

report on changes in law, including changes in authorizations of appropriations and in appropriations, that are needed to permit the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and, after the transfer of functions specified in this part takes effect, the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department, to ensure a prompt and timely response to emergent, unforeseen, or impending changes in the number of applications for immigration benefits, and otherwise to ensure the accommodation of changing immigration service needs.

(Pub. L. 107-296, title IV, § 460, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2201.)

§ 278. Application of Internet-based technologies

(a) Establishment of tracking system

The Secretary, not later than 1 year after the effective date of this chapter, in consultation with the Technology Advisory Committee established under subsection (c), shall establish an Internet-based system, that will permit a person, employer, immigrant, or nonimmigrant who has filings with the Secretary for any benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.), access to online information about the processing status of the filing involved.

(b) Feasibility study for online filing and improved processing

(1) Online filing

The Secretary, in consultation with the Technology Advisory Committee established under subsection (c), shall conduct a feasibility study on the online filing of the filings described in subsection (a). The study shall include a review of computerization and technology of the Immigration and Naturalization Service relating to the immigration services and processing of filings related to immigrant services. The study shall also include an estimate of the timeframe and cost and shall consider other factors in implementing such a filing system, including the feasibility of fee payment online.

(2) Report

A report on the study under this subsection shall be submitted to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate not later than 1 year after the effective date of this chapter.

(c) Technology Advisory Committee

(1) Establishment

The Secretary shall establish, not later than 60 days after the effective date of this chapter, an advisory committee (in this section referred to as the “Technology Advisory Committee”) to assist the Secretary in—

- (A) establishing the tracking system under subsection (a); and
- (B) conducting the study under subsection (b).

The Technology Advisory Committee shall be established after consultation with the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

(2) Composition

The Technology Advisory Committee shall be composed of representatives from high

technology companies capable of establishing and implementing the system in an expeditious manner, and representatives of persons who may use the tracking system described in subsection (a) and the online filing system described in subsection (b)(1).

(Pub. L. 107-296, title IV, § 461, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2202.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The effective date of this chapter, referred to in subsecs. (a), (b)(2), and (c)(1), is 60 days after Nov. 25, 2002, see section 4 of Pub. L. 107-296, set out as an Effective Date note under section 101 of this title.

The Immigration and Nationality Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is act June 27, 1952, ch. 477, 66 Stat. 163, which is classified principally to chapter 12 (§1101 et seq.) of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1101 of Title 8 and Tables.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

TERMINATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Advisory committees established after Jan. 5, 1973, to terminate not later than the expiration of the 2-year period beginning on date of their establishment, unless, in the case of a committee established by the President or an officer of the Federal Government, such committee is renewed by appropriate action prior to expiration of such 2-year period, or in the case of a committee established by Congress, its duration is otherwise provided for by law. See section 1013 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

§ 279. Children's affairs

(a) Transfer of functions

There are transferred to the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services functions under the immigration laws of the United States with respect to the care of unaccompanied alien children that were vested by statute in, or performed by, the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization (or any officer, employee, or component of the Immigration and Naturalization Service) immediately before the effective date specified in subsection (d).

(b) Functions

(1) In general

Pursuant to the transfer made by subsection (a), the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement shall be responsible for—

(A) coordinating and implementing the care and placement of unaccompanied alien children who are in Federal custody by reason of their immigration status, including developing a plan to be submitted to Congress on how to ensure that qualified and independent legal counsel is timely appointed to represent the interests of each such child, consistent with the law regarding appointment of counsel that is in effect on November 25, 2002;

(B) ensuring that the interests of the child are considered in decisions and actions relating to the care and custody of an unaccompanied alien child;

(C) making placement determinations for all unaccompanied alien children who are in

Federal custody by reason of their immigration status;

(D) implementing the placement determinations;

(E) implementing policies with respect to the care and placement of unaccompanied alien children;

(F) identifying a sufficient number of qualified individuals, entities, and facilities to house unaccompanied alien children;

(G) overseeing the infrastructure and personnel of facilities in which unaccompanied alien children reside;

(H) reuniting unaccompanied alien children with a parent abroad in appropriate cases;

(I) compiling, updating, and publishing at least annually a state-by-state list of professionals or other entities qualified to provide guardian and attorney representation services for unaccompanied alien children;

(J) maintaining statistical information and other data on unaccompanied alien children for whose care and placement the Director is responsible, which shall include—

(i) biographical information, such as a child's name, gender, date of birth, country of birth, and country of habitual residence;

(ii) the date on which the child came into Federal custody by reason of his or her immigration status;

(iii) information relating to the child's placement, removal, or release from each facility in which the child has resided;

(iv) in any case in which the child is placed in detention or released, an explanation relating to the detention or release; and

(v) the disposition of any actions in which the child is the subject;

(K) collecting and compiling statistical information from the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of State on each department's actions relating to unaccompanied alien children; and

(L) conducting investigations and inspections of facilities and other entities in which unaccompanied alien children reside, including regular follow-up visits to such facilities, placements, and other entities, to assess the continued suitability of such placements.

(2) Coordination with other entities; no release on own recognizance

In making determinations described in paragraph (1)(C), the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement—

(A) shall consult with appropriate juvenile justice professionals, the Director of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Border Security to ensure that such determinations ensure that unaccompanied alien children described in such subparagraph—

(i) are likely to appear for all hearings or proceedings in which they are involved;

(ii) are protected from smugglers, traffickers, or others who might seek to vic-

timize or otherwise engage them in criminal, harmful, or exploitive activity; and

(iii) are placed in a setting in which they are not likely to pose a danger to themselves or others; and

(B) shall not release such children upon their own recognizance.

(3) Duties with respect to foster care

In carrying out the duties described in paragraph (1), the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement is encouraged to use the refugee children foster care system established pursuant to section 412(d) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(d)) for the placement of unaccompanied alien children.

(4) Rule of construction

Nothing in paragraph (2)(B) may be construed to require that a bond be posted for an unaccompanied alien child who is released to a qualified sponsor.

(c) Rule of construction

Nothing in this section may be construed to transfer the responsibility for adjudicating benefit determinations under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) from the authority of any official of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, or the Department of State.

(d) Effective date

Notwithstanding section 4,¹ this section shall take effect on the date on which the transfer of functions specified under section 251 of this title takes effect.

(e) References

With respect to any function transferred by this section, any reference in any other Federal law, Executive order, rule, regulation, or delegation of authority, or any document of or pertaining to a component of government from which such function is transferred—

(1) to the head of such component is deemed to refer to the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement; or

(2) to such component is deemed to refer to the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services.

(f) Other transition issues

(1) Exercise of authorities

Except as otherwise provided by law, a Federal official to whom a function is transferred by this section may, for purposes of performing the function, exercise all authorities under any other provision of law that were available with respect to the performance of that function to the official responsible for the performance of the function immediately before the effective date specified in subsection (d).

(2) Savings provisions

Subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 552 of this title shall apply to a transfer of functions under this section in the same manner as such provisions apply to a transfer of functions

¹ See References in Text note below.

under this chapter to the Department of Homeland Security.

(3) Transfer and allocation of appropriations and personnel

The personnel of the Department of Justice employed in connection with the functions transferred by this section, and the assets, liabilities, contracts, property, records, and unexpended balance of appropriations, authorizations, allocations, and other funds employed, held, used, arising from, available to, or to be made available to, the Immigration and Naturalization Service in connection with the functions transferred by this section, subject to section 1531 of title 31, shall be transferred to the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement for allocation to the appropriate component of the Department of Health and Human Services. Unexpended funds transferred pursuant to this paragraph shall be used only for the purposes for which the funds were originally authorized and appropriated.

(g) Definitions

As used in this section—

(1) the term “placement” means the placement of an unaccompanied alien child in either a detention facility or an alternative to such a facility; and

(2) the term “unaccompanied alien child” means a child who—

(A) has no lawful immigration status in the United States;

(B) has not attained 18 years of age; and

(C) with respect to whom—

(i) there is no parent or legal guardian in the United States; or

(ii) no parent or legal guardian in the United States is available to provide care and physical custody.

(Pub. L. 107–296, title IV, § 462, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2202; Pub. L. 110–457, title II, § 235(f), Dec. 23, 2008, 122 Stat. 5081.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Immigration and Nationality Act, referred to in subsec. (c), is act June 27, 1952, ch. 477, 66 Stat. 163, which is classified principally to chapter 12 (§1101 et seq.) of Title 8, Aliens and Nationality. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1101 of Title 8 and Tables.

Section 4, referred to in subsec. (d), is section 4 of Pub. L. 107–296, which is set out as an Effective Date note under section 101 of this title.

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (f)(2), was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 107–296, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2135, known as the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 101 of this title and Tables.

CODIFICATION

In subsec. (f)(3), “section 1531 of title 31” substituted for “section 202 of the Budget and Accounting Procedures Act of 1950” on authority of Pub. L. 97–258, § 4(b), Sept. 13, 1982, 96 Stat. 1067, the first section of which enacted Title 31, Money and Finance.

AMENDMENTS

2008—Subsec. (b)(1)(L). Pub. L. 110–457, § 235(f)(1), substituted “, including regular follow-up visits to such

facilities, placements, and other entities, to assess the continued suitability of such placements.” for period at end.

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 110–457, § 235(f)(2)(A), substituted “paragraph (1),” for “paragraph (1)(G).”

Subsec. (b)(4). Pub. L. 110–457, § 235(f)(2)(B), added par. (4).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CHANGE OF NAME

Bureau of Border Security, referred to in subsec. (b)(2)(A), changed to Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement by Reorganization Plan Modification for the Department of Homeland Security, eff. Mar. 1, 2003, H. Doc. No. 108–32, 108th Congress, 1st Session, set out as a note under section 542 of this title.

NOTIFICATION OF USE OF UNLICENSED INFLUX FACILITY

Pub. L. 118–47, div. D, title II, § 232, Mar. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 679, provided that: “In addition to the existing Congressional notification for formal site assessments of potential influx facilities, the Secretary [of Health and Human Services] shall notify the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate at least 15 days before operationalizing an unlicensed facility, and shall (1) specify whether the facility is hard-sided or soft-sided, and (2) provide analysis that indicates that, in the absence of the influx facility, the likely outcome is that unaccompanied alien children will remain in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security for longer than 72 hours or that unaccompanied alien children will be otherwise placed in danger. Within 60 days of bringing such a facility online, and monthly thereafter, the Secretary shall provide to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report detailing the total number of children in care at the facility, the average length of stay and average length of care of children at the facility, and, for any child that has been at the facility for more than 60 days, their length of stay and reason for delay in release.”

Similar provisions were contained in the following prior appropriation acts:

Pub. L. 117–328, div. H, title II, § 232, Dec. 29, 2022, 136 Stat. 4886.

Pub. L. 117–103, div. H, title II, § 232, Mar. 15, 2022, 136 Stat. 473.

Pub. L. 116–260, div. H, title II, § 233, Dec. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 1596.

Pub. L. 116–94, div. A, title II, § 233, Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 2585.

REPORT ON CHILDREN SEPARATED FROM PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS

Pub. L. 118–47, div. D, title II, § 234, Mar. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 680, provided that: “Not later than 14 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Mar. 23, 2024], and monthly thereafter, the Secretary [of Health and Human Services] shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and make publicly available online, a report with respect to children who were separated from their parents or legal guardians by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) (regardless of whether or not such separation was pursuant to an option selected by the children, parents, or guardians), subsequently classified as unaccompanied alien children, and transferred to the care and custody of ORR [Office of Refugee Resettlement] during the previous month. Each report shall contain the following information:

“(1) the number and ages of children so separated subsequent to apprehension at or between ports of entry, to be reported by sector where separation occurred; and

“(2) the documented cause of separation, as reported by DHS when each child was referred.”

Similar provisions were contained in the following prior appropriation acts:

Pub. L. 117–328, div. H, title II, § 234, Dec. 29, 2022, 136 Stat. 4886.

Pub. L. 117–103, div. H, title II, § 234, Mar. 15, 2022, 136 Stat. 473.

Pub. L. 116–260, div. H, title II, § 235, Dec. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 1597.

Pub. L. 116–94, div. A, title II, § 235, Dec. 20, 2019, 133 Stat. 2585.

PART F—GENERAL IMMIGRATION PROVISIONS

§ 291. Abolishment of INS

(a) In general

Upon completion of all transfers from the Immigration and Naturalization Service as provided for by this chapter, the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice is abolished.

(b) Prohibition

The authority provided by section 542 of this title may be used to reorganize functions or organizational units within the Bureau of Border Security or the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, but may not be used to recombine the two bureaus into a single agency or otherwise to combine, join, or consolidate functions or organizational units of the two bureaus with each other.

(Pub. L. 107–296, title IV, § 471, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2205.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsec. (a), was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 107–296, Nov. 25, 2002, 116 Stat. 2135, known as the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 101 of this title and Tables.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CHANGE OF NAME

Bureau of Border Security, referred to in subsec. (b), changed to Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement by Reorganization Plan Modification for the Department of Homeland Security, eff. Mar. 1, 2003, H. Doc. No. 108–32, 108th Congress, 1st Session, set out as a note under section 542 of this title.

§ 292. Voluntary separation incentive payments

(a) Definitions

For purposes of this section—

(1) the term “employee” means an employee (as defined by section 2105 of title 5) who—

(A) has completed at least 3 years of current continuous service with 1 or more covered entities; and

(B) is serving under an appointment without time limitation,

but does not include any person under subparagraphs (A)–(G) of section 663(a)(2) of Public Law 104–208 (5 U.S.C. 5597 note);

(2) the term “covered entity” means—

(A) the Immigration and Naturalization Service;

(B) the Bureau of Border Security of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(C) the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security; and

(3) the term “transfer date” means the date on which the transfer of functions specified under section 251 of this title takes effect.

(b) Strategic restructuring plan

Before the Attorney General or the Secretary obligates any resources for voluntary separation incentive payments under this section, such official shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a strategic restructuring plan, which shall include—

(1) an organizational chart depicting the covered entities after their restructuring pursuant to this chapter;

(2) a summary description of how the authority under this section will be used to help carry out that restructuring; and

(3) the information specified in section 663(b)(2) of Public Law 104–208 (5 U.S.C. 5597 note).

As used in the preceding sentence, the “appropriate committees of Congress” are the Committees on Appropriations, Government Reform, and the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, and the Committees on Appropriations, Governmental Affairs, and the Judiciary of the Senate.

(c) Authority

The Attorney General and the Secretary may, to the extent necessary to help carry out their respective strategic restructuring plan described in subsection (b), make voluntary separation incentive payments to employees. Any such payment—

(1) shall be paid to the employee, in a lump sum, after the employee has separated from service;

(2) shall be paid from appropriations or funds available for the payment of basic pay of the employee;

(3) shall be equal to the lesser of—

(A) the amount the employee would be entitled to receive under section 5595(c) of title 5; or

(B) an amount not to exceed \$25,000, as determined by the Attorney General or the Secretary;

(4) may not be made except in the case of any qualifying employee who voluntarily separates (whether by retirement or resignation) before the end of—

(A) the 3-month period beginning on the date on which such payment is offered or made available to such employee; or

(B) the 3-year period beginning on November 25, 2002,

whichever occurs first;

(5) shall not be a basis for payment, and shall not be included in the computation, of any other type of Government benefit; and

(6) shall not be taken into account in determining the amount of any severance pay to which the employee may be entitled under section 5595 of title 5, based on any other separation.

(d) Additional agency contributions to the retirement fund

(1) In general

In addition to any payments which it is otherwise required to make, the Department of