

## YOUR WORKING CHECKLIST

# Immediate relatives and family preferences: what the category distinction changes

## Why do immediate-relative and family-preference categories work differently?

The Department of State separates close qualifying relationships to U.S. citizens from numerically limited family preferences. Petition approval and visa availability are different questions. A category name should not be converted into a promised completion time.

Check the boxes on screen or by hand. Use the notes area for records to find and questions to ask.

## Your preparation checklist

- ☐ Identify the exact family connection being evaluated.
- ☐ Preserve the status or citizenship evidence relevant to the inquiry.
- ☐ Keep the classification stated in the agency record.
- ☐ Identify the official chart or notice being consulted rather than an estimated date.

## Notes and questions to follow up

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## Source links and current instructions

Sources checked October 25, 2026. Follow current instructions at the linked institution.

### U.S. Department of State: Family immigration: categories and agency roles

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/immigrate/family-immigration.html>

### USCIS: I-130: Petition for Alien Relative

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-130>

### USCIS: Green Card eligibility categories: official navigation

<https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-eligibility-categories>

## Immediate relatives and family preferences: what the category distinction changes

### Return to the complete guide

<https://immigrantinsider.com/immigration-paths/family/immediate-preference/>

### General information

This free organizer is not a government form and does not submit an application, establish eligibility, preserve a deadline or replace individual legal advice. Government filing fees and professional services are separate.