

# **Group Application Workshop Model**

**CLINIC: Center for Citizenship and Immigrant Communities**

**August 26, 2009**

**2:00 – 3:30 p.m. EST**



# Group Application Workshop Model

- PowerPoint slides and recording are available at:  
<http://www.cliniclegal.org/resources/group-application-workshop-model>

# CLINIC Presenter

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Communities/Capacity Building Section

# CLINIC's Capacity Building Goals

- Expand the number of charitable legal immigration programs
- Increase services
- Improve services

# CLINIC's Capacity Building Activities

- Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) agency recognition & staff accreditation
- Immigration Program Management training
- Management webinars
- Consultations with Field Support Coordinators (members)
- On-site visits/assessments (members)

## Capacity Building Activities, cont'd

- Link members & subscribers to CLINIC services
- Project management
- Flow through funding
- Prepare programs for significant immigration changes

# Webinar's Goal

- To promote the effective use of the group application workshop model in order to expand the availability of charitable legal immigration services on a large-scale, principally for naturalization but also for other purposes, including legalization application processing

# Webinar Overview

- Workshop Models
- Workshop Benefits
- Preparation for a Workshop
- Stages of the Workshop Event
- Legalization Workshop Considerations

# References

CLINIC toolkit for naturalization workshops, available at:

**<http://www.cliniclegal.org/resources/toolkit-naturalization-workshops>**

Chapter 9 describing the workshop model in CLINIC's report, *A More Perfect Union*, available at:

**<http://www.cliniclegal.org/resources/more-perfect-union-national-citizenship-plan>**

## Models: Clinic vs. Workshop

### “Clinic”

- Regularly scheduled
- Held in a program’s office
- Supported by program staff only
- Small numbers of clients served
- Legal representation often provided

# Workshop vs. Clinic, cont'd

## “Workshop”

- Occasionally scheduled
- Held in a community setting
- Staffed by professionals and volunteers
- Medium to large numbers served
- Assisted *pro se* without legal representation

# Workshop Model & Approaches

- Legal
  - Community organizing
  - Congressional Representative-sponsored
  - Partnership/hybrid approaches
- \*\* Primacy of legal oversight at workshop

# Workshop Immigration Purposes

- Naturalization
- Refugee & Asylee Adj. of Status
- Temp. Protected Status
- Prospective AgJobs, Dream Act or Legalization

# Formats

## “Two-day Format”

- 1<sup>st</sup> day for orientation
- Distribute forms
- Give instructions
- Assign date and time to return for review
- 2<sup>nd</sup> day for review, quality control & packaging

# Pros & Cons of Two-Day Format

## Pros

- More time for orientation
- More responsibility from the applicant
- Less work for volunteers per day

# Pros & Cons of Two-Day Format

## Cons

- Requires applicants to appear twice
- Possible attrition after first day
- Requires volunteers to appear twice
- Twice the use of space
- Double set-up time

# Format Options, cont'd

## “One-day” Format

- Most commonly used
- Start to finish in one day
- Applications completed, checked & packaged

# Pros and Cons of One-Day Format

## Pros

- One appearance vs. twice for applicants
- Less chance of incompletes/no-shows
- Compact time for volunteers
- Less scheduling of space
- Less set-up work

# Pros and Cons of One-Day Format

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## Cons

- Long day for volunteers
- Compressed time creates stress
- Less time for community education

# Workshop Benefits for Naturalization

- All benefits of citizenship learned
- Screened and prepared applicants
- Myths are dispelled and immigrants' concerns or fears are addressed
- Public event motivates others to apply

## Workshop Benefits, cont'd

- Access to English, history, civics study materials
- Referrals to citizenship classes
- USCIS questions w/o InfoPass
- Access to broad community resources, i.e. vocational training, community safety, health, “know your rights”, etc.

## Workshop Benefits, cont'd

- Derived citizens identified (see CLINIC toolkit)
- Derived citizens learn to document new status
- Immigrants with special needs can seek help to overcome barriers
- Referrals for special services

# Planning for a Workshop

- Needs assessment
- Model and format selection
- Sponsorship and partnerships (MOUs)
- Site location
- Volunteer recruitment and role assignment
- Volunteer ratio 1 vol. to 6 applicants

# Planning for a Workshop, cont'd

- Training staff and volunteers
- Outreach to target populations
- Gather forms, documents, materials, and supplies

# Planning for a Workshop, cont'd

- Staff time and financial resources
- Workshop fees
- Services that will not be provided
- Legal representation considerations
- Pro se or G-28s filed (for whom?)

# Planning, cont'd

To be determined:

- Number of workshops to be sponsored in a year, and dates
- Pre-registration, walk-ins, or both
- Cap on numbers served at each workshop
- Morning & afternoon sessions
- Policy for late arrivals (pre-registered & walk-ins)

# Planning, cont'd

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- “Custody” of cases
- Capacity to give follow-up appointments & services

# Site Location

- Ample parking and be accessible to public transportation and for the disabled
- Large area for waiting room and separate workstations
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Photocopier is essential (backup copier)
- Kitchen for food and drinks

# Volunteer Recruitment & Role Assignment

- Naturalization experts (attys. & BIA reps.)
- Law graduates and students
- ESL & citizenship teachers
- Community outreach specialists
- USCIS officer for outreach and Q & A

# Volunteer Recruitment & Role Assignment, cont'd

- Signed confidentiality agreement for all workers
- Roles need to be clearly explained
- See CLINIC toolkit for sample recruitment flyers, list of tasks, volunteer application form

# Training

- Legal professionals takes responsibility
- Required for all volunteers
- In advance of workshop (see toolkit for volunteer orientation/training guide)
- First-time volunteers should shadow someone with experience
- Volunteers should seek on-the-spot feedback from a roving expert

# Outreach

- Types: print, television, radio, community leaders
- Flyers include purpose, sponsor, contact, date, time, (pre-registration or walk-ins) location
- Items to bring
- Make flyers attractive

# Forms, Documents, Materials, & Supplies

- Checklist of items
- Key USCIS forms
- N-400 attachment sheets labeled
- Laptops, power cords & surge protectors
- Photocopier and lots of paper

# Forms, Documents, Materials, & Supplies

- Disclaimer about representation (see toolkit)
- Registration & Screening Form
- Study materials for applicants (see toolkit)
- Other supplies: notepads, pens, pencils, white-out, post-it notes, nametags, mailing envelopes (see More Perfect Union, pg. 97)

# The Workshop Event

## Set-Up

- Front door sign
- Signs for each station
- Checklist for stations helps applicants navigate room or building
- Volunteer sign-in table to collect info. & name tags
- Waiting area

# Stages of the Workshop Event

1. Registration & Screening
2. Application Assistance
3. Photographs
4. Final Review / Quality Control
5. Application Packaging

(see checklist of stations in toolkit)

# 1. Registration & Screening

- Intake for simple assessment of prima facie eligibility
- Questions in English
- Document review
- Appointments for persons screened-out

# Registration & Intake, cont'd

- Applicants pay fee & receive receipt
- Given assignment number and application packet
- Pre-registered get served first
- Applicants directed to wait for number called
- Waiting period can be used for presentations and Q & A with USCIS

## 2. Application Assistance

Preparer:

- Preserves confidentiality
- Verifies registration/screening sheet
- Completes the N-400
- Seeks help from roaming experts
- Identifies any “red flags” for the final review/quality control stage

## 3. Photographs for Naturalization

- Two color photos required
- Volunteer or staff must be familiar with USCIS photo requirements (same as passport requirements – see toolkit for requirements)
- Write applicant's A-number on reverse side of each photo, in pencil

## 4. Final Review / Quality Control

- Naturalization expert required
- Expert confirms eligibility (including English language skills), reviews the N-400 form, corrects any errors, and makes a determination on any “red flag” issues (see toolkit for Q.C. checklist)
- Follow-up appointments as needed

## 5. Application Packaging

- N-400, attachments, and green card photocopied
- Copy of N-400 for applicant and sponsoring agency
- Check or money order for USCIS is completed

## 5. Application Packaging, cont'd

- Application packet is assembled (see toolkit for checklist)
- Pre-addressed envelope for mailing
- Certified mail with a return receipt recommended

\*\* Require applicants to mail their own applications to USCIS\*\*

# Workshop Follow-Up

- Office appointments
- Thank you letters
- Volunteers feedback
- Assess strengths and weaknesses
- Follow-up to confirm naturalization rate

# Legalization Workshop Considerations

## Capacity Issues

- Millions of applicants
- High impacted, underserved areas
- Lack of charitable immigration programs
- Lack of experienced staff (attys. & BIA reps.)
- Local implementation planning

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- Naturalization workshop is practice for legalization
- Reduce the number of self-filers
- volunteer recruitment and training (volunteer coord. essential)
- Roles and responsibilities (coordination)

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- Interpreter capacity
- Partnerships (MOUs)
- Off-site space (workshop mobility)

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- Appointments (what type of cases?)
  - Clinics (frequency, volume, space issues)
  - Workshops (how large?)
- \*\* All three forms of service will be required

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- Service model options
- Avoiding tensions between community organizers and legal providers
- Format (1 or 2-day)

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- Large-scale outreach & public education (anti-*notario* campaign)
- Pre-registration for demographic data
- Guide & protocol for legal screening
- Triage “ready” applicants first for efficiency

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- 100% ready, 100% paid, (#)-day filing rule
- Avoid accepting cash for payment
- Clarity in writing about legal representation
- Case management for long-term process leading to naturalization

# Legalization Workshop Considerations, cont'd

- Equipment: laptops, Internet connections, portable printers & scanners, cell phones
  - Immigration case management software (web-based for mobility)
  - Hard file storage, security & confidentiality
- \*\* Requires up-front investment\*\***

# Legislative & Regulatory Factors

- Qualifying criteria
- Evidentiary standards
- Volunteer capacity to help review or fill-in documents
- One-step or multiple stages
- Electronic filing
- Fees

# Conclusion

- Perfect the workshop model for naturalization
- Plan for legalization using different service models, including workshops
- Build local partnerships
- Recruit and train volunteers
- Cultivate local funders