

The following USCIS response was received as part of a collective response to several recommendations submitted by the CIS Ombudsman. The following response has been extracted from the original document received by the CIS Ombudsman for display and readability purposes.

The establishment of a separate fee structure for the “*e-filing*” applications/petitions so that a different (lower) fee is permitted for filing an e-file application/petition than that is required for a conventional paper-based filing.

USCIS previously agreed with this recommendation in principle but found that it is currently impractical. At this time, there are technological limitations on USCIS’ ability to gain meaningful cost efficiencies from e-filing. Recently, the Chief Information Officer and Associate Director for Operations of USCIS presented an IT Transformation Strategy within the DHS and it is being reviewed within the Department. Our plan provides a clear path forward for USCIS to transform its paper intensive processes into internal and external electronic information processes.