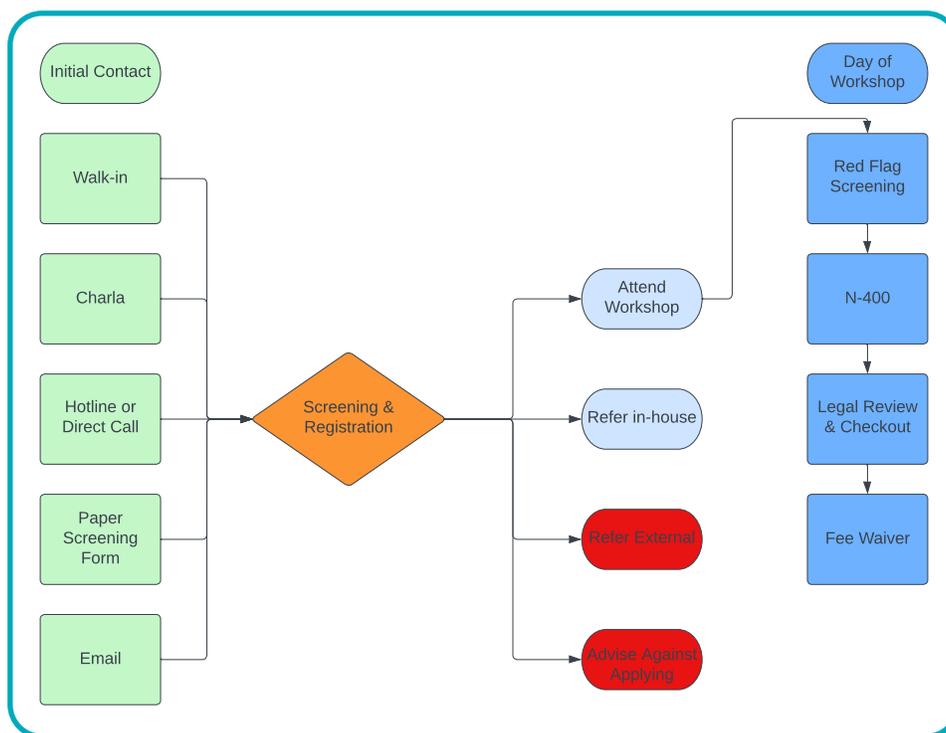


# Description of Catholic Charities of Houston Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Workshop Models

Catholic Charities of Houston, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, has conducted group application workshops for a variety of immigration benefits, including naturalization, DACA, asylum, and Temporary Protected Status. For many years these workshops were in-person events where applicants, volunteers, and Catholic Charities staff would come together to help immigrants complete applications to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, or USCIS.

At the onset of the pandemic, Catholic Charities began serving clients virtually and designing and testing virtual workshop models. As community health conditions began to improve and some community members felt comfortable attending in-person events, Catholic Charities began designing and conducting hybrid workshops, which combined in-person and virtual participation among all participant groups. Below are a series of diagrams for Catholic Charities In-Person, Virtual, and Hybrid models, as used for citizenship workshops. The descriptions provide detail on how each workshop functions and how the models differ.

## In-Person Model



### Initial Contact

All Catholic Charities workshop models emphasize screening individuals for eligibility issues before they attend a workshop. This increases the likelihood that attending applicants will be able to complete their N-400 application on the day of the workshop and maximizes the use of volunteer time.

For in-person workshops, pre-screening requires that Catholic Charities staff and volunteers offer multiple options and opportunities for LPRs to have **initial contact** with the organization and learn about citizenship benefits and upcoming

workshops. Traditionally, the predominant way that applicants would connect with Catholic Charities and be directed towards **screening and registration** for workshops was when they came by the office for consultations, information, or other services. However, Catholic Charities informational hotline is also a significant source of referrals for the workshops. A smaller number of applicants might be directed to screening and registration when given a basic paper **screening form, via email**, or through one-on-one consultations, known as **charlas**.

## Screening & Registration/Referral

Applicants then go through a pre-screening process to determine if they are eligible to apply for citizenship, check for criminal issues or major red flags, and assess applicants' language abilities. If an individual is eligible and appears to have a fairly straightforward case that is suitable for the workshop, Catholic Charities staff will register them and give them information on what they need to bring for the day of the workshop. Applicants are also asked to complete a registration packet with information, such as travel dates and employment and residency history, prior to attending the workshop to help expedite application completion at the workshop. If applicants are eligible but have more complicated cases, they may be **referred in-house** to work with an attorney or accredited representative or may be **referred to an outside attorney**. In cases with criminal or other good moral character issues they may **advise the applicant against applying**.

## Day of Workshop

A typical in-person workshop will begin with an orientation and training for new volunteers. While applicants wait to begin moving through the stations of the workshop they may be asked to begin working on their employment, residency, and travel information from the previous five years.

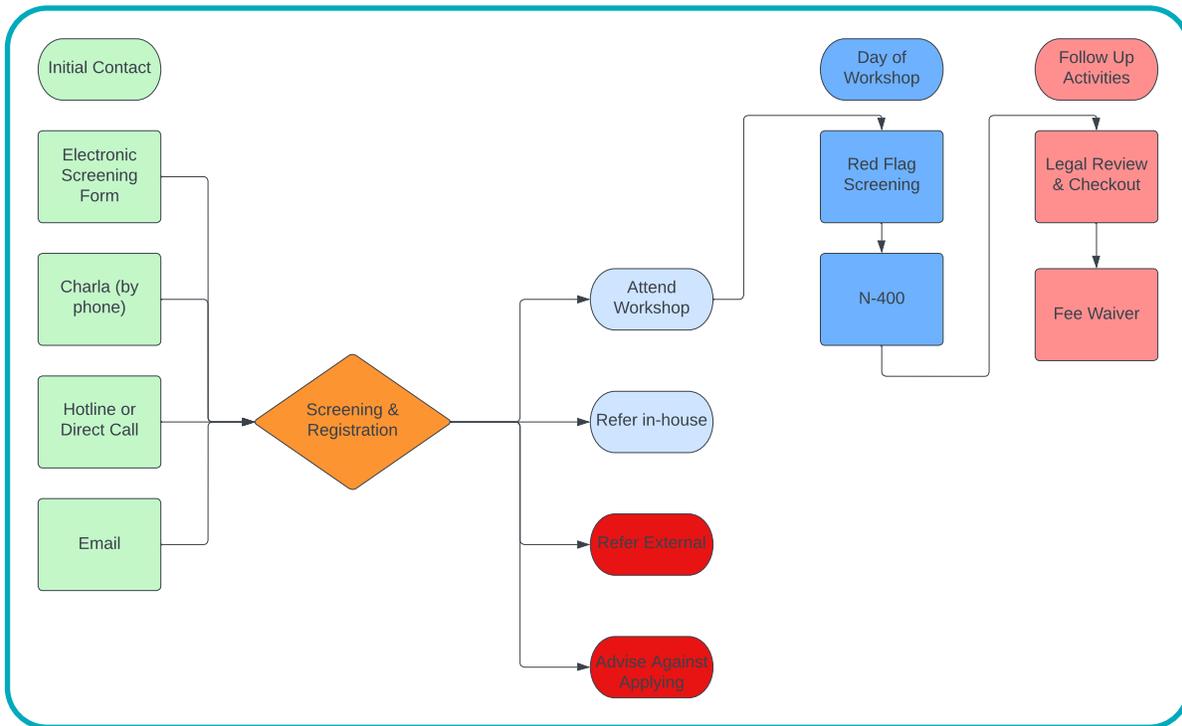
The first station is for **red flag screening**. Here applicants are questioned to determine if there are any significant criminal, good moral character, or other eligibility issues that will make completing the application at the workshop difficult, or which would lead Catholic Charities staff to advise the applicant against applying.

They then proceed to the **N-400** application completion portion of the workshop. Trained volunteers complete a majority of the naturalization application sections with the applicant while maintaining awareness for potential red flag or other eligibility issues. Catholic Charities staff, volunteer attorneys, or accredited representatives are available to answer questions on the application, provide guidance, or help elicit additional important information from the applicant.

The applicant then continues to the **legal review and checkout** stage of the workshop. Here an attorney or accredited representative reviews the application for completeness and makes sure there are no good moral character issues that will complicate the success of the application or put the applicant in jeopardy. Attorneys or accredited representatives typically do not sign G-28 representation agreements as the applicant is applying pro se. The application is finalized, and staff helps to provide copies of supporting documentation and prepare the application to be sent.

The final stage involves the preparation of the full or partial **fee waiver** for qualifying applicants. The application is now completed and packaged and given to the applicant ready for them to mail to USCIS.

# Virtual Model



## Initial Contact

Under Catholic Charities Virtual Model, clients continue to make **initial contact** through **charlas, email**, and the **hotline or phone calls**. However, many applicants also connect through an electronic screening form on Microsoft forms. The form is available in English and Spanish, collects contact information and includes all initial screening questions. It is sent through email and text and has a unique web address and QR code to facilitate access.

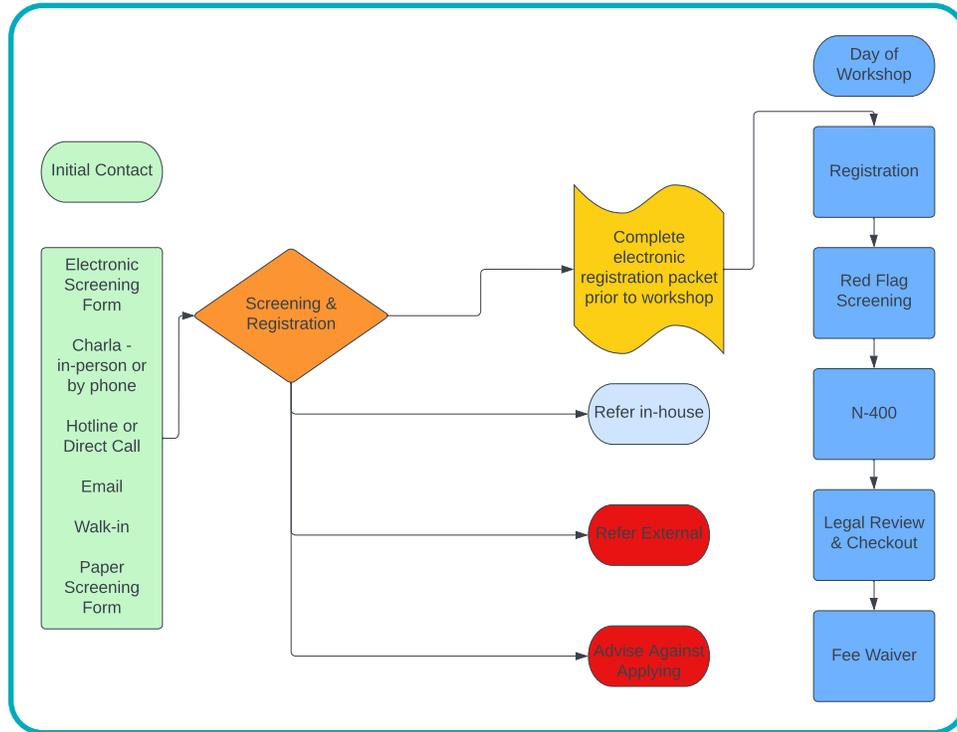
## Screening & Registration/Referral

Applicants that successfully complete the electronic screening form are then sent a registration packet through mail or email. Staff and volunteers follow up with applicants to make sure that packets are completed before the workshop. Staff assign specific appointment timeslots to applicants for the day of the workshop. Applicants that have complex cases are **referred in-house or externally**, or in some cases are **advised not to apply**.

## Day of Workshop/Follow-Up Activities

Volunteers assisting with virtual workshops are trained over Zoom or Microsoft teams, either before the workshop or on the day of the workshop. Applicants begin the workshop with a **red flag screening** and are then paired with a volunteer to complete their **N-400** application. Most applicants work with volunteers over the phone to complete their N-400 application. Catholic Charities legal staff are available throughout the workshop to join the applicant and volunteer via conference call, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams to help answer questions. After the N-400 application is completed, applicants make a follow-up appointment to come in-person to Catholic Charities office. Here the applicant goes through **legal review** and finalization of the application and has the **fee waiver** completed if applicable.

# Hybrid Model



## Initial Contact

Under the hybrid model applicants can have initial contact through an **in-office visit, email, paper screening form, a charla** in-person or by phone, the **hotline**, or the **electronic screening form**. However, Catholic Charities relies heavily on electronic screening form for its hybrid model.

## Screening & Registration/Referral/Completion of Electronic Registration Packet

Applicants that successfully complete a screening form are then given a registration packet, either in-person or sent to them through mail or email. Staff and volunteers then follow up with applicants to make sure that packets are completed before the workshop. Applicants that have complex cases are **referred in-house** or **externally**, or in some cases are **advised not to apply**.

## Day of the Workshop

On day of the workshop an applicant can decide if they want to come in person or attend remotely. Similarly, the workshop includes a mixture of staff and volunteers that participate at the on-site location or remotely. Volunteers are trained simultaneously online and in-person on the day of the workshop. If applicants decide to come in-person, they are given a tablet and will work with a volunteer in person or a volunteer participating remotely.

Catholic Charities Hybrid model features completion of all stages of the workshop on the day of, including **registration, red flag screening, N-400** completion, **legal review & checkout**, and **fee waiver** completion.

Most applications can be finalized on the day of the workshop, with those who attend in person receiving the finalized application packet ready to mail. For applicants who attend remotely, most will make an appointment to come into the office to pick up the finalized packet. However, virtual applicants can also complete virtual review and have their finalized paper application mailed to them or it can be delivered through encrypted email. When emailed, the application is sent as a non-editable PDF to prevent any modification.