

## UNITING FOR UKRAINE

*The following information about the Uniting for Ukraine program is meant as a general summary of the program. Details about eligibility requirements and the application process can be found at the following websites:*

<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/uniting-for-ukraine>

<https://www.dhs.gov/ukraine>

### **Who can submit an application?**

Ukrainian beneficiaries cannot directly apply for Uniting for Ukraine, they must have a sponsor. Sponsors can be any person in the US with lawful immigration status (including parole, deferred action, lawful nonimmigrant status, and deferred enforced departure). They must be able to demonstrate sufficient financial resources to support the Ukrainian beneficiary for whom they are applying and pass security and background checks.

### **Who is eligible to be included in the application?**

Ukrainian citizens (including their immediate family members who are not Ukrainian citizens) that are outside the US can be beneficiaries. They must have resided in Ukraine prior to February 12, 2022 and must have valid Ukrainian passports. Children under the age of 18 must be traveling to the US with their parent or legal guardian.

### **Can I apply for a Ukrainian citizen that is in the US?**

No. However, that person may be eligible for Temporary Protected Status. Visit this USCIS website for more information about Temporary Protected Status: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status/temporary-protected-status-designated-country-ukraine>.

### **Do I need to be related to the Ukrainian person(s)?**

No.

### **How do I apply?**

To start, you must complete and file an I-134 Declaration of Financial Support on the USCIS website: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-134>. At this time, USCIS is only accepting submissions online.

### **Do I need an immigration lawyer or professional to assist me in filing the I-134?**

While it may be helpful to work with an experienced immigration professional, you may complete this form yourself. World Relief Chicagoland has a limited number of appointments available for Uniting for Ukraine applicants. Please call 630-462-7660 for an appointment. There will be a nominal charge for the appointment. Also, there are other legal service organizations in the Chicago area that may be assisting people with completing Uniting for Ukraine applications. Visit this website for more information: <https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/search?state=IL>.

### **Is there a USCIS fee for filing the form I-134?**

No.

### **How long will the process take?**

As this is a new program, it is uncertain how long processing will take.

### **What documentation will I need?**

As a sponsor, you will need evidence of your ability to support the people for whom you are applying. This can include your tax return, bank statements, letter from your employer, and other proof of assets.

### **How do I know if my income and assets are sufficient?**

Immigration says there is no specific threshold of income required. However, the supporter must be able to demonstrate that they have sufficient income or financial resources to support the beneficiary for the two-year period of parole.

**If my income and assets are insufficient, can another person join with me to support the Ukrainian person(s)?**

Yes. Multiple sponsors may join to support one or more Ukrainian beneficiaries. One primary sponsor should submit the I-134 and include supplementary evidence demonstrating the identity and resources of the additional sponsors, along with a statement explaining the intent to share responsibility.

**What happens once the I-134 is submitted?**

USCIS will review the application to make sure the sponsor has sufficient financial income and conduct background checks on the sponsor. USCIS may contact the sponsor if additional evidence or information is needed.

**What happens if my application is approved?**

USCIS will email the Ukrainian beneficiary with instructions on next steps. USCIS may require the beneficiary to attend an interview or provide biometrics to verify identity. They must also pass background and security checks, including vaccination requirements. The case status can be tracked online.

**What happens if my application is denied?**

A denial of the I-134 is final and cannot be appealed. However, the sponsor may file a new Form I-134 for the same or different beneficiary, or a different sponsor may file for the beneficiary.

**How will the Ukrainian beneficiary travel to the US?**

Once the application has been approved, the beneficiary is responsible to arrange and pay for their travel. The authorization to travel to the US is valid for 90 days.

**What immigration status will the beneficiary have and how long can they lawfully stay in the US? Can they work?**

If the application is granted, their immigration status will be “parolees” and they may stay in the US temporarily for two years. The beneficiary may apply for discretionary work authorization.

**Will the beneficiary be eligible for public benefits?**

Ukrainians paroled into the U.S. between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023, will generally be eligible for benefits to the same extent as refugees.

**The beneficiary is the subject of either an I-130, I-131, or Lautenberg application. What happens to those applications?**

I-130: If the beneficiary is in the US when their I-130 application is being processed, once their petition is approved, they will likely be eligible to complete the remainder of the process in the U.S.

I-131: USCIS will be sending notices to applicants who have already filed I-131 applications for Ukrainians. The applicant may reapply through the Uniting for Ukraine program as described above and can either choose to withdraw the I-131 or leave it pending. If the applicant withdraws, the I-131 fees will be refunded. If they do not withdraw, it will be adjudicated and fees will not be refunded.

Lautenberg: If the beneficiary is in the US when their Lautenberg application is being processed, they will be denied refugee status.

**THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS NOT LEGAL ADVICE. PLEASE CONSULT AN IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY OR DOJ ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE REGARDING YOUR SITUATION PRIOR TO TAKING ANY ACTION.**