

## History

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Puerto Rico was a possession of the U.S. since the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, but prior to 1917, Puerto Ricans were considered neither foreigners nor citizens. The case of the Puerto Rican Isabel Gonzalez (detained in Ellis Island in 1903) forced the Supreme Court to determine that Puerto Ricans were exempt from the usual interrogation procedures at Ellis Island.



In 1917, the Jones Act [Act of Congress: March 2, 1917] made Puerto Ricans U.S. citizens. In 1930, the Bureau of Commerce and Industry was established to issue Certificates of Identification to all citizens of the United States born in Puerto Rico. In 1948, the agency became The Employment and Migration Bureau [Act no. 25 approved Dec 5, 1947] and within the bureau, the Migration Division became responsible for producing the ID cards for Puerto Ricans.



“The head of the New York branch of the Bureau of Commerce and Industry is hereby empowered to issue a certificate of identification, upon documentary evidence, to any

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person born in Porto Rico who is a citizen of the United States. For the issue of this certificate of identification a charge of \$1.00 shall be made, which shall be covered into the Treasury of Porto Rico under the heading 'Contingent receipts'." (sic)

[Act no. 46: Approved April 28, 1930]

## ID through the decades



**New York City  
Office Locations**

**1930's**  
1457 Broadway  
Rm. 501

**1948**  
1881 Broadway

**1955**  
21 West 60th St.

**1957**  
88 Columbus Ave.

## 1930's



## 1940's



## 1950's

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