

Does My Immigrant Ancestor Have an A-File?

The A-Files do not document every immigrant to the United States. Use this chart to determine who may have an A-File or other type of record created by the former Immigration and Naturalization Service. (Adapted from chart created by Marian Smith, Chief Historian, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services). The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Genealogy Program can be accessed online at <http://www.uscis.gov/genealogy/>.

The immigrant...	
Died before August 1, 1940	Will not have an A-File nor an Alien Registration Number. Research other National Archives resources of genealogical interest, such as ship passenger manifest lists, for information about this individual.
Became a naturalized citizen between September 27, 1906 and August 1, 1940	Will not have an A-File nor an Alien Registration Number. However, you should inquire with the USCIS Genealogy Program regarding a possible "Certificate File" (C-File).
Became a naturalized citizen between August 1, 1940 and March 31, 1956	Will likely not have an A-File. However, you should inquire with the USCIS Genealogy Program regarding a possible "Certificate File" (C-File) or 1940 Alien Registration Form.
Immigrated to the United States after April 1, 1944	Will have an A-File. Check National Archives holdings if born in 1910 or prior. Otherwise, inquire with the USCIS Genealogy Program.
Naturalized on or after March 31, 1956	Will have an A-File. Check National Archives holdings if born in 1910 or prior. Otherwise, inquire with the USCIS Genealogy Program.
Registered in the United States as an alien in 1940 but never came back to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for any reason	Was likely assigned an Alien Registration Number but will not have an A-File. You can obtain a copy of their 1940 Alien Registration Form from the USCIS Genealogy Program.
Registered in the United States as an alien in 1940 and came back to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for any reason after 1944	Will have an A-File. Check National Archives holdings if born in 1910 or prior. Otherwise, inquire with the USCIS Genealogy Program.

The National Archives at San Francisco | Leo J. Ryan Federal Building

1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno, CA 94066 tel: 650-238- 3501 | fax: 650-238-3510 | e-mail:

sanbruno.archives@nara.gov

Sample Letter for NARA Case File Request

[Date]

To whom it may concern,

[Name of Researcher] has my permission to retrieve any and all documents pertaining to my internment experience, before, during, and after WWII. She/He may also retrieve the documents of my deceased parents [names], siblings [names], and [fill in any other people such as aunts, uncles, grandparents, and include date of death].

Sincerely,

[Type Your Name Here (include maiden name and married name)]

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY EVACUEE CASE FILE REQUEST

1) Name of Evacuee: _____

2) Date of Birth: _____

3) Head of Family: _____

4) Head of Family's Date of Birth: _____

5) Name of War Relocation Authority Center: _____

Name of Requestor: _____

Address: _____

Please note that WRA evacuee case files are subject to privacy restrictions.

You can request a case file if:

_You are the subject of the file.

_You can provide **signed, notarized permission in writing** from the evacuee granting you permission to see their case file (if the evacuee is still living).

_You can provide **proof of death** such as a copy of a death certificate, Social Security Death Index listing, or obituary (if the subject of the file is deceased).

Please return this form and the documentation requested above to the following address:

National Archives and Records Administration

Archives 1 Reference Section (RDT1R)

700 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20408-0001

Our staff will respond to your request within approximately 10 business days.

**COMPENSATION AND REPARATION CASE FILES FOR
THE INTERNMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS DURING
WORLD WAR II**

1) Name of Evacuee: _____

2) Department of Justice case file number: _____

3) Act that compensation requested under (circle one): 1948 or 1988

Name of Requester: _____

Address: _____

If requestor is not one (1) above, please have evacuee sign under the statement below, or provide an explanation of why such permission cannot be obtained.

I hereby give permission to _____
to request an electrostatic copy of my Compensation or Restitution case file.

Signature: _____

Permission cannot be obtained because:

Please return to the Civilian Branch, Textual Archives Services Division, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road, Suite 2600, College Park, MD 20720. You will receive a price quotation for copies in approximately 10 working days. Electrostatic copies cost \$0.75 per page. We have a minimum charge of \$15 for all mail orders.

