



Citizenship Frequently Asked Questions - English

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- **Citizenship Application Process:**

- Residency: You must have been a lawful permanent resident (green card holder) for at least 5 years (or 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen for all of those 3 years).
- Good Moral Character: This means having no serious criminal record and demonstrating a history of abiding by the laws of the country.
- Understanding of Country: You should have a basic understanding of U.S. history, government, and the principles outlined in the U.S. Constitution. This generally involves passing a citizenship test and test of English at the naturalization interview - although there are exceptions (see below).

- **What are the steps involved in applying for citizenship?**

- Contact IAC at: immigration@indoamerican.org OR call us at 773-973-444
Complete and initial application here: (jot form)
- A case worker will call you soon after to schedule an interview over the phone, zoom or in person...etc.
- Obtain Form N-400: Get Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website.
- Complete Form N-400: Fill out the form accurately, providing all required personal information.
- Gather Required Documents: Collect necessary documents such as your green card, identification (passport, driver's license), tax returns, and any other documents specified by Form N-400.
- Submit Form N-400: Mail the completed Form N-400 and accompanying documents to the USCIS.
- Attend Biometrics Appointment: After submitting your application, you will be scheduled for a biometrics appointment to provide fingerprints, photograph, and signature.
- Attend Naturalization Interview: Attend an interview at a USCIS office where you will be tested on your knowledge of English and civics.
- Receive Decision: You will receive a decision on your application, and if approved, you will be scheduled for a swearing-in ceremony.

- **How long does the citizenship application process typically take?**

- The processing time for citizenship applications in the United States can vary, but ranges from 3 to 14 months from the time of application submission to the oath ceremony.
- **Are there any citizenship application fees, and how can they be paid?**
 - The current fee for filing Form N-400 is \$760, which includes the application fee and a biometric services fee. Payment can be made by check, money order, or credit card using Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transactions.
Exceptions for fee exempt or partial fee
- **What kind of tests and criteria are there for obtaining citizenship?**
 - You will be required to take the English and civics test as part of the naturalization process. The English test assesses your ability to speak, read, and write in English, while the civics test evaluates your knowledge of U.S. history and government.
- **Are there language or cultural knowledge requirements for citizenship?**
 - Proficiency in English is required for U.S. citizenship. You must demonstrate the ability to read, write, and speak basic English during the naturalization interview. There are no specific cultural knowledge requirements for citizenship in the USA.

Documentation and Forms:

- **What documents are required for a citizenship application?**
 - Form N-400, Application for Naturalization: This is the main form you will need to complete and submit to USCIS.
 - Green Card (Permanent Resident Card): Proof of your lawful permanent residency in the United States.
 - Identification Documents: Such as your passport, state-issued identification, or driver's license.
 - Marriage Certificate (if applicable): If you are applying for citizenship based on marriage to a U.S. citizen for the past 3 years, you will need to provide your marriage certificate.
 - Divorce Decrees or Death Certificates (if applicable): If you have been previously married, provide documentation of divorce or your former spouse's death.
 - Selective Service Registration: If you are a male between the ages of 18 and 26, you must have registered with the Selective Service System.
- **Where can I find and download the necessary forms for my citizenship application?**
 - **Not needed - we can provide right? (We want them to come here).**

- You can find and download the necessary forms for citizenship application (Form N-400) on the official website of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at uscis.gov/forms. Specifically, Form N-400 can be found at this link: [Form N-400, Application for Naturalization](#).
- **How can I request accommodations for disabilities during the citizenship process?**
 - Submit Form N-648: If you are unable to take the English and civics tests due to a physical or developmental disability or mental impairment, you can submit Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, completed by a licensed medical professional.
 - Contact USCIS: You can also contact USCIS directly to request accommodations for other disabilities or special needs. USCIS provides assistance to individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access to its programs and services.
 - Provide Documentation: Be prepared to provide documentation of your disability or special needs when requesting accommodations. This may include medical records or assessments from qualified professionals.

USCIS Account and Application Status:

- **How do I create a USCIS account for my citizenship application?**
 - Visit the official USCIS website at uscis.gov.
 - Navigate to the "Sign In" or "Create an Account" section.
 - Select the option to create a new account.
 - Provide your email address and create a password.
 - Fill out the required personal information, including your name, address, and contact details.
 - Verify your email address by clicking on the verification link sent to your email.
 - Once verified, your USCIS online account is created, and you can log in to begin your citizenship application.
- **Why is it important to have a USCIS account during the application process?**
 - It is important to have a USCIS account during the application process to be able to track your application online, receive important notifications and updates regarding your application status, to be able to communicate with USCIS regarding any questions or concerns about your application, and upload additional documents or evidence requested by USCIS.
- **Can I check the status of my citizenship application online, and if so, how?**
 - Navigate to the "Check Status" or "My Cases" section.
 - Enter the receipt number provided when you submitted your application.

- The status of your application, along with any updates or requests for additional information, will be displayed.
- **Can multiple applicants use the same USCIS account for their applications?**
 - Each individual applicant should create their own separate USCIS online account for their citizenship application. USCIS accounts are personalized and tied to specific applications and individuals. Using a shared account for multiple applicants is not recommended, as it may lead to confusion and privacy issues.
- **What should I do if I encounter technical issues with my USCIS account?**
 - Try clearing your browser's cache and cookies or using a different web browser.
 - If the issue persists, contact USCIS customer support for assistance. You can reach USCIS by phone at 1-800-375-5283 or through their online Contact Us form on the USCIS website. Provide detailed information about the issue you are experiencing, including any error messages or steps you have already taken to troubleshoot the problem.

Miscellaneous Questions

- **Are there any exemptions or considerations for elderly applicants in the citizenship process?**
 - English Language Requirement: Applicants aged 50 or older and who have been lawful permanent residents (green card holders) for at least 20 years are exempt from the English language requirement for naturalization. They can take the civics test in their native language.
 - Civics Test: Elderly applicants may also be eligible for exemptions or accommodations on the civics test based on age and residency status.
- **Can I apply for citizenship if I have a criminal record, and how does it affect the application?**
 - Having a criminal record does not necessarily disqualify you from applying for citizenship in the USA. However, it can impact your application and may result in denial or delays. Factors such as the nature and severity of the offense, how recently it occurred, and your rehabilitation efforts will be considered. USCIS will conduct a thorough review of your criminal history during the application process.
- **What resources are available for citizenship applicants with limited English proficiency?**
 - ESL Classes: Many communities offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to help individuals improve their English language skills.

- Citizenship Preparation Classes: Some organizations and community centers offer citizenship preparation classes specifically designed for individuals with limited English proficiency.
 - Online Resources: USCIS provides free online resources and study materials, including the "Civics Test Study Tools" and "Naturalization Self Test," which are available in multiple languages.
- **How does military service impact the citizenship application process?**
 - Expedited Processing: Active-duty service members and certain veterans may be eligible for expedited processing of their citizenship applications.
 - Waiver of Fees: Some service members may qualify for fee waivers for their citizenship applications.
 - Special Considerations: USCIS provides special considerations and accommodations for military service members and their families throughout the naturalization process.
- **Are there special considerations for refugees or asylees applying for citizenship?**
 - Expedited Naturalization: Refugees and asylees are generally eligible for expedited naturalization after being admitted to the United States.
 - Waiver of Certain Requirements: USCIS may waive certain requirements, such as the residency and physical presence requirements, for refugees and asylees applying for citizenship.
- **What happens if I miss my scheduled citizenship interview?**
 - If you miss your scheduled citizenship interview in the USA, USCIS will typically reschedule the interview and send you a new appointment notice. It's essential to contact USCIS as soon as possible to explain the reason for missing the interview and request a new appointment.
- **What rights and responsibilities come with citizenship, and where can I learn about them?**
 - Rights: These include the right to vote in federal elections, the ability to travel with a U.S. passport, and eligibility for federal benefits and protections.
 - Responsibilities: Citizens are required to uphold and obey federal, state, and local laws, serve on a jury when called upon, pay taxes, and defend the country if necessary.