



Training for Citizenship Navigators:

Overview of the U.S. Naturalization Process and Citizenship Benefits

September 26, 2016

Agenda

✧ **Impact of Citizenship**

✧ **Citizenship Eligibility Requirements**

✧ **Overview of the Application Process**

✧ **Overview of the USCIS Interview**

✧ **Citizenship Navigator Updates and Requests**

✧ **Questions**

Impact of Citizenship

- ✧ Family Reunification
- ✧ Derivative Citizenship for Children
- ✧ Faster Citizenship for Spouse
- ✧ Full Civic Participation
- ✧ Travel Benefits
- ✧ Public Benefits
- ✧ More Employment and Educational Opportunities
- ✧ Protection from Deportation and Exclusion



Family Reunification

- Sponsor more family members for a Permanent Resident Visa “Green Card”
- Spouses, minor children and parents of adult U.S. citizens are granted green cards without regard to numerical quotas
- Waiting time is shorter for family petitions



Derivative Citizenship for Children



Faster Citizenship for Spouse



Full Civic Participation

✧ Right to Vote, Hold Elected Office, and Serve on a Jury



Travel Benefits

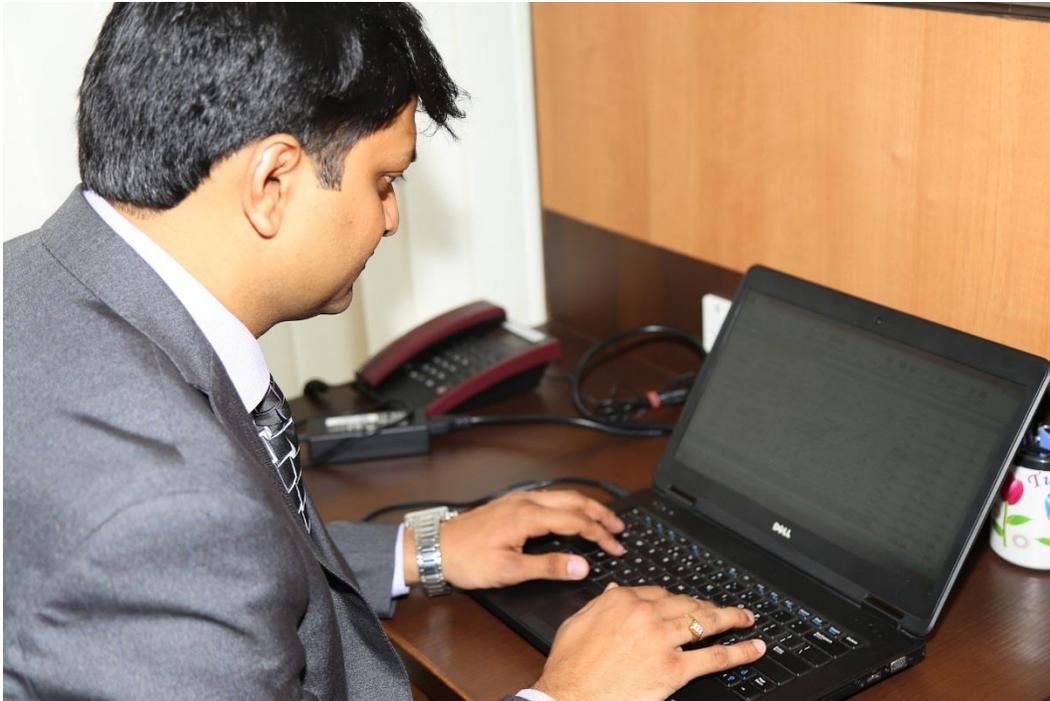
✧ Travel freely and be protected by the U.S. Embassy



Public Benefits



More Employment and Educational Opportunities



Protection from Deportation and Exclusion



Citizenship Eligibility Requirements



Age

✧ A naturalization applicant must be at least 18 years old at the time of filing

Permanent Residence Status and Continuous Residence

- ✧ An applicant must be a lawful permanent resident (“green card holder”) for at least five years or three years if married to a U.S. citizen before applying for naturalization.
- ✧ Must have continuous residence in the U.S. during this period for at least 30 months of the five years preceding the date of filing the application.
- ✧ Long absences from the U.S. may break continuous residence.
- ✧ An applicant must have lived in the state or USCIS district with jurisdiction over the applicant's place of residence for at least 3 months before filing the N-400 application.

English Test

- ✧ An applicant must be able to pass a test on reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English unless qualified for an exemption

U.S. History and Civics Test

✧ An applicant must be able to pass a test on U.S. history and civics.

Testing Exemptions

- ✧ An applicant may qualify for one of several testing exemptions based on age, long-term residence, and disability.
- ✧ An applicant with a certain physical or developmental disability or a mental impairment that make him or her unable to learn can apply for a disability-based waiver of the testing requirements.

Good Moral Character

✧ An applicant must have good moral character (or “GMC”) for five years before applying for naturalization (or three years for the spouses of U.S. citizens).

Selective Service

✧ In general, males must register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday but not after reaching 26 years of age

Oath of Allegiance

- ✧ An applicant must understand and be willing to take an Oath of Allegiance to the U.S.
- ✧ The oath requires applicants to renounce allegiance to any other countries and promise to support and defend the Constitution of the U.S.

Overview of the Application Process



Step 1

- ✧ Complete Form N-400, Application for Naturalization.
- ✧ Get 2 passport-style photos taken.
- ✧ Collect the necessary documents to demonstrate your eligibility for naturalization.
- ✧ Refer to A Guide to Naturalization for more information at www.uscis.gov/natzguide.
- ✧ Review and sign your Form N-400.

Step 2

- ✧ Send in your application, photographs, documents, and fees to USCIS. (Refer to www.uscis.gov/n-400 for filing addresses.)
- ✧ Include Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, if applicable

Step 3

✧ Go to the biometrics appointment, if applicable. You will receive an appointment notice that will include your biometrics appointment date, time, and location.

Step 4

- ✧ Once all the preliminary processes on your case are complete, USCIS will schedule an interview with you to complete the naturalization process.
- ✧ You must report to the USCIS office at the date and time on your appointment notice.

Step 5

✧ Complete the in-person interview at USCIS

Step 6

✧ Receive a decision from USCIS on your Form N-400, Application for Naturalization.

Step 7

✧ Receive a notice to take the Oath of Allegiance.

Step 8

✧ Take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States and receive your Certificate of Naturalization.

Overview of the USCIS Interview



Overview of the USCIS Interview, cont'd

- ✧ During your interview, be prepared to provide corrections, including any new trips overseas, the birth of a child, a new job, etc.
- ✧ The test of your English speaking ability will begin the moment the officer meets you at your interview.
- ✧ Bring your driver's license or state ID, green card, certified marriage and/or divorce decrees for all marriages, passports or travel documents, federal tax returns, proof of registration for selective service.

Sample Interview Questions

- ✧ The officer may talk with you about everyday life. This is called “small talk.” The purpose is to see if you understand basic English.
Examples: How’s the weather outside? Did you have any problems finding parking? Have you been waiting a long time to talk to me today?
- ✧ The officer may ask you a question to see if you understand the reason for your interview.
- ✧ The officer may ask you why you want to become a United States citizen. Do not take this question lightly. Have a serious answer prepared.

Sample History and Civics Questions

- ✧ How many U.S. Senators are there?
- ✧ Where is the Statue of Liberty?
- ✧ What is the capital of the United States?
- ✧ What is the name of the national anthem?
- ✧ Name one problem that led to the Civil War.

Citizenship Navigator Updates

- Please subscribe to the texting campaign!
- Use the hotline if you have questions about citizenship or BIA R&A
- Marketing materials update
- Quarterly Call to occur in October
- Free training on the N-400. Please contact me for the code.



Questions?

Leya Speasmaker

512-635-6138

lspeasmaker@cliniclegal.org

