

# *10 steps to help you prepare for your marriage-based green card interview*



*We get green cards for you and your loved ones*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
Immigration Law

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*Hello!*

I am excited to provide this workbook to help you on your marriage-based green card journey. I am eager to share the knowledge and experience that I have gained in 18 years of immigration practice. In my career as an immigration attorney, I have worked with individuals and families from countless countries, races, educational and socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, religions, and family statuses. I strive to help them achieve their life goals and to provide an excellent client experience in our work together.

*-Ellen*

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# *How to use this workbook*

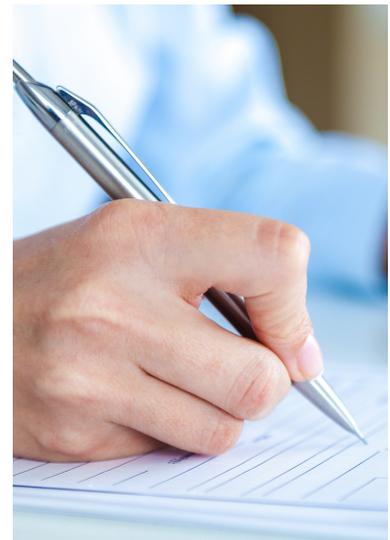
At Cambridge Immigration Law, we have represented many types of couples at their marriage-based green card interviews. We prepare our clients for all sorts of questions and we update evidence before an interview. Since fewer cases are being interviewed, we have to identify-- and prepare for the issues that caused your case to be scheduled for an interview.

By the time our couples get to the interview, they feel confident knowing they have our attorneys by their side. Use this guide to understand the steps necessary to be successful and get your green card!

QUESTIONS?

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## *1 Plan your trip to your local USCIS Field Office*

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You can find the (likely) location of your interview by finding your USCIS Field Office using this link and scrolling to the bottom of the page to enter your zip code. As soon as you get your Interview Notice, put the date, time, and location into your calendar. If your application is based on marriage to a US citizen, your spouse must attend with you, so get the appointment on your spouse's calendar too. If you have not yet received your interview notice.

Before the day of your interview, plan your trip to the local Field Office and plan time for traffic, parking, walking to the Field Office, and checking in through security at the USCIS building.

## *2 Update USCIS if you move*

If you move after you file your “green card” application, you must notify USCIS using the online change of address tool at this [link](#). At our firm, we will notify the USCIS Field Office of the address change so do not forget to let our legal team know of your move. If you move out of the geographic area for your local Field Office, USCIS may NOT be able to conduct your Interview at that location, even if they schedule you for an interview there.

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### *3 Talk with your spouse about your relationship history*

At the interview, USCIS will ask you tell the story of your relationship with your US citizen spouse. Most of the time, the officer asks how you met, how you started dating, how you decided to get married, what your marriage celebration entailed, and how you live your lives together. Even for married couples who have lived together for years, we conduct a thorough mock-interview to help the couple loosen up and become confident that they can answer questions about their relationship. Sometimes the mock-interview helps clients remember things they forgot and sometimes come to an agreement about facts that they seem to remember differently. Do not underestimate the importance of practicing answering even basic questions like your full name, address, and place of birth.

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*Here are some common questions that are asked during a marriage-based green card interview:*

*How did you meet your spouse?*

*Can you describe your wedding ceremony?*

*Who were the witnesses at your wedding?*

*Do you have any joint bank accounts or credit cards?*

*Can you describe a typical day in your life together?*

*What are your spouse's hobbies or interests?*

*Can you name your spouse's siblings or parents?*

*Have you traveled together? If so, where and when?*

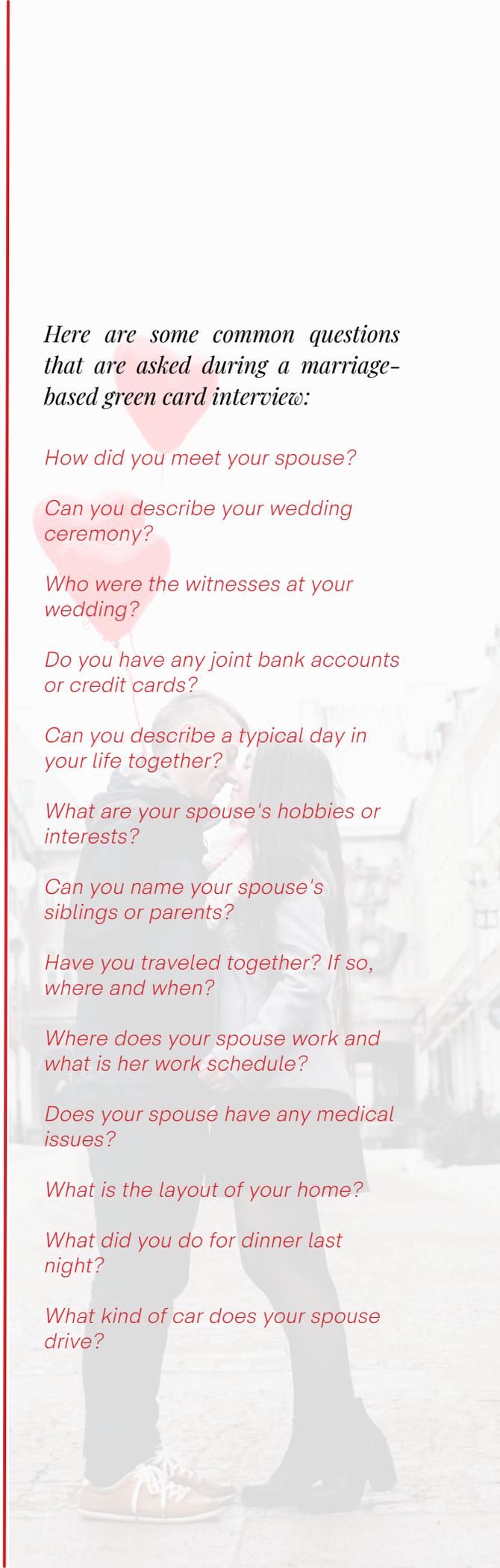
*Where does your spouse work and what is her work schedule?*

*Does your spouse have any medical issues?*

*What is the layout of your home?*

*What did you do for dinner last night?*

*What kind of car does your spouse drive?*





## 5 *Review your I-485 Application*

As soon as you receive your Interview Notice, review your I-485 Application, your related application I-130 Petition, all other related applications (Form I-864, Form I-693, Form I-765, and Form I-131), and all past USCIS and Embassy applications. If there are any mistakes or updates on any of your immigration applications, you should make a list of corrections/updates and be prepared to explain the corrections/updates at the start of your Interview. Also, review your applications so that you are familiar with the content of the application. Know your past addresses and employers. Know your immediate family's birth dates, anniversary dates, and addresses. Review the somewhat confusing language of the eligibility questions on pages 10 to 16 of the Form I-485 Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status. If you found mistakes on your prior applications, you should talk with an experienced immigration attorney about how to go about updating the application. **If you answered "yes" to any questions on pages 10 to 16 of the I-485 Application, do not go to the interview without first consulting with an attorney.**

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### Here are some eligibility questions:

*Have you EVER pled guilty to or been convicted of a crime or offense (even if the violation was subsequently expunged or sealed by a court, or if you were granted a pardon, amnesty, a rehabilitation decree, or other act of clemency)?*

*Have you ever received Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or State, Tribal, territorial, or local, cash benefit programs for income maintenance (often called "General Assistance" in the State context, but which also exist under other names)?*

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## 6 *Gather original documents*

When you go to the Interview, you will bring the original Interview Notice, your original passport/s, your original birth certificate with translation, your original marriage and divorce certificates for all past marriages and divorces, birth certificates for your children, original criminal dockets and all original USCIS/US immigration documents (EADs, visa, approval notices, etc.). Gather and neatly organize these documents so that you can easily access them and show them to the USCIS officer when you are at the Interview.

## 7 *Bring a copy of everything*

Bring a copy of your application and all original documents to the interview. Sometimes the USCIS officer cannot find something in the file (even though it's there), and it is helpful to give the officer a copy of what seems to be missing from the file. Make sure to keep a copy of everything for yourself.

## 8 *Dress “appropriately”*

Plan to wear a “business casual” outfit to the interview. This means that you should wear clothing that is somewhat formal or special and that shows your respect for the importance of the event. If you go with a spouse, try to dress in similar levels of formal dress so that you look like you go together.

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## 9 *Be flexible with travel plans*

If you do not have Advance Parole, an H1B visa, or an L visa, do not leave the US without first consulting with an attorney. You may not be eligible to re-enter the US if you leave before your I-485 Application is approved. If you are eligible to travel and you plan to travel outside the US around the time that your interview could be scheduled, plan to be flexible with your plans. I always advise clients to prioritize attending the Interview over everything else, and I advise clients to change travel plans if at all possible so that they can be at the Interview. Also, if you plan to travel soon after your Interview, you may need to request special proof of your LPR status before your LPR card (I-551/green card) arrives in the mail.

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## 10 *Consult with an experienced immigration attorney*

Before you attend your I-485 Interview, talk to an experienced immigration attorney. If you found any errors in past applications or you answered "yes" to any questions on pages 10-16 on Form I-485, discuss those issues with an experienced immigration attorney. As of October 2022, USCIS plans to approve most marriage-based green card cases without an interview. If you've been scheduled for an interview, there is likely to be some issue in your case that needs special attention and you should not attend the interview without consulting with an experienced immigration attorney.

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# *Congratulations*

YOU ARE ONE STEP CLOSER TO ACHIEVING  
YOUR IMMIGRATION GOALS!

Preparing for the marriage-based green card interview can be a very stressful process. You don't want to make a mistake or forget any required documents.

Let us handle the work. You get your green card.

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