

## A Selection of Important Immigration Law Terms and Acronyms

<b>A-number</b>	A unique number assigned to a non-citizen by the U.S. immigration system. For example, a person who submits an application to <b>USCIS</b> gets an A-number as does a person who is arrested by <b>ICE</b> .
<b>AAO</b>	Stands for <i>Administrative Appeals Office</i> . The AAO is part of <b>USCIS</b> and can consider appeals from certain negative decisions by <b>USCIS</b> officers.
<b>Adjudicator's Field Manual</b>	This is a compilation of USCIS policies and procedures. Portions of it are available to the public at <a href="https://www.uscis.gov/ilink/docView/AFM/HTML/AFM/0-0-0-1.html">https://www.uscis.gov/ilink/docView/AFM/HTML/AFM/0-0-0-1.html</a> . Part of it have migrated to the USCIS Policy Manual. <a href="https://www.uscis.gov/policymanual/HTML/PolicyManual.html">https://www.uscis.gov/policymanual/HTML/PolicyManual.html</a> Eventually the USCIS Policy Manual will replace the Adjudicator's Field Manual
<b>Admissibility</b>	This refers to whether a person is eligible to enter the U.S. Some individuals who are already in the U.S. must be admissible in order to obtain certain immigration benefits. The grounds of inadmissibility are set out in section 212 of the <b>INA</b> (8 U.S.C. §1182). Waivers are available in some circumstances
<b>Affidavit of support</b>	Certain applications must include an affidavit of support to demonstrate that the applicant will not become a <b>public charge</b> .
<b>AILA</b>	Stands for <i>American Immigration Lawyers Association</i> . As the name suggests, it is a national association of immigration lawyers.
<b>Adjustment of status</b>	Adjustment of status is the process by which a person who is already in the United States and who meets eligibility requirements can apply for permanent resident status (a green card) in the U.S. <i>Cf.</i> <b>Consular Processing</b> .
<b>AOS</b>	<i>See Adjustment of Status.</i>
<b>Arriving alien</b>	The term refers to someone who has sought admission at the border. Some people who are already in the U.S. are considered arriving aliens, such as individuals who arrive at a <b>POE</b> seeking asylum.

<b>Asylee</b>	An asylee is a person who has been granted asylum. Asylum can be granted only to a person who is in the United States. <i>Cf. Refugee.</i>
<b>Asylum</b>	Asylum is a form of protection granted to a person in the U.S. who has shown a fear of persecution in his or her home country based on political opinion, race, religion, nationality or membership in a particular social group.
<b>BALCA</b>	Stands for <i>Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals</i> . BALCA, which is part of the <b>DOL</b> , mainly reviews denials of <b>PERM</b> labor certification cases.
<b>BIA</b>	Stands for <i>Board of Immigration Appeals</i> . The BIA is part of the <b>EOIR</b> . The BIA reviews appeals of decisions by Immigration Judges. BIA decisions can be appealed directly to federal circuit courts.
<b>BIA accredited representative</b>	The <b>BIA</b> accredits qualified non-lawyers to represent aliens on behalf of recognized non-profit organizations. Some accredited representatives may represent individuals before <b>DHS</b> only. Others may represent individuals before both <b>DHS</b> and <b>EOIR</b> .
<b>Biometrics</b>	A person who files an application with <b>USCIS</b> will generally receive a notice of a biometrics appointment. At the appointment, <b>USCIS</b> will take fingerprints and photographs.
<b>CAT</b>	Stands for <i>Convention Against Torture</i> . The United Nation's Convention Against Torture prohibits member countries from removing (deporting) an individual if there are substantial grounds for believing that the individual would be in danger of being tortured. There are two forms of CAT protection: withholding of removal and deferral of removal. (see regulations at 8 CFR 208.16). CAT protects individuals from removal but offers fewer benefits than asylum.
<b>CCA</b>	Stands for <i>Corrections Company of America</i> . CCA is a private prison company that operates many immigration detention facilities including the T. Don Hutto Residential Center in Taylor, Texas, and the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas
<b>CBP</b>	Stands for <i>Customs and Border Protection</i> . CBP is part of <b>DHS</b> .

Find the full text of this and thousands of other resources from leading experts in dozens of legal practice areas in the [UT Law CLE eLibrary \(utcle.org/elibrary\)](http://utcle.org/elibrary)

## Title search: A Selection of Important Immigration Law Terms and Acronyms

Also available as part of the eCourse

[2017 Fundamentals of Immigration and Nationality Law eConference](#)

First appeared as part of the conference materials for the  
2017 Fundamentals of Immigration and Nationality Law session  
"Immigration Agencies and Basic Immigration Terminology "