

Glossary of Terms

A Guide to Naturalization – The booklet you are reading.

Aggravated Felony – Usually refers to particularly serious crimes. If you have committed an aggravated felony, you may be permanently ineligible for naturalization. The Immigration and Nationality Act and the laws in each State determine what is considered an aggravated felony.

Application Support Center (ASC) – USCIS offices where applicants usually have their biometrics taken. Once you have filed your application with USCIS, you will receive a notice telling you which ASC serves your area.

AR-11, “Alien’s Change of Address Card” – This is the form you use to tell USCIS when you have moved to a new address. The AR-11 is pre-printed with USCIS’ address. It is very important to tell USCIS when your address changes. This way, you will receive any information USCIS sends you, including interview notices and requests for additional documents.

Certificate of Naturalization – A certificate given at the oath ceremony. It serves as evidence of your citizenship. USCIS also recommends getting a United States passport as evidence that you are a U.S. citizen.

Community-Based Organization (CBO) – Organizations that assist immigrants who are new to the United States or who are going through the naturalization process. Many CBOs will help you complete your application and guide you through the naturalization process. CBOs may charge a fee or offer their services free of charge.

Constitution – The supreme law of the United States. It may be changed only through amendment by Congress and ratification by three-fourths of the States.

Continued – One of three things that may happen to your case after your interview (granted, denied, or continued). If your case is continued, it is put on hold until further action is taken by you or USCIS. If your case is continued, USCIS may ask you to provide more documents or to come to an additional interview.

Continuous Residence – An important requirement for naturalization. Continuous residence may be broken if you take a single trip out of the country that lasts for 6 months or more.

Denied – One of three things that may happen to your case after your interview (granted, denied, or continued). If your application is denied, USCIS has determined that you have not met the eligibility requirements for naturalization.

Districts – The geographic divisions of the United States used by USCIS.

G-28, “Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative” – The form you must file with your Form N-400 if you wish to bring a representative with you to your USCIS interview.

Good Moral Character – Good moral character is an important eligibility requirement for naturalization. When determining if an applicant has good moral character, USCIS considers such things as honesty and criminal records.

Granted – One of three things that may happen to your case after your interview (granted, denied, or continued). If USCIS determines that you are eligible, your application will be approved or “granted.” After you take the Oath of Allegiance, you will be a United States citizen.

N-400, “Application for Naturalization” – The N-400 is the form that all people 18 years of age or older use to apply for naturalization.

N-445, “Notice of Naturalization Oath Ceremony” – If you are approved for naturalization, you will receive an N-445 telling you when and where to attend your oath ceremony. On the back of the form will be several questions that you must answer before you check in at the ceremony.

N-470, “Application to Preserve Residence for Naturalization Purposes” – The N-470 is a form that certain types of applicants who plan to remain longer than a year outside the United States may file to preserve “continuous residence” status.

N-565, “Application for Replacement Naturalization/ Citizenship Document” – If you lose your Certificate of Naturalization, or your Certificate of Citizenship, you may file an N-565 to get a replacement. USCIS advises naturalized citizens to also obtain a United States passport as evidence of their U.S. citizenship.

N-600, “Application for Certificate of Citizenship” – Qualified U.S. residents born outside the United States to U.S. citizen parents, or parents who became citizens, may file a Form N-600 to get a Certificate of Citizenship.

N-600K, “Application for Citizenship and Issuance of Certificate under Section 322” – Qualified children born to U.S. citizen parents, and currently residing outside the United States, may obtain naturalization and a Certificate of Citizenship by filing Form N-600K.

N-648, “Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions” – The form used to apply for a disability exemption. If you have a qualifying medical disability that prevents you from fulfilling the English and civics requirement, you must have a licensed medical or osteopathic doctor, or licensed clinical psychologist complete and sign an N-648. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to submit the N-648 at the time of filing the N-400 to ensure timely adjudication of both applications.

Naturalization – Naturalization is the process by which immigrants apply to become U.S. citizens.

Naturalization Eligibility Worksheet – This is a worksheet in the back of this *Guide* that you may use as a tool to determine whether you are eligible for naturalization. Do not send this worksheet to USCIS at any time; it is for your use only.

Oath Ceremony – To become a naturalized citizen of the United States, you must attend an oath ceremony where you take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States.

Oath of Allegiance to the United States – The oath you take to become a U.S. citizen. When you take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States, you are promising to give up your allegiance to other countries and to support and defend the United States and its Constitution and laws. Ability to take and understand the Oath of Allegiance is a normal requirement for becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen.

Outlying Possessions – The current outlying possessions of the United States are American Samoa and Swains Island.

Permanent Resident – A Permanent Resident is a person who has been granted permanent resident status in the United States and has (or is waiting for) a Permanent Resident Card.

Permanent Resident Card – The Permanent Resident Card is a USCIS document that identifies a person as a Permanent Resident. The Permanent Resident Card may be identified as Form I-551. The Permanent Resident Card used to be known as the Alien Registration Card and/or “Green Card.”

Physical Presence – Physical presence in the United States is an important eligibility requirement. Most naturalization applicants must spend a specified amount of time in the United States in order to meet the physical presence requirement for naturalization.

Except in a few cases, time spent outside of the United States, even brief trips to Canada and Mexico, does not count toward your “physical presence.”

Port-of-Entry – The Port-of-Entry is the place where you legally entered the country as a Permanent Resident.

Selective Service – The Selective Service System is the Federal agency responsible for providing manpower to the U.S. Armed Forces in an emergency. Male applicants generally are required to have registered with the Selective Service before applying for naturalization. See pages 28-29 for information on who is required to register, how to register, and what to do if you were required to register but did not, or call the Selective Service System at **1-847-688-6888** for more information.

Service Center – USCIS Service Centers handle and adjudicate most applications for immigration services and benefits. There are four USCIS Service Centers in the United States.

USCIS Forms Line – The USCIS Forms Line distributes all forms for immigration and naturalization. You can call the Forms Line at **1-800-870-3676** to have any USCIS forms sent to you, including the “Application for Naturalization” (Form N-400).

USCIS Information Counter – USCIS offices have information counters staffed by USCIS employees called Immigration

Information Officers (IIOs). IIOs are available to answer questions you have about naturalization. Remember to use InfoPass to make an appointment to talk to an IIO. Visit our website at **www.uscis.gov** for instructions on how to use InfoPass.

USCIS Lockbox Facility – There are four Lockbox Facilities in the United States that handle the receipting of applications for immigration services and benefits.

U.S. National (but not U.S. Citizen) – A person who, because of his or her birth in American Samoa or on Swains Island, owes permanent allegiance to the United States, and who may naturalize based on residence in an outlying possession of the United States.

United States Passport – A U.S. passport is an official document that identifies you as a U.S. citizen. All naturalized citizens are encouraged to get a passport as soon as possible after they are naturalized.