



CATHOLIC LEGAL
IMMIGRATION
NETWORK, INC.

Media Toolkit for Citizenship Day and Week

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About Citizenship Day

Citizenship Day, proclaimed by the president of the United States along with Constitution Day or Week, is an opportunity for immigrant advocates, service providers and friends of CLINIC to call attention to the important role that immigrants have played in the development and growth of our country, and in our local communities. Citizenship Day was first proclaimed by President Harry Truman in 1952 and has been observed in some fashion every year since. A federal law enacted by Congress in December 2004 designated September 17 as “Constitution Day and Citizenship Day” to recognize the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787. This day enshrines—what was then and is now—a nation of immigrants.

Celebrating Citizenship Day

What are you doing for Citizenship Day? Tag @cliniclegal in your Facebook or Twitter posts. Your local chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and/or other immigrant rights organizations may be planning a ceremony in your area and would likely welcome your support and engagement.

This year, CLINIC will be celebrating the citizenship stories of new Americans and the CLINIC affiliates who assisted them. During the week of Sept. 17-23, we will be highlighting these individuals and organizations on our blog and social media accounts. We invite you to join us using the hashtag #SwearItShareIt.

You also can help call attention to Citizenship Day by reaching out to your local media. In this toolkit you will find templates you can use and adapt, as appropriate, to send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper; submit a brief opinion article for possible publication and to circulate a press release to newspapers, radio and TV stations, including those in Spanish or other languages, in your area. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact LaRia Land at CLINIC headquarters: 301 565-4812 or lrand@cliniclegal.org.

Try to complete your outreach no later than Sept. 8, which will give editors more than a week to process and schedule Citizenship Day coverage.

The more you localize these templates with information that is specific to your community, the more likely they are to be accepted and used. Examples of areas where you can tailor your outreach:

- The number of immigrants who have become citizens in your state or region in the past year or decade;
- The positive changes that immigrants and new citizens are making that are specific to your area;
- Site-specific development that has occurred—the revitalization of a neighborhood, the opening of new businesses, improvements in the economy—that can be credited in part to new immigrant residents and citizens.

If you make such additions, keep them brief. Most letters to the editor should not exceed 200 words and opinion articles are most likely to be accepted if they are under 750 words. Press releases can be longer, but should be kept brief, as well. Usually you can find instructions for submitting pieces on the web site of your local newspaper or radio/TV outlet. What follows are examples for you to review and adapt. Places where we suggest you add your own content are **colored**.

Template Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

This week the American people will proclaim Constitution Day and Citizenship Day to mark the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787, and to salute the continuing contribution that immigrants from around the world have made, and continue to make, to building our country and communities.

Considering the heightened debate surrounding immigration policy and reform, one might mistakenly think that immigration is a huge problem to be attacked, rather than a historic and positive process that mostly needs streamlining. We are strengthened by our diversity. Last year more than 752,800 immigrant residents became naturalized citizens across the country. In our community there are [hundreds/thousands/many] hard at work to qualify for citizenship and others hoping that Congress will create a legal path that will eventually get them there.

As lawyers, service providers and volunteers, we work every day to help educate and integrate immigrant families into our community. We help them enrich our neighborhoods and our economy with the contributions they make. With national support from the Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc.,(CLINIC) we equip new arrivals to become active and contributing Americans. Providing the keys to integration and self-sufficiency is essential and helps immigrants become active members in American community life.

[Your Executive Director's Name]

Executive Director

[Your Organization]

Template Media Advisory (English)

For Release on or after September 9, 2016

For further information contact: Name and phone number/email

On Citizenship Day, A look at what immigrants bring to [our state] and communities

Editors/News Directors:

Sept. 17 is the 230th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution, and the American people are marking Sept. 17, 2017 as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, honoring the enduring contributions made by immigrants to the growth and success of the United States.

As the late Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said:

"The only title in our democracy superior to that of president is the title of citizen."

We invite you to visit [your organization] and interview our staff and volunteers on the hard work we put in to encourage and promote a path to citizenship. Primarily, we provide legal advice and social referrals to newly-arrived and long-standing immigrant residents, and we are affiliated with Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc. (CLINIC), the largest network of nonprofit immigration legal services programs in the nation.

Based on some political rhetoric, one might think that the arrival of immigrants to the United States is a threat to the country. However, for generations people from other lands have arrived in this area to escape persecution and exploitation in their native countries and to seek a better life for their families. Many await action by Congress so that they may begin a path to legal citizenship. Immigrants are a growing and vital part of our community, and as they successfully integrate into community life they become important cultural and economic contributors. We would be happy to discuss immigration and its impact on our local community as part of a story on Citizenship Day.

For further information please contact: [add contact information]

Template Media Advisory (Spanish)

Para distribución no antes del 9 de septiembre de 2016

Para más información contacte a: [Nombre y número telefónico/email]

En el Día de la Ciudadanía, un reconocimiento a la contribución de los inmigrantes en [su estado] y sus comunidades.

Editores/Directores de noticias:

El 17 de septiembre es el 230 aniversario de la firma de la Constitución estadounidense, y los ciudadanos americanos celebran este día no sólo como el día de la Constitución, si no también como el día de la Ciudadanía, honrando así las constantes contribuciones de los inmigrantes al crecimiento y desarrollo de los Estados Unidos.

En las palabras del antiguo miembro de la Corte Suprema, Louis Brandeis:

“En nuestra democracia, el único título superior al de presidente es el título de ciudadano.”

Lo invitamos a visitar [su organización] y entrevistar a nuestro personal y voluntarios sobre el arduo trabajo que hacemos para incentivar y promover el acceso a la ciudadanía. Fundamentalmente, proveemos consejo legal y referencias tanto a inmigrantes recién llegados como a antiguos residentes y estamos afiliados a la La Red Católica Legal de Inmigración (CLINIC), la red más grande programas de inmigración sin fines de lucro de la nación.

Tomando en cuenta ciertos discursos políticos, uno podría pensar que la llegada de inmigrantes a los EE. UU. es una amenaza para el país. De hecho, durante generaciones millones de extranjeros han llegado a este lugar para escapar de la persecución y la explotación en sus países de origen y para buscar una vida mejor para sus familias. Muchos esperan que el Congreso legisle para darles acceso a la ciudadanía. Los inmigrantes son una parte creciente y vital de nuestra comunidad a medida que se integran exitosamente en ella y se convierten en un importante aporte cultural y económico. Nos encantaría charlar sobre la inmigración y su impacto en nuestra comunidad como parte de un artículo o reportaje sobre el Día de la Ciudadanía.

Para más información contacte a: [agregue nombre y número].

Template Opinion Article

CELEBRATING CITIZENSHIP DAY

By [Your Name]

Since last year's election campaign, immigration has been front and center, which makes today's celebration even more important. This Citizenship Day we focus on America's lasting and unique role as a nation of immigrants.

President Trump will likely issue a proclamation designating Sept. 17 as both Citizenship Day and Constitution Day, celebrating the signing of the U.S. Constitution in Philadelphia on that day in 1787. We urge the more than 20 million naturalized American citizens living in the country today to find a minute to reflect on the lives they've led since arriving in the United States. We also challenge the millions of American-born citizens to reflect on the positive ways their communities have grown because of their immigrant neighbors.

[ENHANCE OR MODIFY] I help run a legal and education center for immigrants here in [your city]. Affiliated with Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc., (CLINIC), we are part of a nationwide grid of lawyers, service providers and volunteers working to help immigrant families get their footing and contribute more openly to their communities.

Throughout America's history, from the Pilgrims to today's arrivals, new residents have brought new ideas and perspectives that helped create the country we know today. While the recently arrived come from different places than those early settlers, they continue to add to the fabric and the culture of American society.

Altogether, foreign-born residents make up about 13 percent of the U.S. population and 16.9 percent of the work force. According to the Small Business Administration, immigrants are more likely to start a business in the United States than non-immigrants, and 20 percent of all small business owners in the United States are immigrants, slightly higher than the comparable share among U.S.-born workers.

[Insert a paragraph about the immigrant community and its contributions in your area. Who do you see in your legal clinic and what do they tell you about wanting to integrate and contribute to America's well-being?]

It's to everyone's advantage that immigrants, once here, become citizens. Naturalized citizens have better access to jobs and education and tend to earn higher wages than other immigrants, which means they pay more taxes. In addition to their cultural contributions, immigrants frequently bring innovative ideas and provide business contacts to other markets, enhancing America's ability to compete in the global economy. For example, foreign-born inventors in 2011 contributed approximately 76 percent of patents issued to the top 10 patent-producing universities.

Generations of immigrants have helped build our cities, pioneer new industries and expand our economy. They are eligible for jury duty and to serve in the military. They are more likely to buy houses, participate in community activities, acquire health insurance and encourage their children to finish school and become productive citizens. Even immigrants who are here without documentation contribute to the economy. They pay employee and sales taxes, and Social Security deductions are taken from their pay checks for services they cannot receive.

We should celebrate the energy that new citizens bring to our country. They help keep America evolving and moving forward.

Talking Points for Citizenship Day

General Citizenship Talking Points

- Citizenship Day—celebrated jointly as Constitution Day—this year marks the 230th anniversary of the signing in Philadelphia, on Sept. 17, 1787, of the U.S. Constitution, the document that underpins our nation of immigrants.
- Citizenship is central to the development and greatness of our country. From its earliest moments, America has been both the land of refuge and opportunity for men, women and children from all parts of the globe.
- Our country’s commitment to integrating the entrepreneurship, diversity and passion of new Americans is a measure of our greatness as a country. When new Americans gain the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of citizenship, they contribute more fully to the vitality of our communities and our society as a whole.
- Naturalized individuals contribute more to society, including serving on juries and in the U.S. military.
- New Americans have greater access to education and employment opportunities.
- Naturalization leads to more stable and cohesive families.

Recent Citizenship Numbers

- In 2016 alone, more than 708,000 people had their applications to naturalize approved. That is about the number of people who live in Seattle or Denver. In the last decade, more than 7.4 million people became new U.S. citizens through the naturalization process. Mexico, the Philippines, India, China and Cuba were the top countries of origin of our new citizens last year.
- Millions of people currently qualify for citizenship as legal residents, based on their “green card” status, which allows them to live and work in the U.S. on a permanent basis. But they face barriers including high application fees, a complex legal process and sometimes dishonest attorneys and *notarios* who take advantage of those seeking legal assistance.

Sample English and Spanish Tweets

English

- Happy Citizenship Day from [@your organization]! Learn how you can support our work with immigrants: [Bitly Link]. #IAmAnAmerican
- What makes you proud to be an immigrant and U.S. Citizen on Citizenship Day? Tell us! #IAmAnAmerican #SwearItShareIt
- RT If you are a proud U.S. citizen and immigrant! #CitizenshipDay #SwearItShareIt
- Celebrate #CitizenshipDay by volunteering with those working to be citizens [@your organization]. Learn more here [your website]
- Happy to Celebrate #Citizenship Day with @Cliniclegal #CitizenshipDay #IamAnImmigrant
- Proud 2 show our commitment 2 #immigrants & new #citizens on #CitizenshipDay #SwearItShareIt @cliniclegal
- #CitizenshipDay Selfie! #Swearitshareit @cliniclegal [Include a picture]
- @USCIS on this #CitizenshipDay will you # SwearItShareIt with @cliniclegal?
- Like @Pontifex, we're proud to create a world where no one is out of place! Happy #CitizenshipDay #walkwithfrancis @USCCB [tag your local archdiocese]

Spanish

- Feliz Día de la Ciudadanía De [@afiliado CLINIC]! Aprenda cómo usted puede apoyar nuestro trabajo con los inmigrantes aquí [Bitly Enlace].
- Comparte esto si usted es inmigrante y un ciudadano orgulloso de EE.UU.! #DíaDeLaCiudadanía
- Celebre el #DíaDeLaCiudadanía y sea voluntario para los que luchan para ser ciudadanos en [programa de afiliados]. Obtenga más información aquí [www.cliniclegal.org]

Other ways to promote Citizenship Day on Social Media

- Post a news story about citizenship.
- Invite friends to volunteer at a Citizenship Day naturalization workshop or other activity.
- Share pictures of how your organization is celebrating Citizenship Day.

Graphics for Social Media

Visit cliniclegal.org/citizenshipweek to download graphics that can be used on Facebook and Twitter.



Post this image on Citizenship Day (Sept. 17) morning. Announce any activities you are hosting that day. Follow up with pictures.

Share this image throughout the week with the tag #SwearItShareIt. Ask your followers to share their naturalization story and tag it #SwearItShareIt. Retweet what they share with you.



Post this image throughout the week. Ask your followers to share it and tag their friends that are newly naturalized citizens, welcoming them to their new home.

For ideas on how to use social media resources and to stay up to date on immigration news, connect with CLINIC online.

 fb.com/cliniclegal

 [@cliniclegal](https://twitter.com/cliniclegal)

The right to vote is a valuable benefit of citizenship. Use this moment and Citizenship Week to remind immigrants to start the process of applying.



Use this image to remind all Americans that citizenship is something to cherish.

Help us support refugees on their path to citizenship. Through text4refugees, refugees can receive free texts about the citizenship process. Learn more at cliniclegal.org/text4refugees.

