



# Best Practices and Innovations for Naturalization Workshops: Community Outreach

Providing high-quality, comprehensive, and affordable naturalization services to Lawful Permanent Residents, or LPRs, is a multi-faceted and complex process that often requires coordination among many individuals and organizations. To increase the efficiency of naturalization efforts, CLINIC emphasizes a naturalization model that relies on workshops or clinics to complete applications. A naturalization workshop is a one-day community event that brings professionals and trained volunteers together to assist LPRs in completing the Application for Naturalization, or N-400. Workshops are usually held at a central location in the community that can accommodate large numbers of applicants, such as a community college or parish hall. A naturalization clinic, on the other hand, is a smaller scale event that usually takes place in the organization's offices rather than an outside location.

For more information on workshops, use our toolkit at [cliniclegal.org/naturalization](https://cliniclegal.org/naturalization). For a list of upcoming naturalization workshops in your community, visit the New Americans Campaign's citizenship events page at [newamericanscampaign.org/citizenship-events](https://newamericanscampaign.org/citizenship-events).

Effective outreach to LPRs and volunteers is arguably the most important part of ensuring success at your naturalization events. Your organization may have the physical and monetary resources to put on a great naturalization event, but without LPRs or volunteers to attend and run workshops your results will be limited.

Use our fifteen tips to help your organization reach more immigrants in need of your services!

# Fifteen Tips for Community Outreach

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Utilize free media opportunities, such as church bulletins, local radio stations with untapped programming hours, or local affiliates of networks like Univision and Telemundo to promote your upcoming naturalization workshops.

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Use Facebook, Twitter, and other social media services to promote naturalization events, recruit volunteers, and raise awareness around naturalization.

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Be sure to conduct outreach events and information sessions with a wide variety of organizations, (i.e. businesses, religious and secular organizations, other non-profits, government agencies, libraries, colleges and universities, elected officials, consulates, etc.). Ensure that your organization is diversifying the locations of outreach events and reaching all the geographic corners of your community.

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Partner with a local health and human services agency that can conduct “robo calls” to recipients of public benefits to inform them about an upcoming workshop.

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Identify potential clients in your agency’s consultation database and contact them by phone or mail to inform them about an upcoming workshop.

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Conduct presentations for ESL/civics classes and provide pre-screening and pre-registration for students. As part of the pre-screening process, make sure that applicants understand the requirements around English language skills, knowledge of U.S. history and civics, and expectations for the interview.

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Record phone numbers of pre-registered participants and send text message reminders several days before the event using google voice or another texting platform.

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Partner with refugee resettlement agencies that can identify former clients who may be eligible for the workshop and mail them an invitation.

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Be prepared to respond to calls and questions about your upcoming event. Make sure you have a dedicated phone number and staff person available to answer calls about upcoming naturalization events. Consider establishing a dedicated hotline with pre-recorded messages in multiple languages, separate from the main office line, to handle high-volume calls and questions about the workshop in order to avoid tying up the main line.

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Provide online registration for workshop attendees using a website created for this purpose. Provide information in two or more applicant languages. Attendees who do not have internet access can call the office and have staff register them on the website and mail their confirmation information to them.

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Inform potential applicants that fee waiver application assistance will be provided and let them know what documentation they need to bring.

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Recruit previous naturalization participants to help encourage family, friends, and other members of their community to sign-up for naturalization workshops and come to informational sessions.

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Don't neglect opportunities to engage potential new volunteers and inform the broader community about your organization's naturalization work. Retirement communities, religious organizations, high schools, and universities are all great places to recruit volunteers.

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Interview applicants who have attended one of your citizenship events and have gone through the naturalization process. Highlight their stories on your organization's website or social media platform. These stories will not only help to bolster the credibility of your organization but will also inspire other LPRs to naturalize and inspire members of the community to volunteer at workshops.

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Take time to evaluate and assess your outreach methods to determine what works and what doesn't. Surveying naturalization workshop participants or clients requesting naturalization services can be an effective and easy way to measure what outreach methods are the most effective.

### **More Resources**

Much of CLINIC's experience with conducting naturalization workshops comes from its work with the New Americans Campaign. Many of the best practices shared in this document come from their resources. For more information, visit: [newamericanscampaign.org](http://newamericanscampaign.org).

For more tips related to naturalization workshops, refer to our companion documents on volunteers, partnerships, and planning at [cliniclegal.org/naturalization](http://cliniclegal.org/naturalization).