

DETAILED TABLE OF CONTENTS

PUBLIC CHARGE AND AFFIDAVITS OF SUPPORT: A PRACTITIONER’S GUIDE (2ND ED.)

Summary of Contents	vii
About the Author	ix
Acknowledgments	xi
Chapter 1: Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility	1
Introduction.....	1
Who Is Subject to the Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility?.....	2
Who Is Not Subject to the Public Charge Ground?	4
History of the Public Charge Ground of Inadmissibility	6
1999 Definition of Public Charge.....	8
2018 Foreign Affairs Manual Change	10
Motive Behind New Public Charge Rules.....	11
Public Charge Application by the Department of Justice.....	13
Public Charge Ground of Deportation.....	14
Chapter 2: USCIS Interpretation of Public Charge.....	17
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Public Charge Rule: The Totality of the Circumstances Test and the Six Factors	17
USCIS Public Charge Rule: Likely at Any Time	19
Factor: Age	20
Factor: Health and Health Insurance	21
Medical Condition	21
Health Insurance	23
Factor: Family Status.....	25
Applicants Under 21 and Unmarried.....	26
Applicants Who Are 21 Years or Older or Married	27

Factor: Assets, Resources, and Financial Status.....	28
Income	28
Assets and Resources.....	31
Financial Liabilities	32
Fee Waivers	33
Receipt of Public Benefits	33
Factor: Education and Skills.....	40
Education	41
Skills	41
English Proficiency.....	42
Factor: Affidavit of Support	42
Application of the Totality of the Circumstances Test.....	43
Public Charge and Religious Workers.....	46
Factor: Prospective Immigration Status.....	47
Waivers	48
Chapter 3: Department of State Interpretation of Public Charge.....	49
Introduction.....	49
DOS Public Charge Rule: The Totality of the Circumstances Test and the Six Factors	50
Factor: Age	51
Factor: Health and Health Insurance	52
Medical Condition	52
Health Insurance	53
Factor: Family Status.....	54
Factor: Assets, Resources, and Financial Status.....	57
Income	57
Assets and Resources.....	60
Credit Report and Score.....	62
Liabilities	62
Fee Waivers	62
Receipt of Public Benefits	62
Factor: Education and Skills.....	65

Factor: Affidavit of Support	66
Factor: Visa Classification Sought	68
Immigrant Visa Refusals	69
Waivers.....	70
Case Presentation.....	70
Chapter 4: Completing and Documenting Forms I-944 and DS-5540.....	73
Introduction.....	73
Form I-944, Declaration of Self-Sufficiency.....	74
Part 1. Information About You.....	74
Part 2. Family Status (Your Household).....	75
Part 3. Your and Your Household Members’ Assets, Resources, and Financial Status	75
Part 4. Your Education and Skills.....	91
Part 5. Declarant’s Statement, Contact Information, Certification, and Signature.....	93
Additional Resources.....	93
DS-5540, Public Charge Questionnaire.....	94
Part 1. Information About You.....	95
Part 2. Your Health	95
Part 3. Your Household Size	96
Part 4. Your Assets, Resources, and Financial Status	96
Part 5. Your Education and Skills.....	101
Part 9. Declarant’s Signature	102
Additional Resources.....	102
Advice to Practitioners	102
Chapter 5: Public Charge Bonds.....	103
Introduction.....	103
Bond Basics	104
Factors Determining Eligibility for a Bond.....	104
Bond Breach	106
Bond Cancellation	106
Chapter 6: Overview of the Affidavit of Support: Who Is Affected?	109
Overview.....	109

Mandatory Filing Requirement.....	110
Who is Affected?	110
Who is Not Affected?	111
Where and When Must the Affidavit Be Filed?	117
Chapter 7: Eligibility to Be a Sponsor, Substitute for Sponsor, Joint Sponsor, or Household Member	119
Definition of Sponsor	119
U.S. Citizen, National, or Lawful Permanent Resident	120
At Least 18 Years of Age	121
Domiciled in the United States	122
Other Factors USCIS Considers	125
Other Factors DOS Considers	126
Definition of Joint Sponsor.....	126
Definition of Substitute Sponsor	127
Definition of Household Member or “Relative”	130
Definition of Intending Immigrant If Including Their Income.....	132
Chapter 8: Measuring Sponsor’s Household Size	135
Introduction.....	135
Measuring Household Size.....	135
Determining Federal Poverty Line	135
Rules in Determining Household Size.....	136
Chapter 9: Measuring Sponsor’s Income and Assets	143
Satisfying the Minimum Income Requirement.....	143
Determining Federal Poverty Line	143
Whose Income Can Be Counted.....	144
Current Individual Annual Income.....	146
Tax Filing Obligations and Reporting	149
Determining Sufficiency of Income	153
Using Assets to Satisfy Income Requirements.....	155
Use of Joint Sponsors	157

Chapter 10: Form I-864 Documentary Requirements 159

Introduction..... 159

Income, Assets, and Tax Documentation for Form I-864 160

 Income 160

 Significant Assets 162

 Taxes..... 164

 Other Evidence 167

Specific Documentation for Form I-864EZ..... 169

 Income 169

 Taxes..... 169

Income, Assets, and Tax Documentation for Form I-864A 170

 Income 170

 Assets..... 170

 Taxes..... 170

 Other Evidence 170

Chapter 11: Completing and Filing Forms I-864, I-864EZ, and I-864A 173

Introduction..... 173

Completing Form I-864 173

 Part 1. Basis for Filing the Affidavit of Support..... 173

 Part 2. Information About the Principal Immigrant..... 174

 Part 3. Information About the Immigrants You Are Sponsoring 174

 Part 4. Information About You (Sponsor) 176

 Part 5. Sponsor’s Household Size..... 176

 Part 6. Sponsor’s Employment and Income 177

 Part 7. Use of Assets to Supplement Income (Optional) 178

Completing Form I-864EZ 179

Completing Form I-864A 179

 Part 1. Information About You (the Household Member)..... 180

 Part 2. Your (the Household Member’s) Relationship to the Sponsor 180

 Part 3. Your (the Household Member’s) Employment and Income 180

 Part 4. Your (the Household Member’s) Federal Income Tax and Assets 180

 Parts 5 and 6: Promise, Statement, Contact Information, Certification, and Signature 181

Filing the Forms..... 181

With USCIS	181
With the NVC	181
Withdrawing the Forms	183
Chapter 12: Agency Review and Adjudication of the Affidavit of Support.....	185
Introduction.....	185
Review and Adjudication by DOS	185
Review by the NVC.....	185
Adjudication by the Consulate.....	186
Review and Adjudication by USCIS	187
Review by the NBC	187
Adjudication by USCIS	188
Chapter 13: Ethical Issues Surrounding the Affidavit of Support	191
Overview.....	191
Establishment of the Attorney-Client Relationship	192
When Does the Relationship Form?	192
Significance of Signing Form G-28.....	193
Conflicts of Interest	194
Conflicts of Interest Between Existing Clients.....	194
Concurrent Conflicts of Interest Sometimes Allowed	195
Informed Consent Requires Full Disclosure of Pros and Cons	196
Duty to Withdraw If One Client's Interests Become Adverse to an Existing Client's.....	197
Conflict Between Existing Client and Former Client.....	198
Duty of Continuing Loyalty to Former Clients	199
Unrepresented Third Party.....	199
Withdrawing from Representation in Affidavits of Support Case	200
Maintaining Confidentiality.....	201
What is the Duty?	201
Duty of Confidentiality to Former Clients.....	202
Implied Authorization to Disclose.....	202
Client Fraud and Confidentiality	203

Chapter 14: Sponsorship Obligations and Termination of the Contract	207
Sponsorship Obligations	207
Legal Enforceability in General.....	208
Enforcement by the Sponsored Immigrant	209
Enforcable by a Federal, State, or Other Entity	212
Change of Address Requirements	214
Termination of the Contract.....	214
Chapter 15: Form I-134, Affidavit of Support.....	217
Who Files Form I-134	217
Requirements for Filing	218
Not Legally Enforceable.....	219
Completing and Filing Form I-134	219
Part 1. Information About You (the Sponsor)	220
Part 2. Information About the Beneficiary	220
Part 3. Other Information About the Sponsor.....	220
Appendices.....	221
Appendix 1: Form I-944, Declaration of Self-Sufficiency	223
Appendix 2: Form I-944 Instructions	241
Appendix 3: Form DS-5540, Public Charge Questionnaire	257
Appendix 4: Form I-944 Document Checklist	261
Appendix 5: Form I-944 Applicant Questionnaire	267
Appendix 6: Form I-944 Sample Cover Letter.....	273
Appendix 7: Form I-944 Summary of Positive and Negative Factors	279
Appendix 8: Form DS-5540 Document Checklist.....	281
Appendix 9: Form DS-5540 Sample Cover Letter	287
Appendix 10: Form DS-5540 Summary of Positive and Negative Factors.....	291
Appendix 11: Summary of Positive and Negative Factors by USCIS and DOS.....	293
Appendix 12: 2020 Federal Poverty Guidelines, 125% of FPG, 250% of FPG.....	305
Appendix 13: Report of No Credit Report.....	309
Appendix 14: Form I-864, Affidavit of Support Under INA §213A.....	311
Appendix 15: Form I-864A, Contract Between Sponsor and Household Member..	321
Appendix 16: Form I-864EZ, Affidavit of Support Under INA §213A.....	329

Appendix 17: Earnings Needed to Earn One Quarter of SSA Coverage, 1978 to 2020	337
Appendix 18: Form I-864, Affidavit of Support, USCIS Processing Guides.....	339
Appendix 19: USCIS Request for Initial Evidence for Form I-864	361
Appendix 20: NVC Checklist Template.....	363
Appendix 21: NVC Assessment Letter Template.....	367
Appendix 22: USCIS Request for Additional Evidence for Form I-134.....	369
Appendix 23: Sample Employer Letter	371
Appendix 24: Sample SSA Earnings Statement.....	373
Appendix 25: Sample Consent and Disclosure Form.....	375
Appendix 26: Sample Declaration of Domicile.....	377
Appendix 27: Form I-134, Affidavit of Support.....	379