

EOIR Court Fee Receipt: Research Report

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FINDINGS

EOIR COURT FEE RECEIPT: COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH REPORT

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) fee receipt system represents a critical procedural mechanism in federal immigration practice, particularly following the mandatory implementation of the EOIR Payment Portal in 2025 and subsequent fee adjustments effective February 1, 2026. Understanding the mechanics of fee payment, receipt generation, submission requirements, and consequences of defective filings is essential for practitioners representing clients before immigration courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals. This report synthesizes current regulatory requirements, EOIR operational guidance, recent statutory amendments, and practical implementation procedures to provide immigration practitioners with actionable guidance on fee receipt procedures across all EOIR proceedings. The complexity of these procedures varies significantly depending on the type of relief sought, whether electronic or paper filing is used, whether fee waivers are pursued, and the jurisdiction of the particular immigration court or appellate authority. This report addresses each of these contexts with specific attention to requirements under [8 C.F.R. § 1103.7][1], [8 C.F.R. § 1003.24][6], [8 C.F.R. § 1003.8][8], and current EOIR Practice Manual provisions, while incorporating recent changes to fee schedules and annual asylum fee obligations that became effective during 2025 and early 2026.

Fee Payment Mechanisms and the EOIR Payment Portal System

The Department of Homeland Security and the Executive Office for Immigration Review have fundamentally restructured fee payment procedures through implementation of the centralized [EOIR Payment Portal][10], now mandatory for designated fee categories as of 2025. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1103.7(a)(3)][26], all fees for motions, applications, and appeals submitted to EOIR must be paid to the Department of Homeland Security rather than directly to immigration courts or the Board of Immigration Appeals, as immigration courts and the Board neither collect fees nor maintain fee processing infrastructure. This foundational distinction separates payment authority from adjudicatory authority and requires practitioners to understand the specific portal and procedures applicable to their particular filing type.

The [EOIR Payment Portal][10] is described as a twenty-four-hour, seven-day-per-week web-based application accessible at [<https://epay.eoir.justice.gov>][10]. The Portal allows self-service payment through multiple methods, including debit or credit card (Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express), PayPal account, Amazon Pay, and bank account deduction through ACH (Automated Clearing House) transfer[7]. Electronic payments through the Portal are processed immediately at the time of submission, with no processing fee for ACH transactions and variable processing fees depending on card or digital wallet selection[7]. The Portal itself is administered through cooperation with Pay.gov, a U.S. Department of the Treasury service managed by the Bureau of Fiscal Service, which securely stores payment information encrypted and never collected or retained by EOIR[21].

When a filer accesses the [EOIR Payment Portal][10], the system requires entry of the alien registration number (A-Number), identification of the filing type from a designated dropdown menu, and confirmation of the fee amount corresponding to that filing type[35]. The Portal automatically displays the correct fee amount based on EOIR's published fee schedule, which is regularly updated to reflect statutory adjustments and inflation-based increases[16]. Upon successful payment submission, the filer receives an immediate on-screen receipt page displaying the A-Number, payment tracking identification number, exact payment date and time, filing type, payment method selected, and the amount paid[20][35]. Critically, filers do not receive email

confirmation of payment and must save and print the receipt immediately, as the payment tracking identification number is the only mechanism by which the filer can later retrieve a replacement copy if the original receipt is lost[7][21][27]. The Portal affords filers the ability to view, download, and print receipts; retrieve previously issued receipts through entry of the payment tracking identification number; and confirm payment status through the automated case information system[21][27].

Use of the [EOIR Payment Portal][10] is mandatory for all filing fee categories listed in the Portal's Filing Type dropdown menu[7][21]. However, certain fee categories remain outside the Portal and require alternative payment procedures. For example, BIA appeal fees may also be paid by check or money order in addition to electronic payment through the Portal[8]. Checks and money orders submitted to the BIA must be drawn on a United States bank or financial institution, made payable to "United States Department of Justice," and include the filer's full name and alien registration number[8][15]. For immigration court filings, the applicable fee regulations at [8 C.F.R. § 1003.24][6] require that motions requiring fees and applications requiring fees must be accompanied by either a fee receipt, alternate proof of payment consistent with [8 C.F.R. § 1103.7(a)(3)][26], or a fee waiver request[42]. Practitioners working in Northern California should note that the San Francisco Immigration Court and all other immigration courts in the Ninth Circuit region have implemented mandatory electronic filing through ECAS (EOIR's Courts & Appeals System) for attorneys and accredited representatives, which integration with the EOIR Payment Portal has streamlined fee payment procedures[24][43].

A critical operational feature of the Portal involves consolidated proceedings, where multiple respondents are covered by a single decision or are related in family proceedings. Under EOIR guidance, practitioners should pay only one fee for all respondents in a genuinely consolidated proceeding, provided that the fee payment includes all necessary components for all aliens and the lead respondent's A-Number is entered in the Portal[7][21][27]. If proceedings were not consolidated by the immigration judge at the trial level, however, separate fees are required for each respondent, even if they are family members[15][41]. This distinction has practical significance where family members received separate decisions from the immigration judge or where they file separate motions or appeals.

Receipt Content, Documentation Standards, and Proof of Payment Requirements

An EOIR fee receipt generated through the [EOIR Payment Portal][10] serves as the definitive proof of payment to DHS and must be submitted to the immigration court or Board of Immigration Appeals to satisfy filing requirements[1][37]. The receipt itself contains standardized information elements: the respondent's A-Number, the payment tracking identification number assigned by the Portal, the precise date and time of payment submission, the filing type category selected, the payment method employed (card, ACH, PayPal, Amazon Pay), and the exact fee amount paid[20][35]. This information creates a complete audit trail allowing EOIR staff to verify payment through DHS records even if the physical receipt is temporarily unavailable.

Practitioners should understand that [8 C.F.R. § 1103.7(a)(3)][26] and corresponding EOIR Practice Manual provisions explicitly contemplate situations where a filer has paid the required fee but has not received the fee receipt from DHS by the filing deadline established by the immigration judge. In such circumstances, the regulation permits the filer to submit to the immigration court a copy of proof of payment to DHS with the initial filing, with the actual fee receipt to follow by a deadline subsequently established by the immigration judge[1][31][37][44][49]. If the immigration judge does not set a deadline for submission of the receipt, the receipt must be submitted no later than forty-five days after the date of filing of the application[1][31][37][44][49]. This forty-five-day grace period recognizes processing delays that may occur between DHS payment and receipt generation, though with the immediate processing capability of the [EOIR

Payment Portal][10], such delays are now minimized.

Acceptable proof of payment in lieu of the actual receipt typically includes documentation from the payment service provider, such as a confirmation page from the Pay.gov system, a bank statement showing the ACH deduction to EOIR (identified by location code 7001010352), credit card billing statements showing the transaction to EOIR, or other corroborating evidence demonstrating payment to DHS[1][31]. Practitioners should retain screenshots or printed confirmation pages from the Portal, maintain the payment tracking identification number, and keep all communications from the payment portal system to establish proof of payment if the receipt itself is temporarily unavailable.

The distinction between the fee receipt and the application or motion form itself requires explicit attention. The receipt is a separate document evidencing payment and must be submitted as part of the complete filing package[1][31][37]. The receipt is not the application itself and does not substitute for completion of the required form (such as Form I-589 for asylum, Form EOIR-42B for cancellation of removal, or other relief applications). When filing electronically through ECAS, practitioners may append the fee receipt to the end of the relevant application or document, and the system will process all components as a single submission[24][43].

For asylum applications specifically, practitioners should be aware of the separate category of the Annual Asylum Fee (AAF), which commenced in October 2025 and is distinct from the initial asylum application fee[20][25]. Any alien with an asylum application pending for one year or more on or after October 1, 2025, must pay an Annual Asylum Fee of \$102 per year[25][28][35]. This fee is paid through the [EOIR Payment Portal][10] by selecting the "Annual Asylum Fee (AAF) - Pending Application for Asylum" filing type[20][35]. The AAF generates a separate receipt, which must be submitted to the immigration court having jurisdiction[45]. Practitioners representing asylum clients should proactively monitor the case status, as EOIR has begun issuing notices requiring payment within thirty days, though payment may be required even absent receipt of formal notice if the application remains pending beyond the anniversary of the filing date[27][45].

Immigration Court Filing Procedures and Receipt Submission Requirements

Filing an application or motion with an immigration court that requires a fee involves a multi-step process in which the fee receipt must be properly submitted as part of the complete filing package. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1003.24][6] and EOIR Practice Manual Chapter 3.4, when an application for relief requiring a fee is filed during the course of proceedings, the fee for that application must be paid in advance to DHS, and the fee receipt must be submitted when the application is filed with the immigration court[1][31][37][44]. This "advance payment" requirement means that the filer must have completed payment and obtained the receipt before submitting the application to the court. For motions to reopen or motions to reconsider requiring fees, the filing fee must similarly be paid in advance to DHS, and the fee receipt must be submitted with the motion[1][31][37][44][49]. Practitioners in San Francisco should file through ECAS when representing clients, as electronic filing is mandatory for attorneys and accredited representatives in all cases eligible for electronic filing[24][43]. When filing electronically, the fee receipt may be appended to the end of the relevant application or motion document when uploading, and the entire package is processed as a single submission[24][43].

The delivery and receipt rule for immigration court filings establishes that an application or document is not deemed "filed" until it is received by the immigration court[3][14][29]. All submissions received by an immigration court are date-stamped on the date of receipt[3][14][29]. The immigration court does not observe the "mailbox rule," meaning that a document is not considered filed merely because it has been received by

the U.S. Postal Service, commercial courier, detention facility, or other outside entity[3][14][29]. For paper filings sent by postal service or courier, the submission should be sent to the immigration court's street address, with filing hours and contact information available on the EOIR website[3][14][29]. Hand-delivered filings should be brought to the immigration court's public window during posted filing hours[3][14][29]. For San Francisco Immigration Court, filings may be submitted at either [100 Montgomery Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94104][1] or [630 Sansome Street, 4th Floor, Room 475, San Francisco, CA 94111][1], or at the Concord hearing location at [1855 Gateway Blvd., Suite 850, Concord, CA 94520][1].

Timing of filing is critical to avoiding defective filing determinations. When a filing is submitted more than fifteen days before a master calendar hearing, any responding document must be submitted within ten days after the original filing with the immigration court[3][14][29]. If a filing is submitted fewer than fifteen days before a master calendar hearing, the response may be presented at the master calendar hearing, either orally or in writing[3][14][29]. For individual calendar hearings involving unrepresented, non-detained aliens, filings must be submitted at least thirty days in advance of the hearing unless the filing is an exhibit or witness offered solely to rebut or impeach testimony[3][14][29]. When the immigration judge has set a specific deadline for submission of the fee receipt, that deadline must be observed[1][31][37][44]. When no deadline is set, the fee receipt must be submitted no later than forty-five days after the date of filing of the application[1][31][37][44].

A deficient or missing fee receipt can result in rejection or exclusion of the filing from evidence. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1003.24][6] and EOIR Practice Manual Chapter 3.1(d), if a fee is required but no fee receipt or fee waiver request is submitted to the immigration court, the filing is defective[1][31]. A defective filing may be rejected or excluded from evidence at the immigration judge's discretion[1][31][44]. Additionally, if a fee is not paid in the correct amount or if the payment is uncollectible (for example, a check that does not clear), the filing is defective and may be rejected or excluded from evidence[1][31][44]. Practitioners must verify that the Portal has processed the payment successfully before submitting the application or motion and must ensure that the correct fee amount has been paid by consulting EOIR's published fee schedule at the time of payment, as fees have been subject to multiple adjustments through 2025 and 2026.

The Northern California context presents particular considerations. San Francisco Immigration Court judges have variable approaches to cure periods for defective filings. Some judges routinely grant short-term continuances to allow practitioners to obtain the receipt if it has not yet been received from DHS, while others may be more restrictive. Practitioners should be aware of individual judge tendencies through prior practice and should consider filing a motion to accept the filing as submitted with proof of DHS payment, requesting that the actual receipt be allowed to follow within the forty-five-day statutory period if it has not yet been received.

Board of Immigration Appeals Fee Procedures and Electronic Filing Integration

The Board of Immigration Appeals maintains distinct fee procedures from immigration courts, governed by [8 C.F.R. § 1003.8][8] and BIA Practice Manual Chapter 3.4. When an appeal or motion is filed directly with the Board, the fee must be submitted together with the appeal or motion[15][19][41]. Under current regulations, a filing fee is required for any appeal filed with the Board (except appeals of custody bond determinations), motions to reopen (except motions based exclusively on claims for asylum), and motions to reconsider (except motions based exclusively on underlying asylum claims)[15][19][41]. If the appeal or motion is electronically filed through ECAS, the relevant fee, if any, must be paid electronically through the [EOIR Payment Portal][10][41].

The fee amounts for BIA filings as of January 21, 2026, are as follows: Form EOIR-26 (Appeal from an Immigration Judge decision) requires a \$1,030 fee[25][28]; Form EOIR-29 (Appeal from a DHS officer decision) requires \$1,030 and must be paid to the appropriate DHS office; Form EOIR-45 (Appeal in practitioner discipline cases) requires \$2,030[25][28]. Motions to reopen or reconsider before the Board require fees that vary based on the specific motion type and are listed on EOIR's website[15][19][41]. These amounts reflect adjustments made effective February 1, 2026, pursuant to the Department of Justice's inflation adjustment for OBBBA (One Big Beautiful Bill Act) fees announced in the Federal Register on January 21, 2026[16].

The BIA Practice Manual clarifies that for appeals filed with the Board, any filing fee payment should be stapled to the Notice of Appeal (Form EOIR-26 or Form EOIR-45) as indicated on the form[19][41]. For motions, the fee payment should be stapled to the cover sheet[19][41]. For electronically paid fees, the fee receipt must be submitted with the filing[19][41]. The Board issues receipts routinely only for Notices of Appeal (Form EOIR-26), motions to reopen, and motions to reconsider[30]. A receipt is not an adjudication of timeliness or a determination that a filing falls within the Board's jurisdiction but rather an acknowledgment that a filing has been received[30]. Parties who electronically file through ECAS receive electronic notification upon successful upload and when the filing is added to the electronic record of proceedings; this electronic notification is similarly not an adjudication of timeliness or jurisdictional assessment[30].

If a filing receipt is not received within approximately two weeks of submitting an appeal or motion to the Board, parties may call the Automated Case Information Hotline or visit the online EOIR Automated Case Information System to verify receipt status[30]. The BIA's address for paper filings is 5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2600, Falls Church, Virginia 22041[30]. For technical assistance with electronic filing or payment portal issues, practitioners should contact ECAS Support at 1-877-388-3842 or ECAS.techsupport@usdoj.gov, available Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time[27].

Critical to BIA appeals is the rule regarding defective or missing payments. If a filing fee is required for an appeal or motion but is not submitted or is defective, the filing will be rejected[19][41]. If a fee payment is not in the correct amount as shown on EOIR's website at the time of filing, the filing will be rejected[19][41]. If a fee payment is uncollectible (such as a check that bounces), the appeal or motion will be dismissed or denied as improperly filed[19][41]. These consequences are more severe than at the immigration court level, where cure periods are sometimes available, and practitioners must exercise heightened care in BIA fee submissions.

Fee Waivers, Alternative Procedures, and Economic Hardship Relief

The immigration fee system incorporates a safety valve through fee waiver procedures available to both immigration courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1003.24(d)][6] and [8 C.F.R. § 1003.8(a)(3)][8], when a fee to file an application or motion is required, the immigration judge (for court proceedings) or the Board (for appeals) has discretion to waive the fee upon a showing that the filing party is unable to pay the fee[1][6][8][31]. Fee waivers are not automatic and must be requested through the filing of a properly completed Fee Waiver Request, Form EOIR-26A[1][9][31][41]. This form must be filed along with the application or motion for which the fee would otherwise be required[1][9][31][41].

Form EOIR-26A requires detailed financial information and a declaration under penalty of perjury establishing inability to pay the fee due to personal economic hardship[9]. The form requests itemized information about monthly income from all sources, including wages, self-employment income, rental income, interest from bank accounts, social security, unemployment benefits, public assistance, child support, alimony, and other income sources[9]. The form similarly requests detailed itemization of monthly expenses,

including rent or home-mortgage payments, utilities, installment payments and outstanding debts, living expenses (food, clothing, transportation, childcare, tuition), and other expenses[9]. The respondent must declare under penalty of perjury that based on this financial information, the respondent is unable to pay the filing fee[9]. If an attorney or representative is submitting the form on behalf of the respondent, the attorney must also complete a separate attestation indicating that the attorney has reviewed the details and is satisfied that the fee waiver request is made in good faith[9].

If the fee waiver request does not establish the inability to pay the required fee, the requesting party will receive a rejection notice and the application or motion will be returned without being deemed filed[1][6][8][31][41]. However, the filer will be given fifteen days to refile the rejected application or motion with either the fee or a new fee waiver request, and any applicable filing deadline will be tolled during this fifteen-day cure period[1][6][8][31][41]. This cure period is significant, as it allows practitioners to respond to fee waiver denials by either obtaining funds to pay the fee or submitting a more detailed waiver request with additional supporting documentation. In all cases, the immigration judge (or the Board, on appeal) must issue a decision on the fee waiver request in writing or on the record[1][31][41].

Important limitations on fee waiver authority exist for Department of Homeland Security forms. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1103.7(c)][26], no waiver may be granted with respect to a fee prescribed for a DHS form or action that is identified as non-waivable in DHS regulations[1][26]. For example, the initial Form I-589 (Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal) carries a mandatory \$100 fee for which no fee waiver is available, even for applicants demonstrating severe economic hardship[25][28][35]. Similarly, the Annual Asylum Fee of \$102 carries explicit statutory language that no fee waiver or reduction in fee is permitted[25][28][35]. Practitioners representing asylum applicants must inform clients of this non-waivable fee requirement at the outset of representation.

In contrast, motions to reopen and motions to reconsider filed with immigration courts and the Board are potentially waivable, as are certain applications for relief forms published by EOIR itself (such as Form EOIR-42B for cancellation of removal). Practitioners should review the specific application form and EOIR fee guidance to determine whether a particular fee is waivable. The distinction between EOIR-published forms and DHS-published forms becomes critical when advising clients on fee waiver eligibility.

Recent Changes: Annual Asylum Fee and Updated Fee Schedule

The immigration fee landscape underwent significant changes in 2025 and early 2026, requiring practitioners to update their fee counseling and procedural practices. Most significantly, Congress enacted a new Annual Asylum Fee (AAF) as part of legislative amendments, effective October 1, 2024, for asylum applications filed after that date[27][28][35]. Under current EOIR guidance, any alien who had an asylum application pending for the entire period of October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025, must pay the AAF[48]. Going forward, any alien whose asylum application remains pending for one year or more on or after October 1, 2025, must pay an AAF[27][28][35]. The fee must be paid annually, on the anniversary of the filing date or within thirty days of receiving an EOIR billing notice[20][27][45]. Any application that remains pending for another 365 days after the initial AAF was due-and for each year thereafter-is also subject to the AAF[27][28][35].

Critically, the AAF carries no fee-waiver or reduction option, regardless of applicant economic hardship[25][28][35]. The statutory language explicitly prohibits any mitigation or waiver of this fee. Practitioners must inform asylum clients that they will face annual payment obligations of \$102 for each year their asylum application remains pending before EOIR, without exception. EOIR has begun sending notices to asylum applicants with pending cases, and case status updates now reflect AAF due dates[45]. Practitioners

should check the online case status portal and proactively pay fees even without receipt of formal notice if the case approaches the anniversary of the filing date[45].

Beyond the AAF, the Department of Justice adjusted all EOIR fees effective February 1, 2026, to account for inflation pursuant to the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)[16]. These adjustments affected appeals, motions, and certain applications. Specifically, appeals from immigration judge decisions (Form EOIR-26) increased to \$1,030[25][28]; appeals from DHS officer decisions (Form EOIR-29) increased to \$1,030[25][28]; and practitioner discipline appeals (Form EOIR-45) increased to \$2,030[25][28]. Motions to reopen or reconsider before the Board increased to \$1,010[13][16]. For applications, fees for cancellation of removal applications (Form EOIR-42B for nonpermanent residents) increased to \$1,640 plus \$30 per person biometrics fee[28][34]. All filing fees effective February 1, 2026, or later must reflect these new amounts, and filings submitted with incorrect fee amounts will be rejected[27].

Additionally, the H.R. 1 legislation (enacted in 2025) imposed new surcharge fees on certain USCIS-related forms filed in immigration court proceedings. When filing Form I-485 (Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status) in immigration court, practitioners must now submit two separate payments: the standard EOIR application fee and an additional H.R. 1 surcharge[39]. For Form I-485, the total EOIR fee as of February 1, 2026, is \$2,980, which includes both the base application fee and H.R.1 surcharge components[28][34]. Practitioners must submit both payments through the EOIR Payment Portal and must obtain and submit separate receipts reflecting each payment component[39].

Consequences of Defective or Missing Fee Receipts

The regulatory consequences of failing to submit a required fee receipt or submitting a defective receipt are substantial and may result in complete rejection of the filing. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1003.24][6] and EOIR Practice Manual Chapter 3.1(d), if a fee is required to file an application for relief or motion but a fee receipt is not submitted to the immigration court, the filing is defective and may be rejected or excluded from evidence[1][31][44]. The language "may be rejected or excluded from evidence" grants discretion to the immigration judge, but in practice, most immigration judges strictly enforce fee receipt requirements and reject defective filings outright rather than accepting them and warning of potential consequences. If a fee is not paid in the correct amount or is uncollectible (for example, if a check does not clear), the filing is similarly defective and may be rejected or excluded from evidence[1][31][44].

At the Board level, the consequences are more deterministic. Under [8 C.F.R. § 1003.8][8] and BIA Practice Manual Chapter 3.4, if a filing fee is required for an appeal or motion but is not submitted or is defective, the filing will be rejected[19][41]. This mandatory language ("will be rejected") leaves no discretion to the Board and establishes that defective BIA filings receive no cure period or opportunity for remand. Additionally, if a fee payment is uncollectible, the appeal or motion will be dismissed or denied as improperly filed[19][41].

For practitioners, the practical consequence is that any deficiency in fee payment or receipt submission must be cured immediately. If a filing is rejected due to a fee defect, the practitioner must promptly identify the issue, correct it, and refile the application or motion within the applicable deadline. When an application or motion is rejected, the filing deadline is tolled for fifteen days to allow refiling with a corrected fee or fee waiver request[1][6][8][31][41]. However, if the original filing deadline has already passed and the fifteen-day cure period is exhausted without successful refiling, the application or motion is deemed untimely and is denied or abandoned depending on the specific relief sought.

The integration of ECAS electronic filing has somewhat improved the fee receipt submission process, as the system now prevents accidental omission of the receipt by requiring explicit selection of a fee payment screen

option. However, practitioners filing in paper format must take extreme care to include the receipt with every application and motion that requires a fee. The receipt should be clearly identified and attached or appended to the principal document so that immigration court staff can readily verify its presence during the intake process.

San Francisco Immigration Court Specific Practices and Northern California Implementation

The San Francisco Immigration Court, located at [100 Montgomery Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94104][1], and the Concord hearing location at [1855 Gateway Blvd., Suite 850, Concord, CA 94520][1], serve a geographically diverse Northern California region with significant caseloads involving asylum applicants from Central America, Mexican and Mexican-American communities, DACA and TPS populations, and employment-based visa issues. The court has fully transitioned to ECAS electronic filing for attorneys and accredited representatives, making the integration between the EOIR Payment Portal and ECAS case filing systems a central feature of practice in this jurisdiction[24][43].

San Francisco Immigration Court judges vary in their approaches to fee receipt defects. Some judges have established standing orders requiring that fee receipts be submitted with motions and applications; others leave the matter to case-by-case determination. Practitioners should review any standing orders issued by their assigned judge and should contact the immigration court's filing desk to understand local preferences. The San Francisco court's administrative control office is located at 630 Sansome Street, 4th Floor, Room 475, San Francisco, CA 94111, and staff there can provide guidance on filing procedures and local practices[1].

A critical consideration for Northern California practitioners involves the Spanish-language documentation often required in asylum and persecution-based claims. Form EOIR-26A (Fee Waiver Request) must be completed in English, but practitioners should prepare detailed declarations of economic hardship in Spanish (for Spanish-speaking clients) and English to support the fee waiver request. The hardship declaration should explain the client's work history, including barriers to employment, legal status restrictions on employment, family obligations, and other factors affecting economic circumstances.

For asylum cases specifically, the Annual Asylum Fee obligation creates new administrative burdens for Northern California practitioners. The asylum office with primary jurisdiction over cases in Northern California is the San Francisco Asylum Office, which also processes fee payments and communicates fee deadlines to applicants. Practitioners should maintain regular contact with clients to ensure timely payment of annual fees and should proactively monitor case status to identify when AAF obligations arise, as EOIR notices may not reliably reach all clients.

Retrieval and Replacement of Lost or Misplaced Fee Receipts

Practitioners and filers who have paid fees but misplaced the receipt or cannot locate the payment tracking identification number can retrieve replacement copies through EOIR. Under EOIR Payment Portal FAQ guidance, for cases before the immigration court, filers should contact the court that is currently hearing the case to request the tracking ID associated with their A-Number and payment information[7][27][38]. For cases before the BIA, filers should contact the BIA Clerk's Office at (703) 605-1007[7][27][38]. EOIR staff will provide the tracking ID associated with the A-Number and payment information, after which filers may visit the [EOIR Payment Portal receipts webpage][5] to retrieve and print a copy of the receipt[7][27][38].

The Portal receipts webpage allows filers to enter their A-Number and payment tracking identification number to retrieve any previously issued receipt, which can then be downloaded and printed[5][23]. This retrieval

function is particularly important for asylum clients who pay the Annual Asylum Fee and need to maintain proof of payment for submission to the immigration court, as the system does not send email confirmations and the receipt printout is the only standard record[20][35][45].

Practitioners should advise clients to save receipt documents in secure locations, maintain multiple printed copies, and provide copies to counsel for inclusion in the case file. When filing electronically through ECAS, practitioners should maintain digital copies of all receipts in the case management system and should append receipts to the relevant applications or motions when uploading them through the Case Portal[24][43].

Conclusion: Essential Takeaways for Practitioners

The EOIR fee receipt system represents a multifaceted procedural requirement with significant consequences for deficient compliance. Practitioners must ensure that clients understand the non-waivable Annual Asylum Fee obligation and make timely payments; understand the distinction between filing fee payments to DHS and adjudicatory authority vested in immigration courts and the Board; utilize the mandatory [EOIR Payment Portal][10] for all designated fee categories while maintaining meticulous records of payment tracking numbers and receipt documents; and appreciate the distinction between immigration court cure periods (which may allow remedy of fee defects) and Board of Immigration Appeals mandatory rejection standards (which allow no remedy except through appellate review of the rejection decision itself). The February 1, 2026, fee adjustments require practitioners to verify current amounts on EOIR's published fee schedule prior to payment, and the integration of H.R. 1 surcharges with standard application fees necessitates submission of dual payments with separate receipts for certain forms.

[8 C.F.R. § 1103.7]: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/8/1103.7>

[8 C.F.R. § 1003.24]: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/8/1003.24>

[8 C.F.R. § 1003.8]: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/8/1003.8>

[EOIR Practice Manual Chapter 3.4]: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/reference-materials/ic/chapter-3/4>

[BIA Practice Manual Chapter 3.4]: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/reference-materials/bia/chapter-3/4>