From application to swearing-in and beyond

Naturalization Guide

Your Path to Naturalization
From application to swearing-in and beyond
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MESSAGE FROM ALLAN WERNICK

READ ME FIRST

A. STEPS ON THE PATH TO NATURALIZATION

B. BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

C. DUAL CITIZENSHIP

D. REQUESTING A FEE WAIVER OR REDUCED FEE FOR YOUR APPLICATION

E. SUBMITTING YOUR FORM N-400 APPLICATION

F. AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION: NEXT STEPS

G. YOU ARE NOW A U.S. CITIZEN

H. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

I. STUDY MATERIALS
Dear Participants,

CUNY Citizenship Now! prepared this Naturalization Guide to give legal permanent residents an overview of the laws and procedures they need to know to become a U.S. citizen. Besides advice on naturalizing, the Guide offers information on how to find low-cost Civics and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and authorized immigration services providers.

We hope you find the Guide useful to you in your quest to become a U.S. citizen. If you have any concerns, let us know.

We are here to help.

Cordially,

Allan Wernick, Esq.
Director, CUNY Citizenship Now!
READ ME FIRST!

There are many things to consider before submitting your application for United States citizenship. The list below reflects some of the issues that could prevent you from naturalizing. This guide contains detailed information about each of the warnings in the list below. Be sure to speak with an authorized immigration law expert if:

- **One of your parents became a U.S. citizen before you turned 18 years old.** You may already be a U.S. citizen.

- Since becoming a permanent resident, **you have spent a lot of time outside of the United States**, especially if trips lasted more than six months.

- Since becoming a permanent resident, **you failed to file an income tax return when required to do so**.

- You have ever **failed to pay spouse or child support**.

- You have ever **lied** to government officials, immigration officers, or officers at a consulate abroad.

- You **married someone only to get your green card**.

- You are a male who lived in the United States at any time between your 18th and 26th birthdays and **did not register with the Selective Service**.

- You have ever been **arrested or had any contact** with law enforcement.
A. STEPS ON THE PATH TO NATURALIZATION
Naturalization is the process where a person born outside the United States voluntarily becomes a U.S. citizen. There are five basic steps to becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen:

1. Meet eligibility requirements
2. Complete and file Form N-400
3. Have fingerprints taken
4. Pass interview and citizenship test
5. Attend a swearing-in ceremony

Citizenship Now! can help determine if you meet the eligibility requirements and can assist you with completing your application. We can also help you complete a fee waiver application if you qualify.

This guide also contains information about the next steps after we assist you with preparing your application, such as materials to help you prepare for the interview and to study for the civics test.
THE PATH TO U.S. CITIZENSHIP

1. MAKE SURE YOU ARE ELIGIBLE

2. COMPLETE AND MAIL YOUR APPLICATION

3. USCIS SENDS YOU AN I-797C* NOTICE OF ACTION

4. USCIS SENDS YOU A "BIOMETRICS APPOINTMENT"

5. HAVE YOUR FINGERPRINTS AND PHOTO TAKEN

6. USCIS SENDS YOU A DATE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW AND A LIST OF WHAT TO BRING

7. YOU ATTEND YOUR INTERVIEW

8. USCIS SENDS YOU THE INTERVIEW RESULTS AND, IF YOU PASSED, A NOTICE FOR THE OATH CEREMONY

9. YOU ATTEND THE OATH CEREMONY

Congratulations, you are a U.S. Citizen!

*You will find these numbers on the upper right side of the documents you receive from USCIS. The steps shown here are for applications submitted by mail.
B. BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
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To Naturalize You Must:

1. Be a **lawful permanent resident (LPR)**

2. Be at least **18** at the time you file your application

3. Meet the **continuous residence** and **physical presence** requirements

4. Have lived for **at least three months** in the State or USCIS District where you will file your application*

5. Speak and write **basic English**

6. Be a **person of good moral character**

7. Pass a **test of U.S. History and Government** (Civics)

8. Be willing to **take the oath of allegiance**

* Students may apply for naturalization either where they go to school or where their family lives, if they are still **financially dependent on their parents**.

1. Continuous Residence Requirement

You must show you have continuously resided in the United States as a lawful permanent resident for at least five years before naturalizing. If you are married to a U.S. citizen, you can naturalize three years after becoming a permanent resident if you have been married to and living with the same U.S. citizen for the entire three-year period. Your spouse must have been a U.S. citizen for the three-year period as well. (Special rules apply to active military members and some veterans.)
Continuous residence does not mean you must have been in the United States without ever leaving during that time. It means that during the five or three-year period all of the following were true:

- You did not abandon your permanent resident status.
- You maintained your primary place of residence in the United States.
- You did not stay outside of the United States for one continuous year (365 consecutive days) or more. An absence of one year in most cases automatically breaks continuous residence.

2. Physical Presence Requirement

You must be physically present in the United States for half of the five or three-year period before applying to become a citizen. You will need to list your trips outside the country and count the total number of days you have spent outside the United States during the five or three-year window. That means the total number of days you spent outside the United States cannot be more than 913 days in the last five years (or 548 days in the last three years). There are some exceptions.

3. Good Moral Character Requirement

To naturalize, you must prove that you are a person of good moral character. If you have a criminal record, failed to pay required spouse or child support, have had problems with drugs or alcohol, been involved in illegal gambling or prostitution, failed to pay your taxes, willfully failed to register with the Selective Service, or have lied to immigration officials to gain immigration benefits, it’s possible you will not meet the good moral character requirement.

Parking tickets, disorderly conduct convictions, and many other minor offenses usually will not prevent you from proving you have good moral character. USCIS may argue you do not have good moral character if you have repeated convictions for minor violations.

If you lied to get public benefits, it is possible you will not be able to show good moral character. However, you can naturalize even if you have been receiving means-tested public benefits, as long as you were entitled to receive them. This includes benefits such as food stamps or Medicaid, which are available only to individuals whose income is below a certain level.
a. Criminal Activity

If you have ever been arrested, charged or convicted of a crime (even abroad), you need to get information about your criminal record. Go to the Clerk of the court in the county/borough/city where you were arrested/charged and get a Certified Court Disposition for every arrest or charge. A Certified Court Disposition is an official court document that shows the current status of a case or its final outcome.

Ordinary traffic stops or tickets will not prevent you from naturalizing. You do not need to submit evidence of these minor offenses unless a traffic incident was alcohol or drug related or caused serious injury to another person. You do not need to submit documentation for traffic fines and incidents that did not involve an actual arrest if the only penalty was a fine of less than $500 and did not result in points on your driver’s license.

If you have been convicted of certain serious crimes called aggravated felonies, you may be permanently barred (prohibited) from naturalizing. Some crimes may even cause immigration authorities to remove you from the United States or may have other serious consequences.

b. Child Support

If you purposely fail to meet your child support obligations, USCIS will find that you are not a person of good moral character and may deny your application for naturalization. Child support refers to financial support you provide to your children when they do not live with you, even if they live abroad.

c. Selective Service Registration

Males living in the United States who are between 18 and 26 years old must register with the Selective Service System. This includes undocumented men, permanent residents, and citizens. The requirement ends once the applicant reaches the age of 26. The registration requirement does not apply to men here in lawful nonimmigrant status, such as F-1 student visas or H-1B temporary worker visas.

If you did not register with the Selective Service System and you are not yet age 26, you must register before you file your naturalization application. You can get a Selective Service registration form at your local post office or you can register online at www.sss.gov.
If you are 31 or older at the time you file your N-400 application (29 or older for the spouse of a U.S. citizen), you can naturalize even if you failed to register. Even though form N-400 says you must submit documentation about your failure to register, it is not required from applicants who have already turned 31 (or 29 if you are married to a U.S. citizen).

If you are between the ages of 26 and 31 years old (or 26 and 29 years old and married to a U.S. citizen) you can naturalize even if you failed to register. You must prove that your failure to register was not “knowing and willful” by submitting a letter explaining why you did not register. If you are claiming that you were unaware of your obligation to register, you must also submit a Status Information Letter from Selective Service stating that the agency never contacted you. You can submit the explanation letter and the Status Information Letter either with the naturalization application or at the time of the naturalization interview. Instructions for requesting the Status Information Letter are online at www.sss.gov/instructions.html.

How to Check if You Are Registered with the Selective Service

There are two ways to check if you are registered with the Selective Service System and to obtain your registration date and number. Call their toll-free number at 888-655-1825 or check the website at www.sss.gov. Have your date of birth and Social Security number available. To speak to a Selective Service representative, call 847-688-6888.

4. Civic Knowledge Requirement

At your interview you must show a basic understanding of U.S. history and government (civics). This means you must answer six out of ten questions correctly from a list of 100 questions provided by USCIS.
You must have a basic knowledge of English in order to become a U.S. citizen. However, certain applicants may be exempt from the English language requirement because of their age and length of time they have been a permanent resident. You are exempt from the English language requirement if at the time you are filing your application you have been a permanent resident for at least 20 years and you are 50 years of age or older (the 50/20 rule.) If you have been a permanent resident for at least 15 years and you are 55 years of age or older (the 55/15 rule), you are also exempt from the English language requirement. If you are exempt, you must still pass the civics test, but USCIS will test you in your native language. For a list of the vocabulary to prepare for the reading and writing sections of the test, go to section I. Study Materials, pages 54 and 55 of this guide.

If you are 65 years of age or older and you have been a permanent resident for at least 20 years (the 65/20 rule) at the time you submit your application, you may take the simplified civics test (and have
your interview in the language of your choice). You will need to answer six out of ten questions from a list of 20 questions. For a list of the 20 civics questions, go to section I. Study Materials, pages 52-53 of this guide.

6. Medical Exemptions

If you cannot learn due to an impairment or disability, you can apply for an exemption from the English and/or civics test. Your licensed medical doctor, psychiatrist or clinical psychologist must properly and completely fill out Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, with a clear and detailed explanation of the disability and the inability to take the English and/or civics test. This completed form is submitted with your Form N-400, Application for Naturalization. USCIS will decide whether to approve or deny your request at the interview.

If you need an accommodation such as a sign language interpreter, large print materials, or extra time for the exam, be sure to note this on your application.

7. Age and Willingness to Take the Oath

The final step in becoming a U.S. citizen is taking the oath of allegiance to the United States Constitution and form of government.

If you are unable to understand or are unwilling to take the oath because of a disability or medical condition, you can apply for a waiver of the oath requirement. A request for a waiver of the oath can be submitted along with the N-648 form, but a detailed written evaluation completed by your medical doctor or clinical psychologist in addition to other documentation may be needed. The evaluation must explain why and how you are unable to understand the Oath of Allegiance. You must also have a court appointed guardian who can take the oath on your behalf.

a. Allegiance to the U.S. Government Requirement

It is not until you take the Oath of Allegiance that you actually become a citizen. Part of the oath is giving up allegiance to other countries. Some countries will still allow you to keep your citizenship after you take the oath (see section C. Dual Citizenship of this guide.) To check your country’s rules on dual citizenship, contact your country’s embassy or consulate in the United States.

You must also demonstrate your allegiance to the United States by being willing to either bear arms on behalf of the United States or perform
some form of military service or civilian work of national importance. There are some exceptions to the oath requirement for individuals with deeply-held beliefs against military service.

b. Exceptions to the Requirements: Veterans and Those in Military Service

If you are a U.S. military veteran or currently serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or other qualifying member of the Armed Forces, you may be able to naturalize without meeting the normal residence and physical presence requirements. You are also exempt from paying the application and biometrics (fingerprinting) fees.

Individuals presently serving in the U.S. military during a time of war qualify for naturalization regardless of immigration status. Go to www.uscis.gov/military for more information.
C. DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Some countries allow their citizens to naturalize without losing citizenship in their home country. Even if your country allows dual citizenship, you are required by U.S. law to use a U.S. passport to leave and re-enter the United States. If you are concerned about whether your country allows dual citizenship, contact your consulate or embassy to be sure. The countries below have laws on dual citizenship (being a citizen of two countries at once). The countries marked with an asterisk (*) have restrictions.

1. Dual Citizenship Generally Allowed After U.S. Naturalization

Afghanistan  Cambodia  Cyprus  Cuba  Djibouti  Egypt*  El Salvador  Eritrea  Fiji  Finland  France  Gabon  Gambia  Ghana  Greece  Grenada  Guatemala  Guinea-Bissau  Guyana  Haiti  Hong Kong  Hungary  Iceland  Iran*  Iraq  Ireland  Israel  Italy  Jamaica  Jordan  Kenya  Latvia*  Lebanon  Libya  Liechtenstein  Macao  Macedonia  Maldives  Mali  Malta  Mauritius  Mexico  Morocco  Mozambique  Namibia  New Zealand  Nigeria  Panama*  Pakistan  Peru  Philippines  Poland  Portugal  Romania  Russia  Rwanda  Sao Tome & Principe  Senegal  Seychelles  Sierra Leone  Solomon Islands  St. Christopher  St. Kitts and Nevis  St. Lucia  St. Vincent  Slovenia  South Africa*  Spain  Sri Lanka  Swaziland  Sudan  Sweden  Switzerland  Syria  Taiwan  Trinidad & Tobago  Tunisia  Turkey  Tuvalu  Uganda  United Kingdom  Uruguay  Vietnam  Venezuela
2. Dual Citizenship Generally Not Allowed After U.S. Naturalization

Algeria
Andorra
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bhutan
Botswana
Bolivia
Brunei
Cameroon
China
Congo, Democratic Republic of
Cuba
Denmark
Equatorial Guinea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Georgia
Germany*
Guinea
Honduras
India
Indonesia
Ivory Coast*
Japan
Kazakhstan
Kiribati
Kuwait
Kyrgyz Republic
Laos
Lesotho
Liberia
Lithuania
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Marshall Islands
Mauritania
Micronesia
Moldova
Monaco
Mongolia
Myanmar (Burma)
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
New Guinea
Niger
North Korea (DPRK)
Norway
Oman
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Principe Island
Qatar
Samoa
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
Slovakia
Somalia
South Korea
Surinam
Tanzania
Thailand
Togo
Tonga
Tunisia
Ukraine*
United Arab Emirates
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

These lists were last revised on March 2015.
D. REQUESTING A FEE WAIVER OR REDUCED FEE FOR YOUR APPLICATION
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1. Requesting a Fee Waiver for Your Application

When you file your naturalization application, you must submit the entire fee of $725 or you must submit a fee waiver request. The filing fee is $640 for applicants age 75 years of age or older. If you are unable to pay the naturalization filing fee, you can request USCIS waive it. To qualify for a fee waiver, you must prove your inability to pay. If you apply for a fee waiver and USCIS rejects your request, USCIS will send your application back to you instructing you to submit the filing fee or to submit further proof that you are unable to pay the required processing fee. To request a fee waiver, file USCIS Form I-912.

You can show you qualify for a fee waiver based on three main criteria:

- **Your Household Income is 150% or less than the Poverty Guideline.** USCIS uses Form I-912P, HHS Poverty Guidelines, which is updated every year to review your income. If the combined income of everyone in your household falls below the guidelines spelled out in the chart on Form I-912P, then you qualify for a fee waiver. You will need to provide proof of income by submitting federal tax returns or other proof of income that demonstrates your inability to pay the N-400 filing fee.

- **You Receive a Means-Tested Public Benefit.** If you are receiving a means-tested benefit and want to request a fee waiver for your N-400, you must submit a letter proving you currently receive the stated benefit along with the Form I-912. The benefit letter must be dated within the last six months, be in English and contain all of the following:
  
  - Name of agency awarding the benefit
  - Name of person receiving the benefit
  - Date the benefit was awarded
  - Date the benefit will expire (if applicable)
  - Proof that you are **currently** receiving the benefit

- **You Have a Financial Hardship that Prevents You From Paying the Filing Fee.** USCIS will take into consideration unexpected circumstances such as emergency medical bills, natural disasters,
homelessness or sudden unemployment. See section 3 of this chapter for the documents that will help prove you qualify for a fee waiver based on hardship.

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<tr>
<th>Most Common Means-Tested Public Benefits</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supplemental Security Income (SSI):</strong> The Social Security Administration pays SSI benefits to people who are blind or disabled, 65 years of age or older and have limited income and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicaid:</strong> Medicaid provides free public health insurance to low-income individuals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SNAP (Food Stamps):</strong> The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides a card to pay for food. The monthly amount on the card depends on household income.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cash Assistance:</strong> Called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in most states, this is a short-term cash benefit for families with children.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Choice Voucher Program:</strong> Sometimes called Section 8 or Public Housing, this program provides rental assistance to low-income families.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Benefits that Are Not Means-Tested</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certain benefits are not means-tested because there is no income or assets test required to receive them. These include:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI):</strong> SSDI is a cash benefit paid to people with long-term disabilities who are not yet at retirement age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicare:</strong> Medicare is a nationwide health insurance program for people age 65 or older. Some people under 65 with certain disabilities or medical conditions may qualify as well. Generally, Medicare helps with cost of health care, but it does not cover all expenses or the cost of most long-term care.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Requesting a Reduced Fee for Your Application

If you do not qualify for a full fee waiver based on the three criteria previously mentioned (receipt of means-tested benefits, income at or below 150% of the poverty guidelines, or a financial hardship situation) you may qualify for a reduced fee. The reduced fee for the Form N-400 is $320 along with an $85 biometrics (fingerprinting) fee, for a total of $405. You must send a personal check or money order for the reduced fee with your naturalization application. Applicants age 75 or older do not have to pay the $85 biometrics fee. They should submit a check or money order for $320 only. To request a reduced fee for the processing of your naturalization application, file USCIS Form I-942.

You can show you qualify for a reduced fee if your household income is between 150% and 200% of the poverty guidelines. USCIS uses Form I-942P, Income Guidelines for Reduced Fees, to determine if your household income falls between the amounts set by the poverty guidelines. If you qualify for the reduced fee, you provide proof of income by submitting federal tax returns. If for some reason you did not file taxes, you can submit other proof of income such as paystubs or a letter from your employer on business letterhead stating the amount of wages paid to you.

3. Documents to Help Determine if You Qualify for a Fee Waiver or Reduced Fee

To help determine if you qualify for a reduced fee, a fee waiver based on income, or a fee waiver based on financial hardship, bring the documents below to your appointment with an authorized immigration law expert:

- **Copy of IRS federal tax returns for the most recent tax year** (for each person in the household who works and files taxes) with any attached schedules (i.e. W2s and 1099s)

- **Copies of paystubs for the past 1-2 months or a statement from your employer on business letterhead showing salary or wages paid**

- **Copies of child support letter or spousal support (alimony)**

- **Copy of receipt of Unemployment Benefits**

- **Copy of receipt of Workers Compensation**

- **Social Security Administration Benefit Verification Letter**
✓ Copies of all recent utility bills (gas, electric, internet, cable, phone)

✓ Copy of lease, rental agreement or mortgage payments

✓ Copy of last 3 bank statements for each checking and/or savings account

✓ Proof of all other expenses (including medical bills, insurance, loans and credit card payments)
E. SUBMITTING YOUR FORM N-400 APPLICATION
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Here is a checklist of what you must mail to USCIS with your Form N-400:

- **Form N-400**: Answer all questions and sign and date Part 13.

- **Additional pages**: Include these for work and residence history, trips, prior marriages, children or for other questions that need a continuation sheet.

- **Proof of your permanent resident status**: Copy of front and back of your Green Card, or copy of I-551 stamp in your passport indicating your A-Number.

- **Check or Money Order for $725**: Made payable to “U.S. Department of Homeland Security.” Write your name and A-Number on the front of the check or money order. You may also pay by credit card by submitting a completed and signed Form G-1450 Authorization for Credit Card Transactions.

  **Note**: Applicants 75 and older are exempt from paying the $85* biometric fee and must appear in person to have their photos taken at the Application Support Center (ASC). The total fee for applicants over age 75 is $640*.

  **OR**

  Submit Form I-912, Request for Fee Waiver with supporting documents or Submit Form I-942, Request for Reduced Fee with supporting documents.

- Mail your complete application and documents using the Postal Service to the USCIS address with jurisdiction over where you live. Go to www.uscis.gov or call 800-375-5283 to find out what jurisdiction you are in.

- Remember, keep a copy of everything you send to USCIS, your postal receipts, and the receipts for the money order, if you sent one.

*All fees listed as of December 2016. For updated fees, check www.uscis.gov/forms
To check on how long USCIS expects to take to make a decision on your application, you can check the USCIS website for N-400 processing times. Do this by visiting www.uscis.gov and clicking on “Tools” and then under “Manage your Case” select “See Office Case Processing Times” from the scroll-down menu. At the bottom of the next page, choose your local Field Office and click the button that says “Field Office Processing Dates.”
F. AFTER SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION: NEXT STEPS
1. Receipt Notice
Within three to four weeks of mailing your application, you should get a receipt notice in the mail from USCIS verifying they have received your application. The receipt notice serves as confirmation that your application is in process and that your payment has been accepted, or your fee waiver approved. Keep this receipt as proof USCIS received your application. If you do not receive a notice, call USCIS customer service at: 800-375-5283.

2. Biometrics (fingerprinting) Appointment
Shortly after getting your receipt notice, you will receive a “biometrics” appointment notice to have your fingerprints and photographs taken. You must go to this appointment with a photo ID and your appointment notice. If you fail to go to this appointment, USCIS will deny your application. Applicants 75 years or older will not be fingerprinted but still must appear in person to the designated Application Support Center (ASC) to have their photograph taken. Only a USCIS designated Application Support Center (ASC) can do fingerprinting for naturalization purposes.

3. Interview Notice
About two to three months after your fingerprints are taken you will be scheduled for your naturalization interview. Again, you will receive form I-797C Notice of Action in the mail with the time, date and location of your scheduled interview with a USCIS officer. Be sure to bring all the documents USCIS requests along with your naturalization interview appointment notice (originals and copies).

4. Naturalization Interview
What Will Happen:
At the interview, a USCIS officer will review your N-400 application to make sure you meet the qualifications for citizenship, and will test you on civics and on your ability to understand, speak, read and write English (unless you meet certain exemptions). Please see section I. Study Materials for additional information and test preparation materials.
At the start of your interview, the USCIS officer will ask you to stand, raise your right hand and swear under oath that all the information you are about to give is true. After you have taken this oath, the USCIS officer will review your application to make sure that the statements you made in it are accurate. You should disclose any changes that happened since you submitted your application, such as marriage, travel abroad, or change in employment. The officer will update your file based on the information you provide.

Your ability to speak and understand English is determined during this interview based on the way you answer the questions the USCIS officer asks you. The officer will also assess your English reading and writing ability and civics knowledge, during the interview. You will be asked to read up to three sentences in English, and to write up to three dictated sentences in English. You will be tested orally with up to ten questions on civics. The questions are chosen randomly by the USCIS computer system from a list of 100 questions. (See section I. Study Materials to find the 100 civics questions for the naturalization test).

Applicants will be asked 10 questions and must answer six correctly. As discussed earlier, some older, long-time residents and some disabled residents are not required to read, write and speak English in order to become U.S. citizens but may have to take the civics portion of the test in their native language. The USCIS Citizenship Resource Center (www.uscis.gov/citizenship) provides an overview of the naturalization interview and test. Other materials are available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Korean, Tagalog and Vietnamase. CUNY Citizenship Now! also lists the questions on our website. Check www.cuny.edu/citizenshipnow for test resources.

What to Bring to the Interview:

- Bring an extra copy of all documents in the notice in case the USCIS officer requests to keep them on file.
- Males between the ages of 18 and 31 should bring proof of registration with the Selective Service System. If you did not register when you were required to do so, males between the ages of 18 and 31 should also bring a Status Information Letter with them to the interview. Instructions for requesting the Status Information Letter are online at: www.sss.gov/instructions.html.
If you are unable to take the full oath of allegiance because of religious beliefs, you should bring a letter from your religious institution explaining how your beliefs prevent you from taking the oath. Individuals who have other deeply-held beliefs that prevent them from taking the full oath, should provide a written affidavit.

a. What If I Fail the English or Civics Test?
If you fail the English or civics tests you will be scheduled for another appointment to retake the test within 90 days. You will not have to pay another fee or resubmit your fee waiver. If you fail the test a second time, your application will be denied. There is no limit to how often you can re-apply for citizenship. Keep in mind that each time you apply, you will be required to pay the filing fee or submit a new fee waiver request.

5. After the Interview
The USCIS officer will usually decide your case at the interview. The law requires USCIS to make a decision within 120 days of the date of your interview. If you passed, you will be scheduled for the final step, the swearing-in (or oath) ceremony, about one to two months later. If you did not pass, the officer will give you a paper explaining the reason. You may have to send in more documentation or take the test again. If USCIS approves your naturalization application during the interview, the USCIS officer may give you the choice of waiting in the office to be given a swearing-in ceremony notice or having USCIS mail the notice for you to appear at a later date.

At the time of the swearing-in ceremony, you will take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States and become a naturalized citizen. If you requested a name change, a Federal Judge or Magistrate will swear you in. If you did not request a name change, a USCIS officer may swear you in. If your name was changed through marriage or divorce, a USCIS officer may swear you in. Your Certificate of Naturalization will be issued in your new name. You become a U.S. citizen when you complete the swearing-in ceremony and receive your Certificate of Naturalization.
6. Appealing a USCIS Denial of Naturalization

If USCIS denies your application, the USCIS officer must inform you that you have 30 days to request a hearing before an immigration officer. A request for a hearing is made by filing Form N-336 along with a filing fee, or with a fee waiver if you qualify. If you are unsuccessful at that hearing, you may seek a review of the decision in federal court.

*For updated fees, check www.uscis.gov/forms

7. How to Handle Changes during the Naturalization Process

a. Address Changes

If you think your address will change while you have an application pending with USCIS, use a post office box or the mailing address of a friend or relative on the form N-400 to make sure you receive all notices from USCIS. If you move after filing your application, you must update your address by completing all of the following steps:

- Report your change of address over the phone by calling 800-375-5283, or online at https://egov.uscis.gov/coa/displayCOAForm.do. To do this you will need your receipt number.

- In addition to submitting your change of address by phone or online, it is recommended that you file the form AR-11 Change of Address by mail. You can find the form, filing address and instructions at www.uscis.gov. There is no fee required to file an AR-11.

- Inform the post office you have moved. You can do this online at www.usps.com or by visiting your local post office.

What to do if you don’t have your receipt number:

- If you have not yet received a receipt notice with a receipt number for your application, you can still submit a change of address.

- If you paid for your application by check, contact your bank for a copy of the check image. On the back of the check image is your 13-digit USCIS receipt number. If you paid for your
application by money order, you can change your address without a receipt number, by calling the National Customer Service Center at 800-375-5283.
WELCOME
G. YOU ARE NOW
A U.S. CITIZEN
ENJOY YOUR JOURNEY
Congratulations on becoming a U.S. citizen! Below is a list of some important next steps you can take.

**Now That You Are a U.S. Citizen:**

1. **Register to Vote**
   - Voter registration varies from state to state, but usually in order to register to vote you must be: a U.S. citizen, at least 18-years-old on election day, a resident of the state where you plan to vote, and not be convicted of felony or be on parole for committing a felony, and not claim the right to vote in another state, borough, county or city. To learn how to register to vote in your state, visit the website for the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) at http://www.naleo.org/vote.

2. **Update your Social Security Records**
3. **Apply for a U.S. Passport**
4. **Obtain a certificate of Citizenship for your Children**
5. **Serve on a Jury**

**1. Register to Vote**

Voter registration varies from state to state, but usually in order to register to vote you must be: a U.S. citizen, at least 18-years-old on election day, a resident of the state where you plan to vote, and not be convicted of felony or be on parole for committing a felony, and not claim the right to vote in another state, borough, county or city. To learn how to register to vote in your state, visit the website for the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) at http://www.naleo.org/vote.
2. Update Your Social Security Records

After you become a U.S. citizen, you should update your Social Security records. You will keep the same social security number after you become a U.S. citizen. To find your local Social Security office, call 1-800-772-1213 or visit www.socialsecurity.gov.

3. Apply for a U.S. Passport

You can learn about how to apply for a U.S. passport from the U.S. Department of State by visiting www.travel.state.gov or by calling the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at 1-877-487-2778. You may also ask for a paper application at your local post office. Routine processing of the U.S. passport is approximately six weeks from the time you apply.

4. Obtain a Certificate of Citizenship for Your Child

Children under 18 may become U.S. citizens on the day you naturalize. This is called derivative citizenship and is common when a parent naturalizes.

Under the current law, in order for a child who was born outside the United States to derive U.S. citizenship, one or both parents must be U.S. citizens. In addition, the child must also meet the following requirements: be unmarried and under 18 years of age; the child must be a lawful permanent resident (green card holder); the child must reside with the naturalized citizen parent(s) in the United States; and finally, the naturalized citizen parent(s) must have physical and legal custody of the minor child.

It does not matter in which order the requirements are met as long as they are all met before the child reaches her or his 18th birthday. The rules for derivative citizenship apply to biological children and to adopted children who meet the definition of “adopted child” under U.S. immigration law. Step-children who were not adopted cannot derive U.S. citizenship through a step-parent. Different rules apply to children born out of wedlock.

A child who derives U.S. citizenship becomes a U.S. citizen without needing to apply for citizenship through the process of naturalization. To have proof of his/her citizenship, the child can apply for a U.S.
passport through the U.S. Department of State or for a Certificate of Citizenship through the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) by filling out the form N-600 and including the necessary supporting documents.

5. Jury Duty
The constitution of the United States guarantees defendants in criminal trials and people in civil trials the right to a trial by jury. A civic duty of U.S. citizens is to serve on a jury, which is a group of (usually 12) people who swear to give a true verdict (decision) in a legal case. In the American justice system, the judge determines the law to be applied in a case and the jury decides the guilt or innocence of the accused. The jury is supposed to represent a fair cross section of the community where the court is located. To find out information about jury service in your state, visit http://www.ncsc.org.
H. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
H. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Remember, the information listed below often changes. Contact each organization directly to find the most up-to-date information about services, the languages they offer, their fees, intake and appointment procedures.

1. Finding Free and Low Cost Immigration Services

immigrationlawhelp.org

Search for free or low-cost immigration legal services providers in all 50 states. Enter your zip code to find assistance with various types of immigration legal services at a location near you.

2. To Find English or Civics/Citizenship Preparation Classes by Zip Code.

www.uscis.gov/findaclass
www.uscis.gov/citizenship

To find citizenship resources and study materials for the naturalization interview and test.

3. Finding a Private Attorney

AILA

www.ailalawyer.com

Search for AILA member private attorneys by language, area of immigration expertise and/or geographic area.

4. Reporting Immigration Fraud

www.uscis.gov/avoid-scams
www.stopnotariofraud.org

If you are a victim of immigration fraud or to report fraudulent activity in your community. For more information about common scams and a full list of how to report immigration scams.
I. STUDY MATERIALS
I. STUDY MATERIALS

As we explained on page 12, when you go for your interview the USCIS Officer will assess your English and Civics knowledge. For a list of the civics questions and answers that you could be asked, see below. (The officer will ask up to 10 questions randomly selected by the USCIS computer system.) The elderly will need to answer just 10 questions from the list. Those questions can be found in pages 52 and 53. For a list of words that you may need for the English test, see pages 54 and 55.

A. One Hundred Questions and Answers for the Naturalization Test

American Government

Principles of American Democracy

1. Q. What is the supreme law of the land?
   A. The Constitution

2. Q. What does the Constitution do?
   A. Sets up the government; defines the government; protects basic rights of Americans

3. Q. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?
   A. We the People

4. Q. What is an amendment?
   A. A change (to the Constitution); an addition (to the Constitution)

5. Q. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
   A. The Bill of Rights

6. Q. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
   A. Speech; religion; assembly; press; petition the government

7. Q. How many amendments does the Constitution have?
   A. Twenty-seven (27)
8. Q. What did the Declaration of Independence do?
   A. Announced our independence (from Great Britain); declared our independence (from Great Britain); said that the United States is free (from Great Britain)

9. Q. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
   A. Life; liberty; pursuit of happiness

10. Q. What is freedom of religion?
    A. You can practice any religion, or not practice a religion.

11. Q. What is the economic system in the United States?
    A. Capitalist economy; market economy

12. Q. What is the “rule of law”?
    A. Everyone must follow the law; Leaders must obey the law; Government must obey the law; No one is above the law

System of Government

13. Q. Name one branch or part of the government.
    A. Congress; legislative; President; executive; the courts; judicial

14. Q. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?
    A. Checks and balances; separation of powers

15. Q. Who is in charge of the executive branch?
    A. The President

16. Q. Who makes federal laws?
    A. Congress; Senate and House (of Representatives); (U.S. or national) legislature

17. Q. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
    A. The Senate and House (of Representatives)

18. Q. How many U.S. Senators are there?
    A. One hundred (100)

19. Q. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?
    A. Six (6)
20. Q. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators now?
   A. Answers will vary. [For New York the answer is Kirsten Gillibrand or Charles Schumer.]

21. Q. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
   A. Four hundred thirty-five (435)

22. Q. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?
   A. Two (2)

23. Q. Name your U.S. Representative.
   A. [Answers will vary. You can identify your U.S. Representative at www.house.gov or by calling the U.S. House of Representatives at 202-224-3121.]

24. Q. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
   A. All people of the state

25. Q. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
   A. (Because of) the state’s population; (because) they have more people; (because) some states have more people

26. Q. We elect a President for how many years?
   A. Four (4)

27. Q. In what month do we vote for President?
   A. November

28. Q. What is the name of the President of the United States now?
   A. Donald J. Trump; Donald Trump; Trump

29. Q. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?
   A. Michael R. Pence; Mike Pence; Pence

30. Q. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
    A. The Vice President
31. Q. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
   A. The Speaker of the House

32. Q. Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?
   A. The President

33. Q. Who signs bills to become laws?
   A. The President

34. Q. Who vetoes bills?
   A. The President

35. Q. What does the President’s Cabinet do?
   A. Advises the President

36. Q. What are two Cabinet-level positions?
   A. Secretary of Agriculture; Secretary of Commerce; Secretary of Defense; Secretary of Education; Secretary of Energy; Secretary of Health and Human Services; Secretary of Homeland Security; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Secretary of the Interior; Secretary of Labor; Secretary of State; Secretary of Transportation; Secretary of the Treasury; Secretary of Veterans Affairs; Attorney General; Vice President

37. Q. What does the judicial branch do?
   A. Reviews laws; explains laws; resolves disputes (disagreements); decides if a law goes against the Constitution

38. Q. What is the highest court in the United States?
   A. The Supreme Court

39. Q. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?
   A. Nine (9)

40. Q. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?
   A. John Roberts (John G. Roberts, Jr.)

41. Q. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?
   A. To print money; to declare war; to create an army; to make treaties
42. Q. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?
   A. Provide schooling and education; provide protection (police); provide safety (fire departments); give a driver’s license; approve zoning and land use

43. Q. Who is the Governor of your state now?
   A. Answers will vary. [For New York the answer is Andrew M. Cuomo.]

44. Q. What is the capital of your state?
   A. Answers will vary. [For New York the answer is Albany.]

45. Q. What are the two major political parties in the United States?
   A. Democratic and Republican

46. Q. What is the political party of the President now?
   A. Republican (Party)

47. Q. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?
   A. Paul D. Ryan; (Paul) Ryan

Rights and Responsibilities

48. Q. There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.
   A. Citizens eighteen (18) and older (can vote); You don’t have to pay (a poll tax) to vote; Any citizen can vote. (Women and men can vote.); A male citizen of any race (can vote).

49. Q. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?
   A. Serve on a jury; vote in a federal election

50. Q. Name one right only for United States citizens.
    A. Vote in a federal election; run for federal office

51. Q. What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?
    A. Freedom of expression; freedom of speech; freedom of assembly; freedom to petition the government; freedom of religion; the right to bear arms
52. Q. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?
   A. The United States; the flag

53. Q. What is one promise you make when you become a United States citizen?
   A. Give up loyalty to other countries; defend the Constitution and laws of the United States; obey the laws of the United States; serve in the U.S. military (if needed); serve (do important work for) the nation (if needed); be loyal to the United States

54. Q. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?
   A. Eighteen (18) and older

55. Q. What are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy?
   A. Vote; join a political party; help with a campaign; join a civic group; join a community group; give an elected official your opinion on an issue; call Senators and Representatives; publicly support or oppose an issue or policy; run for office; write to a newspaper

56. Q. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?
   A. April 15

57. Q. When must all men register for the Selective Service?
   A. At age eighteen (18), between eighteen (18) and twenty-six (26)

American History

Colonial Period and Independence

58. Q. What is one reason colonists came to America?
   A. Freedom; political liberty; religious freedom; economic opportunity; practice their religion; escape persecution

59. Q. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?
   A. American Indians; Native Americans
60. Q. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?
   A. Africans; people from Africa

61. Q. Why did the colonists fight the British?
   A. Because of high taxes (taxation without representation); because the British army stayed in their houses (boarding, quartering); because they didn’t have self-government

62. Q. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?
   A. (Thomas) Jefferson

63. Q. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
   A. July 4, 1776

64. Q. There were 13 original states. Name three.
   A. New Hampshire; Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut; New York; New Jersey; Pennsylvania; Delaware; Maryland; Virginia; North Carolina; South Carolina; Georgia

65. Q. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?
   A. The Constitution was written; The Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution.

66. Q. When was the Constitution written?
   A. 1787

67. Q. The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Name one of the writers.
   A. (James) Madison; (Alexander) Hamilton; (John) Jay; Publius

68. Q. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?
   A. U.S. diplomat; oldest member of the Constitutional Convention; first Postmaster General of the United States; writer of “Poor Richard’s Almanac”; started the first free libraries

69. Q. Who is the “Father of Our Country”?
   A. (George) Washington

70. Q. Who was the first President?
   A. (George) Washington
1800s

71. Q. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?
   A. The Louisiana Territory; Louisiana

72. Q. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1800s.
   A. War of 1812; Mexican-American War; Civil War; Spanish-American War

73. Q. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South.
   A. The Civil War; the War between the States

74. Q. Name one problem that led to the Civil War.
   A. Slavery; economic reasons; states’ rights

75. Q. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?
   A. Freed the slaves (Emancipation Proclamation); saved (or preserved) the Union; led the United States during the Civil War

76. Q. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?
   A. Freed the slaves; freed slaves in the Confederacy; freed slaves in the Confederate states; freed slaves in most Southern states

77. Q. What did Susan B. Anthony do?
   A. Fought for women’s rights; fought for civil rights

Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information

78. Q. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.
   A. World War I; World War II; Korean War; Vietnam War; (Persian) Gulf War

79. Q. Who was President during World War I?
   A. (Woodrow) Wilson

80. Q. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?
   A. (Franklin) Roosevelt

81. Q. Who did the United States fight in World War II?
   A. Japan, Germany, and Italy
82. Q. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was he in?
   A. World War II

83. Q. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?
   A. Communism

84. Q. What movement tried to end racial discrimination?
   A. Civil rights (movement)

85. Q. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?
   A. Fought for civil rights; worked for equality for all Americans

86. Q. What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the United States?
   A. Terrorists attacked the United States.

87. Q. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.
   A. Cherokee; Navajo; Sioux; Chippewa; Choctaw; Pueblo; Apache; Iroquois; Creek; Blackfeet; Seminole; Cheyenne; Arawak; Shawnee; Mohegan; Huron; Oneida; Lakota; Crow; Teton; Hopi; Inuit

Integrated Civics

Geography

88. Q. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.
   A. Missouri (River); Mississippi (River)

89. Q. What ocean is on the West Coast of the United States?
   A. Pacific (Ocean)

90. Q. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?
   A. Atlantic (Ocean)

91. Q. Name one U.S. territory.
   A. Puerto Rico; U.S. Virgin Islands; American Samoa; Northern Mariana Islands; Guam
92. Q. Name one state that borders Canada.
   A. Maine; New Hampshire; Vermont; New York; Pennsylvania; Ohio; Michigan; Minnesota; North Dakota; Montana; Idaho; Washington; Alaska

93. Q. Name one state that borders Mexico.
   A. California; Arizona; New Mexico; Texas

94. Q. What is the capital of the United States?
   A. Washington, D.C.

95. Q. Where is the Statue of Liberty?
   A. New York (Harbor); Liberty Island [Also acceptable are New Jersey, near New York City, and on the Hudson (River).]

Symbols

96. Q. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?
   A. Because there were 13 original colonies; because the stripes represent the original colonies

97. Q. Why does the flag have 50 stars?
   A. Because there is one star for each state; because each star represents a state; because there are 50 states

98. Q. What is the name of the national anthem?
   A. The Star-Spangled Banner

Holidays

99. Q. When do we celebrate Independence Day?
   A. July 4

100. Q. Name two national U.S. holidays.
    A. New Year’s Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Presidents’ Day; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Columbus Day; Veterans Day; Thanksgiving; Christmas
B. Civics Questions for the 65/20 Exemption

If you are over 65 years old and have been a permanent resident for at least 20 years, you qualify to take the civics test in the language of your choice. You are only required to study 20 questions. The officer will ask you up to 10 questions randomly selected by the USCIS computer system.

1. Q. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
   A. Speech; religion; assembly; press; petition the government

2. Q. What is the economic system in the United States?
   A. Capitalist economy; market economy

3. Q. Name one branch or part of the government.
   A. Congress; legislative; President; executive; the courts; judicial

4. Q. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
   A. The Senate and House (of Representatives)

5. Q. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators now?
   A. Answers will vary. [For New York the answer is Kirsten Gillibrand or Charles Schumer.]

6. Q. In what month do we vote for President?
   A. November

7. Q. What is the name of the President of the United States now?
   A. Donald J. Trump; Donald Trump; Trump

8. Q. What is the capital of your state?
   A. Answers will vary. [For New York the answer is Albany.]

9. Q. What are the two major political parties in the United States?
   A. Democratic and Republican

10. Q. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?
    A. Serve on a jury; vote in a federal election

11. Q. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?
    A. Eighteen (18) and older
12. Q. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?
   A. April 15

13. Q. Who was the first President?
   A. (George) Washington

14. Q. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?
   A. Freed the slaves (Emancipation Proclamation); saved (or preserved) the Union; led the United States during the Civil War

15. Q. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.
   A. World War I; World War II; Korean War; Vietnam War; (Persian) Gulf War

16. Q. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?
   A. Fought for civil rights; worked for equality for all Americans

17. Q. What is the capital of the United States?
   A. Washington, D.C.

18. Q. Where is the Statue of Liberty?
   A. New York (Harbor); Liberty Island [Also acceptable are New Jersey, near New York City, and on the Hudson (River).]

19. Q. Why does the flag have 50 stars?
   A. Because there is one star for each state; because each star represents a state; because there are 50 states

20. Q. When do we celebrate Independence Day?
   A. July 4
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| Abraham Lincoln  
George Washington | American flag  
Bill of Rights  
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Congress  
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### D. English Writing Vocabulary for the Naturalization Test

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THEY FOLLOWED THE PATH AND ARE CITIZENS NOW!

Don't wait to get on your path too!
Tell Us When You Become a Citizen

citizenshipnowinfo@cuny.edu

@Citizenshipnow

@CUNYCitizenship

@cunycitizenshipnow