Form I-130A, officially the Supplemental Information for Spouse Beneficiary, is a key supporting form for U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents sponsoring their foreign spouse for a green card using Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative. It provides USCIS with detailed biographic information about the spouse beneficiary, helping verify identity, background, and eligibility during the marriage-based immigration process. This guide covers everything from eligibility to filing tips, drawing from official USCIS resources and common applicant experiences.

Whether your spouse is abroad or adjusting status inside the U.S., understanding Form I-130A ensures a smoother petition and avoids delays like Requests for Evidence (RFEs).

Table of Contents

- Quick Summary
  - Key Takeaways
- What is Form I-130A, and Why Do You Need It?
- Who Files Form I-130A? Petitioner vs. Beneficiary Roles
- Step-by-Step Guide: How to Fill Out Form I-130A
- Key Sections Breakdown
- Supporting Documents for Form I-130A and I-130 Packet

- Filing Locations and Fees (2026 Update)
- Processing Times and What Happens After Filing
- Common Mistakes to Avoid with Form I-130A
- FAQs
- Next Steps After I-130 Approval

Quick Summary

This blog provides a comprehensive guide to Form I-130A, the Supplemental Information for Spouse Beneficiary, essential for marriage-based green card petitions filed with Form I-130. It covers roles, step-by-step filling instructions, common mistakes, filing details, processing timelines, and post-approval steps, with tables and visuals for clarity.

Key Takeaways

- **Strong marriage evidence** like joint docs is crucial alongside accurate I-130A.
- **I-130A is mandatory for spouse petitions** only; it collects the beneficiary's 5-year address and employment history, biographic details, and marital info to support the I-130.

- **Petitioner fills and signs**, but beneficiary signs only if in the U.S.; no signature needed for overseas spouses.
- **Avoid gaps in histories**—use “N/A” for inapplicable fields and match info to official docs to prevent RFEs.
- **No separate fee**; file with I-130 ($675) at USCIS lockboxes based on your state.
- **Processing: 10–18 months** average; approval advances to I-485 (U.S.) or NVC/consular (abroad).

What is Form I-130A, and Why Do You Need It?

Form I-130A collects comprehensive details about the spouse beneficiary’s personal history, address, employment, and family background to support the primary I-130 petition. It is **required only for spouse petitions**—not for children, parents, or other relatives—and must be filed with the I-130 unless the spouse is deceased or the marriage ended before filing.

The form helps USCIS officers assess the bona fide nature of the marriage and cross-check information against other records. Skipping it or submitting incomplete details often leads to RFEs or denials, as it is a critical piece of evidence in proving the relationship’s legitimacy.

Who Files Form I-130A? Petitioner vs. Beneficiary Roles

In immigration petitions, the **petitioner** is the U.S. citizen or green card holder sponsoring their spouse, while the **beneficiary** is the foreign spouse seeking permanent residency. The petitioner typically completes and signs the I-130A, but the beneficiary must provide accurate information for all sections.

Key distinction:

- If the beneficiary lives **in the U.S.**, they must personally sign the form.
- If abroad, the beneficiary does **not** need to sign; the petitioner can submit it unsigned, but it must still be included.

This flexibility accommodates consular processing cases where the spouse cannot easily access U.S. forms.

Step-by-Step Guide: How to Fill Out Form I-130A

Download the latest Form I-130A (PDF) and its instructions from USCIS—use the edition dated 04/01/24 or later, as older versions are rejected. Fill it out in black ink or type it, using “N/A” for inapplicable fields unless instructed otherwise.

Key Sections Breakdown

Section	What to Include	Common Pitfalls
Part 1: Information About You (Beneficiary)	Full name, A-number (if any), date/place of birth, passport details, parents' names/DOBs	Spelling mismatches with official docs; use exact birth certificate info
Part 2: Address History (Last 5 Years)	All physical addresses with dates—no gaps	Omitting short-term stays or foreign addresses
Part 3: Marital History	All prior marriages, divorce/death proofs referenced	Forgetting to attach termination docs
Part 4: Employment History (Last 5 Years)	Employer names, addresses, job titles, dates	Vague entries or missing self-employment
Part 5: Signature	Beneficiary signs if in U.S.; petitioner certifies accuracy	Unsigned when required abroad (but still submit)

Pro Tip: Cross-reference with the beneficiary's passport, birth certificate, and prior visa applications to ensure

consistency—USCIS checks for discrepancies.

Supporting Documents for Form I-130A and I-130 Packet

While I-130A itself requires no attachments, the full packet needs strong evidence of a bona fide marriage. Essential docs include:

- Certified marriage certificate
- Proof of petitioner's status (birth cert, passport, green card)
- Divorce/death certificates for prior marriages
- Shared life evidence: joint accounts, leases, photos, affidavits from friends/family

Submit everything together to the correct USCIS lockbox based on your state and filing type (standalone I-130 or concurrent with I-485).

Filing Locations and Fees (2026 Update)

No separate fee for I-130A—it is included with the I-130 filing fee ($675 as of April 2026). Mail to USCIS lockboxes; check

the USCIS Direct Filing Addresses for updates, as they change by state and concurrent filing status.

Example lockbox chart for common scenarios:

Your Residence	Standalone I-130	Concurrent I-130 + I-485
Most states east of Mississippi	USCIS Phoenix Lockbox	USCIS Chicago Lockbox
California, etc.	USCIS Phoenix Lockbox	USCIS Elgin Lockbox

Processing Times and What Happens After Filing

I-130 (with I-130A) processing averages 10–18 months for immediate relative spouses in 2026, varying by service center and backlogs. Track via USCIS case status online using your receipt number.

After approval:

- **In U.S. (Adjustment):** Proceed to I-485 interview.
- **Abroad (Consular):** Case forwarded to NVC for DS-260 and visa interview.
  RFEs often stem from incomplete I-130A details like address gaps—respond within 87 days.

Common Mistakes to Avoid with Form I-130A

Even experienced petitioners slip up—here are top errors:

1. **Incomplete histories**: Gaps in 5-year address/employment (fill all lines).
2. **Inconsistent info**: Mismatches with passport or prior apps.
3. **Missing I-130A**: Leads to RFE/denial.
4. **Weak marriage proof**: No joint docs raises fraud flags.
5. **Wrong filing address**: Delays receipt.

FAQs

Who is the petitioner, and who is the beneficiary on Form I-130A?

The petitioner is the U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident sponsoring their spouse. The beneficiary is the foreign spouse seeking the green card. The petitioner typically completes the form using the beneficiary's details.

What's the difference between Form I-130 and Form I-130A?

Form I-130 establishes the qualifying family relationship and proves the marriage is bona fide. Form I-130A supplements it with detailed biographic info (addresses, employment, marital history) about the spouse beneficiary only—no other relatives need it.

Does the spouse beneficiary need to sign Form I-130A if they live overseas?

No, if abroad, the beneficiary does not sign; the petitioner submits it unsigned. But always include the completed form—omitting it triggers an RFE or denial.

What information does Form I-130A require, and tips to avoid mistakes?

It covers biographic details (names, DOB, parents), 5-year address/employment histories (no gaps), and marital history. Tips: Match official docs exactly, use "N/A" for non-applicable fields, list all residences/jobs, including short-term ones.

What supporting documents go with I-130A and the I-130 packet?

Marriage certificate, petitioner's status proof (passport/green card), prior marriage terminations, joint life evidence (bank statements, leases, photos). Organize and submit with the packet—no attachments directly to I-130A.

Where do I mail Form I-130A and I-130?

To USCIS lockboxes—check USCIS Direct Filing Addresses for your state and filing type (e.g., concurrent I-485). Addresses change, so verify before mailing.

How long does I-130A/I-130 processing take in 2026?

Typically 10–18 months for spouse cases, varying by service center. Track online with receipt number; RFEs add time.

What happens after I-130 approval?

Confirms qualifying marriage but no green card yet. In U.S.: Proceed to I-485. Abroad: NVC for DS-260, fees, then consular interview.

Related Posts

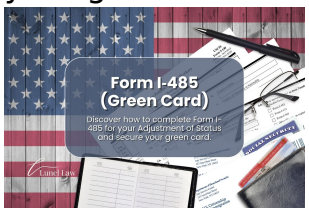
Form I-90 Explained (2025 Guide): Cost, Timeline, Supporting Forms, and Common Mistakes

Citizenship Green Card
Form I-90 is the backbone of the green card renewal and replacement process. Understanding it clearly—its cost, timeline, supporting forms, and common pitfalls—can save you time, money, and stress. This guide breaks down every major part of

Form I-90 for permanent residents who want more than a quick overview. It […]

8 Ways to Get a U.S. Green Card

Immigration Citizenship Visa Asylum Green Card Visa
Obtaining a U.S. green card is a dream for many who seek to live and work permanently in the United States. The green card offers lawful permanent resident status, which comes with many rights and opportunities. Here are eight pathways to secure your green card. 1. Family-Based Immigration One of […]



Form I-485 (Green Card): A Complete Step-by-Step Guide to Adjustment of Status

Citizenship Family Based Immigration Family Immigration Form Form I-485 Green Card Naturalization
Form I-485, officially called the Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, is the main form you use to apply for a green card from inside the United States. I-485 instructions (PDF) Adjustment of status overview. It's part of a process called "adjustment of status," which lets eligible people […]

IR6 Green Card Explained: Eligibility, Benefits, and Key Differences

Citizenship Family Based Immigration Family Immigration Green Card US National
The U.S. immigration system offers several family-based green card categories, and the IR6 Green Card is one of the most valuable for spouses of U.S. citizens. Unlike conditional green cards (such as CR1), the IR6 category grants permanent residency immediately to spouses in marriages that are at least two years […]
Immigration Law Firm in Atlanta

Next Steps After I-130 Approval

Once approved, your marriage is recognized for immigration—next is green card application via adjustment (I-485) or consular processing. For family-based paths, explore Lunel Law's resources on family-based immigration in Atlanta.

> **Disclaimer:** Lunel Law focuses on family-based immigration. This article is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Consult an immigration attorney for your case. Always use current USCIS forms and instructions.