

**Guidelines for Requesting Law Enforcement Certifications for “U” Nonimmigrant Status,  
(Form I 918, Supplement B)**

The New York City Police Department (“NYPD”) is committed to serving all communities in the City of New York, especially those vulnerable to victimization. Immigrants without legal status are particularly vulnerable. They often fear that any contact with law enforcement may result in removal, or deportation, from the United States. Following city policy, the NYPD does not contact the Department of Homeland Security for federal civil immigration enforcement, unless it is investigating illegal activity other than the individual’s legal status.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as a general precaution, immigrants are often reluctant to report criminal activity or assist in law enforcement investigations or prosecutions.

Accordingly, in 2000, Congress created the U nonimmigrant status, also known as the U visa, as a tool to address these issues. The U visa strengthens law enforcement’s ability to investigate and prosecute crimes involving immigrant victims and it offers these victims immigration protection so they can assist law enforcement. To be eligible for a U visa, immigrant victims must satisfy federal statutory requirements, which include a completed law enforcement certification. Certifying agencies may complete the form at their discretion. The NYPD, one of several certifying agencies in New York City, recognizes the value of completing certifications and supporting immigrant victims of crime who are helpful in the investigation or prosecution of a crime.

To request a certification from the NYPD, please send materials (cover letter, police reports, supplemental documents) to the **Domestic Violence Unit, New York City Police Department, One Police Plaza - Room 1312-O, New York, New York 10038**. Keep a copy for your records. **Note:** This unit handles all certification requests, regardless of the qualifying crime. Failure to follow these instructions may delay review of the request.

**Materials to Send**

1. **Cover Letter (Required).** Please include the following:
  - a. **Victim information.** Full name (including any middle name, and other names such as maiden names or nicknames), date of birth, gender, and, if available, address.
  - b. **Description of qualifying criminal activity.** Crime(s), date(s), and location(s) of occurrence.
  - c. **Description of helpfulness.** Specify how the victim assisted the NYPD’s investigation of the crime(s).
  - d. **Return mailing address.** State where the NYPD may send written correspondence.

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<sup>1</sup> See Mayoral Executive Orders 34 & 41 (2003), <http://www.nyc.gov/html/imm/html/eoll/eo41.shtml>. See also, Patrol Guide Procedure No: 212-66.

e. **Contact name(s) and phone number(s).**

2. **Police reports (Recommended).** Submit any police reports (for example, complaint reports or domestic incident reports), related to the underlying qualifying crime. If you have requested reports, but have not yet received them, please provide documentation of that request. **Note:** You can still submit a certification request even if you do not have police reports, or have not yet requested them.
3. **Supplemental documents.** Documents relevant to the particular victim and incident in the certification request may be submitted, for example medical records.

**Note:** USCIS, an agency within the Department of Homeland Security, has sole authority to grant immigration benefits, including U nonimmigrant status (U visas). **A completed certification form does not guarantee any legal status.**

### RECEIVING A RESPONSE FROM THE NYPD

Once your request has been received, you will be contacted with one of the following responses from the NYPD:

1. **Phone call.** If the certification is signed, a member of the NYPD will call and provide instructions for picking up the form. The Department may also call if there is a question about the request.
2. **Acknowledgement letter.** If a request takes 30 days or more to review, the NYPD will send a letter indicating that it is still being reviewed. The letter will be sent to the return mailing address you provide.
3. **Denial letter.** If the NYPD determines that it cannot sign the certification, you will receive a letter explaining the reason(s) for the denial.

### APPEALS PROCESS

To appeal a decision, submit a written request to the **Attn: Commanding Officer, Legal Bureau, New York City Police Department, One Police Plaza - Room 1406, New York, New York 10038.** Appeals should include a copy of all materials originally submitted and supplemental information relevant to the certification generally or to the reason(s) identified in the denial letter. Appeals decisions will be communicated in writing.