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Dear Doctor:

We are assisting your patient in filing for U.S. citizenship. The government has a special medical waiver of the English language and civics requirements of the citizenship exam for those persons who are unable to learn or retain new information due to physical, developmental or mental impairments. Old age and illiteracy alone are not acceptable reasons for a waiver of the language and civics requirements.

We would greatly appreciate your assistance in filling out the attached *Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions* form (Form N-648) for our client, which we must file together with his/her application for naturalization to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to request the medical waiver.

PLEASE NOTE THAT A NEW VERSION OF THE FORM WAS JUST PUBLISHED AND CAN BE USED RIGHT AWAY. IT IS MUCH SHORTER AND MUCH SIMPLER THAN THE PREVIOUS VERSION. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND USING THE NEW VERSION. AS OF 11/21/2022, ONLY THE NEW VERSION OF THE FORM WILL BE ACCEPTED.

I have enclosed here a full copy of the new form, which may also be filled out online at the USCIS website: www.uscis.gov (go to Forms, and type in "N-648" in the space for "Search by content" to access the form). If you do not choose to fill it out online, it is preferable that the form be typed, rather than handwritten. I am also enclosing the instructions to the form, which may be helpful to you.

CHANGES TO THE FORM:

On **Page 2 at Part 3, Question #1 -- Information About Disabilities and Impairments:** This question now asks for both (1) a list of the clinical diagnoses of the applicants' physical, developmental or mental impairments that affect their ability to meet the English and/or civics requirements and (2) an explanation of the connection between each disability/impairment and the inability to meet the requirements.

A number of other questions have been deleted from the old form, including the general description of the disabilities, their cause, dates of diagnosis and onset, date/location of first exam and many more. Also, please note that telehealth exams are now acceptable.

A new section has been added on **Page 3 at Part 4, Question #1: Ability to Understand the Oath of Allegiance.** By taking the Oath of Allegiance, an applicant is confirming his/her loyalty to the United States. USCIS has shown flexibility regarding this issue and has often accepted the applicant's simple communication that he/she chooses the U.S. as his/her new home as demonstrating loyalty. If he/she cannot do so, this may be a barrier in their



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becoming a citizen, as they would have to have a certain designated representative or legal guardian to testify on their behalf. Therefore, in answering this question on the N-648, we urge you to consider the applicant's basic understanding of the concept of loyalty to the U.S. and that answering "No" to this question could cause a big problem for the applicant. I will be glad to clarify this further for you, if you would like.

If after reviewing the form, you do not feel that our client has an impairment or disability that would prevent him/her from learning new information (language and civics), we would appreciate your letting us know. If you feel that a specialist (neurologist, psychologist, etc.) could better make this determination, we would appreciate your making a referral to the specialist for our client.

We greatly appreciate your assistance in filling out this form. Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions about this matter. My email is lalexander@hiaspa.org and my direct phone number is (215) 832-0916.

Thank you so much for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

Lori Alexander
Director of Citizenship and Family Unification Program

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