Training for Citizenship Navigators:

Overview of the U.S. Naturalization Process and Citizenship Benefits

September 26, 2016
Agenda

✧ Impact of Citizenship

✧ Citizenship Eligibility Requirements

✧ Overview of the Application Process

✧ Overview of the USCIS Interview

✧ Citizenship Navigator Updates and Requests

✧ Questions
Impact of Citizenship

✧ Family Reunification
✧ Derivative Citizenship for Children
✧ Faster Citizenship for Spouse
✧ Full Civic Participation
✧ Travel Benefits
✧ Public Benefits
✧ More Employment and Educational Opportunities
✧ Protection from Deportation and Exclusion
Family Reunification

- Sponsor more family members for a Permanent Resident Visa “Green Card”
- Spouses, minor children and parents of adult U.S. citizens are granted green cards without regard to numerical quotas
- Waiting time is shorter for family petitions
Derivative Citizenship for Children
Faster Citizenship for Spouse
Full Civic Participation

✧ Right to Vote, Hold Elected Office, and Serve on a Jury
Travel Benefits

✧ Travel freely and be protected by the U.S. Embassy
Public Benefits
More Employment and Educational Opportunities
Protection from Deportation and Exclusion
Citizenship
Eligibility Requirements
Age

✧ A naturalization applicant must be at least 18 years old at the time of filing
Permanent Residence Status and Continuous Residence

- An applicant must be a lawful permanent resident ("green card holder") for at least five years or three years if married to a U.S. citizen before applying for naturalization.

- Must have continuous residence in the U.S. during this period for at least 30 months of the five years preceding the date of filing the application.

- Long absences from the U.S. may break continuous residence.

- An applicant must have lived in the state or USCIS district with jurisdiction over the applicant's place of residence for at least 3 months before filing the N-400 application.
An applicant must be able to pass a test on reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English unless qualified for an exemption
An applicant must be able to pass a test on U.S. history and civics.
An applicant may qualify for one of several testing exemptions based on age, long-term residence, and disability.

An applicant with a certain physical or developmental disability or a mental impairment that make him or her unable to learn can apply for a disability-based waiver of the testing requirements.
An applicant must have good moral character (or “GMC”) for five years before applying for naturalization (or three years for the spouses of U.S. citizens).
Selective Service

In general, males must register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday but not after reaching 26 years of age
Oath of Allegiance

✧ An applicant must understand and be willing to take an Oath of Allegiance to the U.S.
✧ The oath requires applicants to renounce allegiance to any other countries and promise to support and defend the Constitution of the U.S.
Overview of the Application Process
Step 1

✧ Complete Form N-400, Application for Naturalization.
✧ Get 2 passport-style photos taken.
✧ Collect the necessary documents to demonstrate your eligibility for naturalization.
✧ Refer to A Guide to Naturalization for more information at www.uscis.gov/natzguide.
✧ Review and sign your Form N-400.
Step 2

✧ Send in your application, photographs, documents, and fees to USCIS. (Refer to www.uscis.gov/n-400 for filing addresses.)
✧ Include Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, if applicable
Step 3

✧ Go to the biometrics appointment, if applicable. You will receive an appointment notice that will include your biometrics appointment date, time, and location.
Step 4

✧ Once all the preliminary processes on your case are complete, USCIS will schedule an interview with you to complete the naturalization process.
✧ You must report to the USCIS office at the date and time on your appointment notice.
Step 5

✧ Complete the in-person interview at USCIS
Step 6

Receive a decision from USCIS on your Form N-400, Application for Naturalization.
Step 7

✧ Receive a notice to take the Oath of Allegiance.
Step 8

✧ Take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States and receive your Certificate of Naturalization.
Overview of the USCIS Interview
During your interview, be prepared to provide corrections, including any new trips overseas, the birth of a child, a new job, etc.

The test of your English speaking ability will begin the moment the officer meets you at your interview.

Bring your driver’s license or state ID, green card, certified marriage and/or divorce decrees for all marriages, passports or travel documents, federal tax returns, proof of registration for selective service.
Sample Interview Questions

✧ The officer may talk with you about everyday life. This is called “small talk.” The purpose is to see if you understand basic English.
   Examples: How’s the weather outside? Did you have any problems finding parking? Have you been waiting a long time to talk to me today?

✧ The officer may ask you a question to see if you understand the reason for your interview.

✧ The officer may ask you why you want to become a United States citizen. Do not take this question lightly. Have a serious answer prepared.
Sample History and Civics Questions

✧ How many U.S. Senators are there?
✧ Where is the Statue of Liberty?
✧ What is the capital of the United States?
✧ What is the name of the national anthem?
✧ Name one problem that led to the Civil War.
Citizenship Navigator Updates

• Please subscribe to the texting campaign!
• Use the hotline if you have questions about citizenship or BIA R&A
• Marketing materials update
• Quarterly Call to occur in October
• Free training on the N-400. Please contact me for the code.
Questions?

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