

# How to Organize a Naturalization Workshop

*Web-Based Conference Call Training*

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Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)  
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## Overview

- Workshop Models
- Workshop Benefits
- Preparation for a Workshop
- Stages of the Workshop Event

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## References

CLINIC toolkit for naturalization workshops, available at:  
<http://www.cliniclegal.org/Refugee/natztoolkit.html>

Chapter describing the workshop model in CLINIC's report, *A More Perfect Union*, available at:  
[http://www.cliniclegal.org/DNP/citzplan07/Chpt\\_09.pdf](http://www.cliniclegal.org/DNP/citzplan07/Chpt_09.pdf)

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### Note:

If you have questions during the call, please e-mail them to: [lburdick@cliniclegal.org](mailto:lburdick@cliniclegal.org) and they will be addressed (as many as time permits) at the end of the presentation.

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### Workshop Models

- Legal model vs. community organizing model
- Rationale for choosing the legal model
- Terminology differences (workshop vs. clinic)
- Format differences (one day vs. two day)

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### Workshop Benefits

- Immigrant community learns the benefits of citizenship and how to prepare for naturalization
- Immigrants are motivated to attain citizenship
- Myths are dispelled and immigrants' concerns or fears are addressed

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## Workshop Benefits, cont'd

- Access to English and native-language study materials
- Referrals to citizenship classes, resulting in better chance of passing test
- Access to useful information and community resources, i.e. vocational training, community safety, health, "know your rights" (see toolkit for list of handouts and information for applicants)

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## Workshop Benefits, cont'd

- Immigrants learn how their children can become U.S. citizens by derivation and how to document this status (see toolkit for derivation fact sheet)
- Those who are already citizens by derivation learn how to document their status
- Immigrants can speak to a USCIS officer about their case
- Immigrants with special needs can speak to experts and learn how to overcome barriers
- Immigrants requiring additional services receive referrals

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## Overview of Preparation for a Workshop

- Needs assessment and planning
- Site location
- Volunteer recruitment and role assignment
- Training
- Outreach
- Forms, documents, materials, and supplies

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## Needs Assessment & Planning

- Can use demographic data on LPRs and interviews with stakeholders and potential volunteers
- Must identify the level of staff time and financial resources required
- Capacity to provide follow-up services needs to be assessed
- Sponsors must choose mutually acceptable goals, objectives, and implementation strategies

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## Needs Assessment & Planning, Cont'd

To be determined:

- Number of workshops to be sponsored in a year, and dates
- Cap on number served at each workshop
- "Custody" of reported number served
- Services that will/will not be provided at workshop
- Pre-registration requirements and walk-in policies
- Fee levels

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## Needs Assessment & Planning, Cont'd

To be determined:

- Desirable locations
- Volunteer recruitment ideas
- Division of responsibilities among sponsors for outreach, training, on-site management, quality control, project evaluation

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## Site Location

- Location should have ample parking and be accessible to public transportation and the disabled
- Large common area needed for waiting area and workstations
- Photocopier is essential
- Kitchen is desirable for providing volunteers with food and drinks

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## Volunteer Recruitment & Role Assignment

- Written confidentiality agreement is recommended
- Roles need to be clearly explained
- Legal immigration experts from nonprofit organizations and law firms are desirable, as well as ESL teachers
- Having a USCIS officer attend is helpful, draws applicants, and promotes good working relationship
- See toolkit for sample recruitment flyers, list of tasks, volunteer application form

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## Training

- Lead sponsoring agency should take responsibility
- Training should be required for all volunteers
- Training can be done on the day of the workshop or earlier (see toolkit for volunteer orientation/training guide & other training resources)
- Written materials should be given
- First-time volunteers should shadow someone with experience for the first one or two applications
- Volunteers should seek on-the-spot consultation from a roving expert during the workshop

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## Outreach

- Outreach promotes citizenship, educates the community on the benefits and requirements
- Outreach is a shared responsibility
- Workshop coordinator continually expands list of outreach contacts and venues
- Outreach flyer should include certain important details, and date of next workshop (see toolkit for sample outreach flyers)

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## Forms, Documents, Materials, & Supplies

- Checklist of items is recommended
- Key USCIS forms: N-400, N-600, N-648
- N-400 attachment sheets recommended
- Disclaimer and waiver of liability recommended (see toolkit for sample waiver of liability)
- Study materials for applicants helpful (see toolkit for information for applicants)
- Key supplies: notepads, pens, pencils, white-out, post-it notes, nametags, mailing envelopes (see report for more details, on pg. 97)

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## The Workshop Event

- Policy needed for late arrivals
- Signs needed for each station
- Checklist of stations helps applicants navigate
- Volunteer sign-in table, to collect their contact information, recommended

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## Overview of Stages of the Workshop Event

1. Registration & Intake
2. Application Assistance
3. Photographs
4. Final Review / Quality Control
5. Application Packaging

(see checklist of stations in toolkit)

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## 1. Registration & Intake

- Pre-registration recommended (see sample registration form in toolkit)
- If high numbers, can assign registrants to morning or afternoon sessions
- Applicants pay fee and receive receipt, number, and application packet

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## Registration & Intake, Cont'd

- Intake involves a simple assessment of English/literacy skills and determination of general eligibility (see sample intake forms in toolkit)
- Applicants then directed to sit in waiting area and wait for their number to be called
- Waiting period can be used for presentations, consultations with USCIS, etc.

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## 2. Application Assistance

- Privacy
- Preparer reviews the intake sheet for verification
- Preparer completes the N-400 (see sample N-400 attachments in toolkit)
- Preparer identifies any “red flags” for the final review or quality control stage
- Expert roams the room to answer any questions that come up

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## 3. Photographs

- Two full-frontal, color photos required
- Volunteer or staff must be familiar with USCIS photo requirements (same as passport requirements – see toolkit for requirements)
- Write applicant’s A-number on reverse side of each photo, in pencil

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## 4. Final Review / Quality Control

- Naturalization expert required (immigration attorney or BIA-accredited representative)
- The expert re-confirms eligibility (including English language skills), reviews the N-400 form, corrects any errors, and makes a determination on any “red flag” issues (see toolkit for QC checklist)
- Applicants are told where to go for help if the need arises, and can ask questions

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## 5. Application Packaging

- N-400, attachments, and green card are photocopied
- Applicant receives a copy of the N-400 for his/her records and sponsoring agency keeps a copy for its records
- Check or money order is filled out
- Application packet is assembled (N-400, copy of green card, photos, and payment – see toolkit for checklist)
- Applicant receives a pre-addressed envelope for mailing
- Certified mail with a return receipt is recommended
- Applicants should be encouraged to contact sponsoring agency when citizenship is granted

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## Workshop Follow-Up

- Make office appointments for applicants with barriers
- Send thank you letters to location host, staff, volunteers, USCIS staff, sponsors, and funders
- Call first-time volunteers to get feedback on their experience and assess their training needs
- Meet with staff and co-sponsors to assess strengths and weaknesses to be addressed for next workshop
- Schedule next training for new volunteers

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## Questions?

Contact Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), 202-635-5820 or [lburdick@cliniclegal.org](mailto:lburdick@cliniclegal.org)

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