

— FREE CHECKLIST

RFE Response Organizer

A step-by-step organizer for answering a Request for Evidence: deadline math, the response matrix, assembly order, and proof of delivery.

Free

Print-ready

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A Request for Evidence is one chance — USCIS allows a single response, and it must answer every item by the deadline printed on the notice. This organizer walks you through reading the notice, calendaring the deadline, building an item-by-item response matrix, gathering the right evidence for the common RFE types, and assembling a package an officer can grant from.

Step 1 — Read the notice (twice)

- ☐ Confirm what you received: RFE (case stays open, you add evidence) vs. NOID (intent to deny — call the office immediately) vs. rejection notice (case returned) — the response strategy differs
- ☐ Find the response deadline printed on the notice — it is a RECEIPT deadline at USCIS, not a mailing deadline
- ☐ Note the receipt number, form type, applicant name, and the address/instructions for where the response must go (often different from the original filing address)
- ☐ Read every numbered/bulleted request — highlight each distinct item; officers frequently ask for 3–6 separate things inside dense paragraphs
- ☐ Separate what was "not received" from what was "insufficient" — a document USCIS says it never got may simply need a fresh copy; "insufficient" needs new or better evidence

- ☐ Check whether the notice includes standard boilerplate lists (e.g., every possible bona fide marriage document) versus specific demands — respond to the specific demands fully and cover the boilerplate categories you reasonably can
- ☐ Scan or photograph the entire notice, every page, the day it arrives
- ☐ Send the notice to your attorney the same day — do not wait until you've gathered documents

Step 2 — Calendar the deadline

- ☐ Enter the printed deadline in two calendars (phone + shared/family) the day the notice arrives
- ☐ Set a working deadline 14 days BEFORE the printed date — that is your target to have everything gathered
- ☐ Set an absolute ship date at least 7 days before the deadline for trackable overnight/2-day delivery
- ☐ Back-plan slow items first: certified court records, foreign documents, certified translations, IRS transcripts, doctor's letters — order these in week one
- ☐ There are no extensions of an RFE deadline — if an item cannot arrive in time, plan to submit proof it was requested (order receipts) with an explanation, and everything else complete

Step 3 — Build the response matrix

- ☐ Make a three-column table: (1) exactly what USCIS asked for, quoted from the notice; (2) what you are sending in response; (3) the exhibit/tab number where it sits in the package
- ☐ One row per requested item — never merge two requests into one row
- ☐ For any item you cannot provide: a row explaining why, with alternative/secondary evidence offered (e.g., certificate of non-availability + affidavits)
- ☐ For any item you believe was already submitted: send it AGAIN anyway, marked as a resubmitted copy — never respond with "previously provided"

- ☐ Have a second person check the finished matrix against the notice line by line — a skipped item can mean denial for abandonment of that issue

Step 4 — Gather evidence by RFE type (common requests)

- ☐ Bona fide marriage RFE: full joint bank statements (all pages, many months), lease/deed with both names, joint tax transcript, insurance with beneficiary pages, dated photos with captions, 3-5 detailed affidavits — spread across the relationship timeline
- ☐ I-864 financial RFE: newest IRS tax RETURN TRANSCRIPT (not just the return), W-2s/1099s, current employment letter and recent pay stubs, corrected household-size math on a fresh signed I-864 if the original had errors, or add a joint sponsor's complete package
- ☐ I-693 medical RFE: schedule a civil surgeon exam now — the RFE means USCIS wants a current, valid exam; submit the new sealed envelope unopened
- ☐ Birth certificate / civil document RFE: registry long-form certificate; if genuinely unavailable, certificate of non-availability + secondary evidence (baptismal, school, census) + two birth affidavits, all with certified translations
- ☐ Translation RFE: complete word-for-word certified English translation with the translator's signed certification — attach translation and original together
- ☐ Criminal records RFE: certified court dispositions for EVERY incident named, even dismissed/sealed/expunged (get an unsealing copy for immigration purposes); add a police clearance letter where records were destroyed
- ☐ Status/entry RFE: fresh I-94 printout, all passport stamp pages, prior I-797s, and a written timeline of every entry and status

Step 5 — Assemble the package

- ☐ Page 1: response cover letter — receipt number, name, A-number, "RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR EVIDENCE" heading, and the response matrix as its body
- ☐ Page 2: copy of the ENTIRE RFE notice — USCIS instructs that the notice (or its coversheet) go on top of the response; put the original notice coversheet first if the notice says so, then your letter

- ☐ Then: exhibits in matrix order, each behind a labeled tab/divider (Exhibit 1, 2, 3...) matching column 3 of the matrix
- ☐ Translations stapled to their foreign-language originals within the same exhibit
- ☐ No originals unless the notice demands them — clear, complete copies; sealed I-693 envelope goes in unopened if that's the request
- ☐ Copy or scan the complete assembled response — every page in final order — before sealing
- ☐ ONE package answering everything — USCIS accepts a single response per RFE; nothing can be sent later, so hold shipment until every item is in

Step 6 — Send it and prove it

- ☐ Ship to the exact address on the notice (check for a courier vs. P.O. Box address) by trackable overnight or 2-day service
- ☐ Save the tracking number, the shipping receipt, and the delivery confirmation with signature — print and file them with your package copy
- ☐ Confirm delivery online the day it is due to arrive; screenshot the proof
- ☐ Watch the case status for "Response to USCIS' Request for Evidence Was Received" — allow 1-2 weeks, then call USCIS if it never updates
- ☐ Calendar a follow-up 60 and 90 days after delivery to check for movement

Notes: One response only — anything you leave out cannot be sent afterward, so a nearly-ready package must wait for its last document. The deadline on the notice is the date USCIS must RECEIVE the response; a package postmarked on time but delivered late is treated as a failure to respond, and the case can be denied on the record as it stands. Respond to every single item, even ones you think are mistaken — address those in writing rather than ignoring them. If you received a NOID or the deadline is under three weeks away, call the office today: Usher Law Group, P.C., (718) 484-7510.

This checklist is general information, not legal advice, and doesn't cover every situation. Fees and rules change — confirm current amounts at [our fee table](#) or [uscis.gov](#) before filing. © Usher Law Group, P.C.

