

Consequences of Failing to Make a Payment:

Below are the possible consequences of failing to pay the AAF on time, per the [United States Citizenship and Immigration Services](#) (USCIS).

1. Rejection of a pending asylum application, which is often followed by removal proceedings.
2. Loss of previously approved work authorization.
3. Rejection of any pending work permit applications.

These outcomes may make a person(s) more vulnerable to deportation or removal.

Some Ways to Pay:

We strongly encourage community partners to refer asylum seekers to the Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP) asylum fees [webpage](#), which provides a regularly updated, complete, and accurate guide. Below are general considerations for individuals when preparing to make a payment:

1. Determine the agency in which the case is pending.
 - a. For affirmative asylum cases: [USCIS](#).
 - b. For defensive asylum cases: [Immigration Court](#).
 - c. For asylum appeals: [Board of Immigration Appeals](#) (BIA) (NOTE: The BIA has not yet established an online payment method).
2. Locate your unique 9-digit [A number](#) and asylum application [receipt number](#).
3. Determine a form of payment, such as a credit card, debit card, or US bank account information. If these are not an option, individuals can buy a pre-paid card at many large stores with cash.
4. Agencies should send a receipt of payment - save this for record-keeping purposes.

This asylum fee process is confusing and still developing, so applicants should **check their case status regularly**. Questions regarding fees, payment, and notifications from immigration agencies should be directed to a trusted immigration legal service provider, community organization, or accredited representative for support. **This guide is meant to provide general information and should not replace legal advice about a specific case.**

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Additional Resources:

Our Coalition is actively searching for resources for members to share. We understand that financial assistance is the highest priority resource for people to secure; however, it is also extremely limited and hard to find. These resources are meant to serve as additional references for navigation and information.

- **The Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)** website is a useful tool for all things asylum fee-related, including their step-by-step [annual asylum fee](#) instructions and general [asylum application and evidence](#) page.

Coalition members who may be available to assist in navigating the payment process:

- **[Hope Acts](#)** - Does not provide financial assistance. Other services include troubleshooting with immigration and state agencies on a wide range of issues such as address changes, assistance accessing DHHS benefits (SNAP, MaineCare, TANF), Free Care applications, and understanding bills and other mail. To make an appointment, call (207) 613-5052; walk-ins are available Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 11 am to 3 pm.
 - Please note: HopeActs are not attorneys and do not provide legal advice.
- **[Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project \(ILAP\)](#)** - Does not provide financial assistance. Offers pro bono legal assistance for asylum seekers. Due to the high volume of those in need, individuals must go through a screening process before being placed with an attorney, and can begin by reaching out via email: info@ilapmaine.org or by phone at 207-780-1593.
 - [Asylum Fee Explainers available in: English, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish](#)
- **[LighthouseME](#)** - And the accompanying Hotline (207) 544-9989 serves as a way to help connect community members with local organizations, resources, report ICE sightings, and find information.
- **[Trinity Jubilee Center](#)** - Does not provide financial assistance, but can help navigate the website to pay the AAF for both affirmative and defensive asylum cases for people who live in Androscoggin County. Other services include work permits, citizenship, and certain green card applications. Appointments can be made over the phone at (207) 782-5700 or in person at 123 Bates St., Lewiston.
 - Please note: Trinity Jubilee Center employees are not attorneys and do not provide legal advice.