

# NATURALIZATION PACKET

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Packet Contains:

- When to Get Legal Help Before Applying for Citizenship
- Don't Vote Unless You Are a U.S. Citizen
- Reasons To Become a U.S. Citizen
- How to File a Citizenship Application
- Completing Your Citizenship Application
- Common Questions About Naturalization
- Naturalization and Children
- 100 History & Government Questions & Answers
- The Naturalization Process and People With Disabilities
- The Disability-Based Waiver: Citizenship For People With Disabilities

For more information on naturalization services provided in your area, please contact your local public library.

To obtain a packet in a language other than English, please contact Jessica Conrad at (206) 464-1519 or [jessicac@nwjustice.org](mailto:jessicac@nwjustice.org).



## WHEN TO GET LEGAL HELP BEFORE APPLYING FOR CITIZENSHIP

If any of the following are true for you, get legal advice from an immigration attorney **BEFORE** you apply for citizenship.

- **TRAVEL FOR 6 MONTHS.** You have been **out of the U.S.** for more than 6 months at a time since getting your green card.
- **MOVED FROM U.S.** You have moved to another country since getting your green card.
- **CRIMES.** You have been arrested, convicted or have admitted committing any crime, including misdemeanors, any drug crime, drunk driving, robbery, bigamy, or prostitution.
- **DEPORTATION.** You have or had a deportation or exclusion order against you.
- **TAXES.** You have not paid your taxes or paid them as a non-resident.
- **CHILD SUPPORT.** You have not paid child support you were ordered to pay.
- **SELECTIVE SERVICE.** You are a male, born after 1960, who lived in the U.S. while you were between the ages of 18 and 26 and did not register for military service.
- **PROBATION.** You are on probation or parole due to a criminal conviction.
- **INS INFORMATION.** The information on your citizenship application is different from the information you gave the INS to get your green card.
- **ILLEGAL ENTRY.** You have helped someone, even your child, parent or spouse, enter the U.S. illegally.
- **FALSE DOCUMENTS.** You have been accused of using false documents
- **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.** You have been accused or charged with committing domestic violence, abuse or neglect of a child.



## **DON'T VOTE UNLESS YOU ARE A U.S. CITIZEN**

Amelia has her green card. When she got her driver's license, she was told that she could register to vote even though she was not a citizen. She registered to vote. In November, she voted in the election. Later that year she applied for citizenship. At her citizenship interview, the INS officer asked if she had voted. She said yes. Because of harsh changes in the immigration laws, her application for citizenship was denied and she was put into deportation proceedings.

- **Who can vote in the U.S.?**  
Only citizens can vote in Federal, State and most local elections. Lawful Permanent Residents (green card holders) are not eligible to vote until they become naturalized U.S. citizens.
- **Who can register to vote in the U.S.?**  
Only U.S. citizens can register to vote. This means that you should not vote if you are not a U.S. citizen, even if someone tells you that you can.
- **What can the INS do if I am not a citizen and I voted in the U.S.?**  
The INS can deny your application for citizenship and may even seek to deport you.
- **What should I do if I am not a U.S. citizen and I registered to vote?**  
Remove your name from the list of registered voters. Send a letter to your County Auditor's Office that says "Please cancel my voter registration."
- **What should I do if I am not a U.S. citizen and I voted in the U.S.?**  
See an immigration attorney. Do not apply for citizenship before you speak with an attorney.



## REASONS TO BECOME A U.S. CITIZEN

1. **PUBLIC BENEFITS.** All citizens are eligible for the full range of public benefits. Some non-citizen immigrants are not eligible for some benefits, so becoming a citizen protects your eligibility for these programs.
2. **BRING FAMILY TO THE U.S.** Citizens can apply for more family members to immigrate than those with green cards, and often those relatives can immigrate much more quickly.
3. **CITIZENSHIP FOR CHILDREN.** Children under age 18 can become citizens if their parents become citizens.
4. **VOTE.** Citizenship increases your voice in public processes. Citizens may vote in elections, serve on juries and be elected to public office.
5. **TRAVEL.** Citizens may travel abroad without worrying about re-entry permits or about losing legal status.
6. **NO DEPORTATION.** Citizens may **not** be deported. Green card holders who commit a crime and leave the U.S. may be denied reentry to the U.S. or may be deportable.
7. **PAPERWORK.** Citizenship is permanent. Citizens do not have to renew their lawful status as citizens.
8. **GOVERNMENT JOBS.** Citizens are eligible to work for the federal government and to apply for certain state jobs.
9. **GUN OWNERSHIP.** It is illegal for most non-citizens to own guns.

**IMPORTANT: Before you apply for citizenship, read our other sheets:**

- **When to Get Legal Help Before Applying for Citizenship**
- **Don't Vote Unless You Are a U.S. Citizen**



# HOW TO FILE A CITIZENSHIP APPLICATION

**IMPORTANT:** Before you apply for citizenship, read our other sheets:

- When to Get Legal Help Before Applying for Citizenship
- Don't Vote Unless You Are a U.S. Citizen

**GET THE APPLICATION.** You need INS Form N-400. You can get the form at the INS office, by calling 1-800-870-3676 and ordering a form or may print the form from the INS website at [www.ins.usdoj.gov/](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/).

**COMPLETE THE APPLICATION.** Answer all questions truthfully. Attach a copy of both sides of your green card and two identical 2" by 2" photographs of yourself.

**FEES.** The application fee is \$260. An additional fee of \$50 is charged for fingerprinting, for a total of \$310. Applicants over age 75 are not fingerprinted and are not charged the fingerprinting fee. Include a check or money order for the correct amount made payable to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. If you receive food stamps, SSI, or other public benefits, you may be able to have this fee paid by some community organizations that assist naturalization applicants. If you cannot afford the fee but do not receive public benefits, you can apply to the INS for a waiver of the fee. Ask your INS office for a fee waiver form.

**SUBMIT THE APPLICATION.** Do not take the application to the INS office. **KEEP A COPY OF EVERYTHING YOU SEND.** Mail the packet (application, copy of green card, photos and check or money order) by **CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT**, to:

USINS Nebraska Service Center  
Attention: N-400 Unit  
P.O. Box 87400  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-7400

**FINGERPRINTING.** Several months after you submit your application, the INS will send you a notice for a fingerprint appointment. Fingerprints are taken at special INS facilities called Application Support Centers (ASC). Normally, INS gives you a one-week period of time during which you may go to the ASC for fingerprinting. INS also notes "make-up" days on the notice if you are unable to attend during your scheduled week. If you live far from the ASC or are unable to travel to the ASC, you may have your fingerprints taken by a mobile ASC unit. If you are over age 75, you will not be fingerprinted.

**INTERVIEW.** Several months after you have been fingerprinted, you will receive a notice from the INS instructing you to go to your INS office for your naturalization interview. Review your application, as the INS officer will ask you to confirm the information you submitted. You will be asked to prove your knowledge of English and U.S. government by answering a series of questions. If you do not pass the English and/or government tests, you will be given a second interview date. Seek legal help if you are unable to pass the tests due to a mental or physical disability. For more information on disability waivers, see "The Naturalization Process and People with Disabilities" and "The Disability Waiver: Citizenship for People with Disabilities."



# COMPLETING YOUR CITIZENSHIP APPLICATION

**IMPORTANT:** Before you apply for citizenship, read our other sheets:

- When to Get Legal Help Before Applying for Citizenship
- Don't Vote Unless You Are a U.S. Citizen

**You will need the following information to complete your citizenship application:**

- **GREEN CARD.** (I-551 or I-151).
- **DATES OF TRAVEL.** Dates of all trips you took outside of the U.S. since becoming a permanent resident
- **RESIDENCES.** Addresses of places you lived during the past 5 years
- **EMPLOYERS.** List of employers you had during the past 5 years. Include the name of the company, the address, the dates of your employment and the positions you held.
- **SPOUSE.** Information about your spouse, even if your spouse is not a legal permanent resident. Include your spouse's name, address, date of birth, date and place of marriage, Social Security number and alien number (if applicable). If your spouse is a naturalized citizen, you will need the place and date of naturalization. You must provide this information, even if your spouse is not a legal resident.
- **PAST MARRIAGES.** If you have been married before or if your present spouse has been married before, you will need to report the name of the prior spouse, the date of the marriage, the date the marriage ended, how the marriage ended and the current immigration status of the prior spouse.
- **CHILDREN.** Information about ALL of your children, including those who are deceased. List all children from previous relationships or marriages and including any children who do not live in the U.S. Include their names, dates and places of birth, current residence and alien number, if applicable.
- **POLICE RECORDS.** If you were arrested for any reason, including misdemeanors and drunk driving, you need the dates of arrest, charges and copy of the court ruling for each offense. **If you have been convicted of ANY crime, seek legal help from an immigration attorney BEFORE applying for citizenship.**

- **SELECTIVE SERVICE NUMBER.** Males born after 1960 who lived in the U.S. between the ages of 18 and 26 should have registered for military service. If you did not register, seek legal help before applying for citizenship. Call 1-888- to confirm your registration.

**Include the following with your application:**

- Completed application, INS Form N-400
- A photocopy of both sides of your green card
- Two identical 2" x 2" photos of yourself
- A check or money order for \$310 (\$260 plus \$50 for fingerprints), made payable to the INS





## **SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT NATURALIZATION**

### **What are the requirements for naturalization?**

The basic requirements are that you:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Have been a legal permanent resident for at least the last five years (or three years, if married to a U.S. citizen). You'll need a "green card:" an I-551 or I-151.
- Have been present in the U.S. for 2-1/2 of the past five years (or 1-1/2 of the past three, if married to a U.S. citizen), and haven't been outside the U.S. for one year or more within the last five years (or three years, if married to a U.S. citizen)
- Be able to speak, read and write ordinary English (some exceptions are discussed below)
- Be able to pass a U.S. history and government exam (some exceptions are discussed below)
- Be a person of "good moral character" (This will be difficult to establish if you have failed to pay child support, taxes, or have been convicted of certain crimes, among other things)
- Take an oath of loyalty to the U.S.

### **What is the process?**

To apply for naturalization, you'll need to submit a Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, a photocopy of both sides of your green card, two immigration-style photos and a check or money order for \$310 (\$260 plus \$50 for fingerprints) to the following address: US BCIS Nebraska Service Center, Attn: N-400 Unit, PO Box 87400, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-7400. It is a good idea to send any documents to the BCIS (formerly INS) by certified mail. After you submit your application, BCIS will send you a written notice scheduling you for fingerprints. Several months later, you will be notified by the BCIS about your interview date. At the interview you will be questioned about the information on your application, and tested for English ability and knowledge of U.S. history and government. If the application is approved, BCIS will schedule you to appear at a swearing in ceremony and get your certificate of naturalization.

### **What if I can't pay the fee?**

You can send BCIS a request for a fee waiver with your application. You must show proof that you are low-income (for example, a copy of your SSI check or TANF grant). Also, many community agencies can pay the fee for you if you are currently receiving SSI, GAU or food stamps.

## **Do I need to be fluent in English?**

You don't need to be fluent. You should, however, be able to answer questions about your application in English at the interview, and answer the U.S. history and government questions in English. The interviewer will dictate an English sentence to you, which you need to be able to read and write in English.

## **Am I exempt from the English and Civics Requirements?**

You may be exempted from the English requirement, and have the interview and examination conducted in your own language, if you are over **50** years old and have been a legal permanent resident for at least **20** years, or if you are over **55** years old and have been a legal permanent resident for at least **15** years by the date of your application. If you are exempt from the English requirement you may bring an interpreter to the interview, who may not be a relative. Some people may also be exempted because of certain disabilities - physical or mental - which keep them from learning or being tested on English language or Civics. These applicants must have their disability properly documented by a medical professional trained to evaluate that type of disability, and submit this documentation, on BCIS form N-648, with the naturalization application, N-400. Applicants who qualify under the Hmong Veterans Act and who apply before the applicable deadline (May 26, 2003 for veterans and their spouses and November 1, 2003 for widows of veterans) also are exempt from the English requirement. In addition, if you are over 65 and have been a lawful permanent resident for at least 20 years, or you qualify under the Hmong Veterans Act and apply by the deadline, you will be able to take a shorter Civics test.

## **Are the requirements the same for refugees and asylees?**

The basic requirements are the same, although refugees and asylees are entitled to a special residence rule when applying to naturalize. Refugees are not eligible for lawful permanent resident (LPR) status until they have been in the U.S. for a year, and asylees cannot apply for LPR status until one year after their asylum applications have been approved. Under **rollback**, refugees can start counting the five years required for citizenship from the date they arrived in the U.S., rather than the date they obtained LPR status, and asylees can start counting from one year before their applications for LPR were approved.

## **How do I learn about history and government?**

Many community colleges and a number of community-based organizations offer citizenship courses that will teach what you need to know for the exam. The BCIS examiner must choose 16-20 questions from a list of 100 standard ones. This list of questions, and their answers, is available for review. Under the law, persons who are over 65 and have been a lawful permanent resident of the U.S. for more than 20 years are entitled to be asked 10 questions out of a list of 25, rather than 20 selected from 100. A list of these 25 questions is also available. If you do not pass the history and government exam at your first interview, you may be re-examined once within 90 days without having to file a new application.

## **Can I take the history and government test before my interview with BCIS?**

In the past, applicants for naturalization could take the history and government test in one of two ways: at the interview with the BCIS, or before the interview at certain independent testing agencies approved by the BCIS. Since 1998, however, the test is only available at your naturalization interview with BCIS.

### **Does being on welfare or receiving SSI make me ineligible to naturalize?**

**NO!** Receiving public benefits is not, in and of itself, a bar to naturalization. Your receipt of public assistance will only get in the way of naturalizing if it is discovered that you received them through some kind of fraud, for instance, by failing to disclose all of your assets while you were receiving benefits.

### **Do I risk anything by applying for naturalization?**

If you become a U.S. citizen, you may have to give up citizenship in your native country. Dual citizenship is allowed by many countries, however. Some countries will not allow ownership of property by non-citizens, so if you must give up citizenship, you may also have to give up property rights in your native country.

***You may also risk deportation by applying to naturalize.*** Even if you have a green card, the BCIS may determine that you are deportable, or were excludable the last time you entered the U.S., if it is discovered that you have been convicted of certain crimes, have been out of the U.S. for too long, helped someone enter the U.S. illegally, made fraudulent statements to receive public assistance or immigration benefits, among other reasons. ***Because of this risk, it is very important that you have help from a person knowledgeable about these issues in evaluating your eligibility before you apply.***

### **Do my children become citizens when I do?**

A new law in February of 2001 provides that children who are under 18 automatically derive citizenship when one parent naturalizes, as long as the children are LPR's and are in the legal and physical custody of the naturalizing parent. If you naturalized before the new law, your children under 18 became U.S. citizens on the date the law took effect: February 27, 2001

This material provides general information only and is current only as of the date it is written. To receive information on how this material may apply to a specific situation, you may wish to consult an immigration expert. Northwest Immigrant Rights Project can provide information and legal assistance with immigration issues to persons of low income. For more information, call Kristen Kussmann at (206) 587 4009, or (800) 445 5771.

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## Naturalization and Children

**Q: *I'm a lawful permanent resident in the process of becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen. Will my children become U.S. citizens when I naturalize?***

**A:** Your children under 18 years of age may automatically derive citizenship upon your naturalization – provided that you have listed them on your Form N-400 and that **one** of the following conditions is met:

- the child's other parent is already a U.S. citizen, **or**
- the child's other parent is naturalizing at the same time, **or**
- the child's other parent is deceased, **or**
- you and the child's other parent are legally separated and you have custody, **or**
- in some cases, if you are the mother and the child was born out of wedlock.

**Q: *If my child does automatically derive citizenship when I naturalize, do I have to file any special papers with the Immigration and Naturalization Service?***

**A:** No. Since the child automatically derives citizenship it is not necessary to submit any special paperwork or for the child to be interviewed or sworn in. However, it is a good idea to obtain some proof of the child's citizenship. You can do this by applying for a passport at a U.S. Passport Agency or by submitting an N-600 application for a certificate of citizenship to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

**Q: *Does my child have to be legally present in the U.S. in order to automatically derive citizenship when I naturalize?***

**A:** Your child does not have to be legally present in the U.S. at the time of your naturalization, but he or she must begin to reside in the U.S. as a lawful permanent resident while under the age of 18 in order to derive citizenship from you. If your child is not legally present in the U.S., speak to an immigration attorney about either filing a family visa petition or about the possibility of applying for your child to naturalize through a special provision for children outside of the U.S.

**Q: *I just became a U.S. citizen, but my spouse isn't ready to apply yet. Do my children have to wait for him to naturalize or until they turn 18 before they can become citizens?***

A: Not necessarily. You may be able to apply for your children to naturalize under a special provision for children who do not automatically derive citizenship when their parents naturalize. Under this provision, the child is exempted from many of the requirements for citizenship, including the residency and literacy requirements. In order to find out whether your child is eligible to naturalize under this provision, speak with an immigration attorney.

**Q: *I'm applying for naturalization and one of my children is going to turn 18 soon. Is there any way to have my application expedited?***

A: You can ask the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to expedite your application. However, due to the large number of applications the INS receives, you should not count on their being able to process your application quickly. Whenever possible, you should submit your naturalization application well in advance of your child's eighteenth birthday.

**Q: *I'm a U.S. citizen and I have a child who was born in another country. Is my child a U.S. citizen?***

A: It is possible that your child acquired citizenship from you, even if he or she was born in another country. The answer will depend on several factors, including: the child's date of birth, whether you or the child's other parent were a citizen at the time of the child's birth, and the periods of time that you or the child's other parent resided in the U.S. prior to the child's birth. In order to find out whether your child acquired U.S. citizenship from you, speak with an immigration attorney.

**Q: *Neither my spouse nor I have legal immigration status in the U.S., but our children were born here. Are they U.S. citizens?***

A: Under the U.S. constitution, all persons born in the U.S. and subject to its jurisdiction are U.S. citizens at birth (with the exception of children of certain diplomats.) Your U.S. citizen children may be able to help you obtain legal immigration status, but you may have to wait. Only U.S. citizens who are 21 years of age or older may petition for their parents to obtain lawful permanent residence.

Prepared by Northwest Immigrant Rights Project and Northwest Justice Project, updated February 2000.

## 100 History & Government Questions & Answers

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Q: What are the colors of our Flag?

A: Red, White and Blue

Q: How many stars are there in our flag?

A: 50

Q: What color are the stars on our flag?

A: White

Q: What do the stars on the flag mean?

A: One for each state in the union.

Q: How many strips are there in the flag?

A: 13

Q: What color are the stripes?

A: Red and White

Q: How many states are there in the union?

A: 50

Q: What is the 4th of July?

A: Independence Day

Q: What is the date of Independence Day?

A: July 4th

Q: Independence from whom?

A: England

Q: What country did we fight during the Revolutionary War?

A: England

Q: Who was the first President of the United States?

A: George Washington

Q: Who is the President of the United States today?

A: George W. Bush

Q: Who is the Vice President of the United States today?

A: Dick Cheney

Q: Who elects the President of the United States?

A: The Electoral College

Q: Who becomes President of the United States if the President should die?

A: Vice President

Q: For how long do we elect the President?

A: 4 years

Q: What is the Constitution?

A: The supreme law of the land

Q: Can the Constitution be changed?

A: Yes

Q: What do we call a change to the Constitution?

A: Amendment

Q: How many changes or amendments are there to the U.S. Constitution?

A: 27

Q: How many branches are there in our government?

A: 3

Q: What are the 3 branches of government?

A: Legislative, Executive and the Judiciary

Q: What is the legislative branch of our government?

A: Congress

Q: Who makes the laws in the United States?

A: Congress

Q: What is Congress?

A: The Senate and the House of Representatives

Q: What are the duties of Congress?

A: To make laws

Q: Who elects Congress?

A: The people

Q: How many senators are there in Congress?

A: 100

Q: Can you name the 2 senators from your state?

A: Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell (Washington state)

Q: For how long do we elect each senator?

A: 6 years

Q: How many representatives are there in Congress?

A: 435

Q: For how long do we elect the representatives?

A: 2 years

Q: What is the executive branch of our government?

A: The President, the Cabinet, and departments under the cabinet members

Q: What is the judiciary branch of our government?

A: The Supreme Court

Q: What are the duties of the Supreme Court?

A: to interpret laws

Q: What is the supreme law of the United States?

A: The Constitution

Q: What is the Bill of Rights?

A: The first 10 Amendments of the Constitution

Q: What is the capital of your state?

A: Olympia (Washington state)

Q: Who is the current Governor of your state?

A: Gary Locke (Washington state)

Q: Who becomes President of the USA if the President and the Vice President should die?

A: Speaker of the House of Representatives

Q: Who is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

A: William Rehnquist

Q: Can you name the 13 original states?

A: Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Rhode Island and Maryland

Q: Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death"?

A: Patrick Henry

Q: Which countries were our enemies during World War II?

A: Germany, Italy and Japan

Q: What are the 49th and 50th states of the union?

A: Hawaii and Alaska

Q: How many terms can a president serve?

A: 2



Q: Who was Martin Luther King, Jr.?

A: A civil rights leader

Q: Who is the head of your local government?

A: insert local information

Q: According to the Constitution, a person must meet certain requirements in order to become president. Name one of these requirements.

A: must be a natural born citizen of the United States, must be at least 35 years old by the time s/he will serve, must have lived in the USA for at least 14 years

Q: Why are there 100 senators in the Senate?

A: 2 from each state in the union

Q: Who selects the Supreme Court Justices?

A: Appointed by the President

Q: How many Supreme Court Justices are there?

A: 9

Q: Why did the pilgrims come to America?

A: for religious freedom

Q: What is the head executive of a state government called?

A: Governor

Q: What is the head executive of the city government called?

A: Mayor

Q: What holiday was celebrated for the first time by the American colonists?

A: Thanksgiving

Q: Who was the main writer of the Declaration of Independence?

A: Thomas Jefferson

Q: When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

A: July 4, 1776

Q: What is the basic belief of the Declaration of Independence?

A: That all men are created equal

Q: What is the national anthem of the United States?

A: The Star Spangled Banner

Q: Who wrote the Star Spangled Banner?

A: Francis Scott Key

Q: Where does freedom of speech come from?

A: The Bill of Rights

Q: What is the minimum voting age in the United States?

A: 18

Q: Who signs the bill into law?

A: The President

Q: What is the highest court in the United States?

A: The Supreme Court

Q: Who was the president during the Civil War?

A: Abraham Lincoln

Q: What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

A: Freed many slaves

Q: What special group advises the President?

A: The Cabinet

Q: Which president is called the father of our country?

A: George Washington

Q: What Immigration and Naturalization Service form is used to apply to become a naturalized citizen?

A: Form N-400 "Application to File Petition for Naturalization"

Q: Who helped the pilgrims in America?

A: The American Indians (Native Americans)

Q: What is the name of the ship that brought the pilgrims to America?

A: The Mayflower

Q: What were the 13 original states of the United States called?

A: Colonies

Q: Name 3 rights or freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of Rights?

A: a) the right of freedom of speech, press, religion, peaceable assembly and requesting change of government; b) the right to bear arms (the right to have weapons or own a gun, though subject to certain regulations); c) the government may not quarter, or house, soldiers in the people's homes during peacetime without the people's consent; d) the government may not search or take a person's property without a warrant; e) a person may not be tried twice for the same crime and does not have to testify against himself; f) a person charged with a crime still has some rights, such as the right to a trial and to have a lawyer; g) the right to trial by jury in most cases; h) protects people against excessive or unreasonable fines or cruel and unusual punishment; i) the people have rights other than mentioned in the Constitution; j) any power not given to the Federal Government by the Constitution is a power of either the state or the people.

Q: Who has the power to declare war?

A: The Congress

Q: What kind of government does the United States have?

A: Republican

Q: Which president freed the slaves?

A: Abraham Lincoln

Q: In what year was the Constitution written?

A: 1787

Q: What are the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution called?

A: The Bill of Rights

Q: Name one purpose of the United Nations?

A: for countries to discuss and try to resolve world problems; to provide economic aid to many countries.

Q: Where does Congress meet?

A: In the capital in Washington, D.C.

Q: Whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?

A: Everyone (citizens and non-citizens living in the U.S.)

Q: What is the introduction to the Constitution called?

A: The Preamble

Q: Name one benefit of being a citizen of the United States?

A: obtain federal government jobs; travel with a U.S. passport; petition for close relatives to come to the U.S. to live.

Q: What is the most important right granted to U.S. citizens?

A: The right to vote

Q: What is the United States capitol?

A: A place where Congress meets

Q: What is the White House?

A: The President's official home

Q: Where is the White House located?

A: Washington, D.C. (1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.)

Q: What is the name of the President's official home?

A: The White House

Q: Name one right guaranteed by the First Amendment?

A: freedom of speech, press, religion, peaceable assembly, and requesting change of the government.

Q: Who is the Commander in Chief of the U.S. military?

A: The President

Q: Which president was the first Commander in Chief of the U.S. Military?

A: George Washington

Q: In what month do we vote for the president?

A: November

Q: In what month is the new president inaugurated? A: January

Q: How many times may a senator be re-elected?

A: there is no limit

Q: How many times may a congressman be re-elected?

A: there is no limit

Q: What are the 2 major political parties in the U.S. today?

A: Democratic and Republican

Q: How many states are there in the United States?

A: 50



## The Naturalization Process and People With Disabilities

Before you become a U.S. citizen, you will have an interview with the INS. At the interview, the INS will ask you to speak, read and write basic English and answer questions about U.S. history and government. If you are disabled, the INS can help you with your interview in 2 ways.

### **ACCOMMODATION**

“Accommodation” is for people with disabilities who can speak some English and/or answer some or all of the history and government questions. The INS can help by:

- allowing you to use a sign language interpreter if you are deaf
- giving you extra time to answer the history or government questions
- giving the interview in a wheelchair accessible room

There are many other ways the INS can help you. To get accommodation from the INS, a letter from your doctor may be useful in explaining what kind of help you need. Give the letter to the INS when you apply for citizenship and again at your interview. Get an advocate at a community group or legal services office to help you!

### **DISABILITY- BASED WAIVERS**

If, because of your disability, you can't learn English and/or any of the history and government questions, you can ask INS for a waiver from these requirements. People have received waivers for disabilities like strokes, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Alzheimer's. If INS grants you the waiver, you won't have to know English or history or government questions. To get a disability-based waiver, you must have your doctor fill out Form N-648. The doctor must explain why you can't learn English or history and government. Disability-based waivers are difficult to get. You or your doctor should consult with an attorney so the form is completed satisfactorily. Give the form to the INS when you apply for citizenship.

**IMPORTANT:** Before you apply for citizenship, read our other sheets:

- **When to Get Legal Help Before Applying for Citizenship**
- **Don't Vote Unless You Are a U.S. Citizen**



**Aid for Immigrants**  
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# **The Disability-Based Waiver: Citizenship for People With Disabilities**

## **What is the Disability-Based Waiver?**

To become a citizen of the U.S., most applicants must show the INS that they speak, understand and write basic English. Applicants also must pass a test in U.S. government and history. If you have a disability that makes you unable to learn or remember new information like English and history, you can apply for a Disability Waiver. If the Waiver is granted, you will not be required to speak English or take the history tests and can still become U.S. citizen.

## **Who can get a Waiver?**

The Waiver is very difficult to get. It is ONLY for people with disabilities that make them unable to learn or remember new information. It is NOT for people who just have a hard time learning English or memorizing the history questions.

## **What kind of disabilities qualify for the Waiver?**

Examples of the kinds of disabilities that qualify include: stroke, Alzheimer's, severe mental illnesses like depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, learning disabilities.

## **How do I apply for a Waiver?**

You must ask your doctor to complete INS Form N-648. On the form, the doctor explains what kind of disability you have and how it makes you unable to learn or remember new information. You submit this form with your application for citizenship, INS Form N-400, or bring it to your interview. Seek help from a community organization or legal services office to prepare your application and accompany you to your citizenship interview.

## **How does INS decide if I get a Waiver?**

At your citizenship interview, the INS officer will review your doctor's Form N-648. If your doctor's statement describes your disability, explains clearly how it keeps you from learning, and contains all information required by INS, the examiner should approve the waiver. You will be allowed to have your interview in your native language and will not have to take the history test. If the officer is not satisfied with the doctor's statement, she will not approve the waiver. She may ask you to get more information and return for a second interview, or she may conduct the interview in English and ask you to take the history test.

## **INS did not approve my Waiver. What should I do?**

Get help from a community organization or legal services office. They can review your application and determine if additional information could improve your application.

## **If I apply for a Waiver, do I have to take the Oath of Citizenship?**

Yes. Every adult must understand and take the oath to become a citizen. If the INS officer finds that you do not understand that you are applying for citizenship, she will not approve your application and you cannot become a citizen.

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