

CLATSOP COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Naturalization Process: the path to US citizenship

A Guidebook

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The following pages will provide the reader with a basic outline of the how to apply for US citizenship.

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First, determine if you are eligible to apply.

- ▶ Have **Permanent Residency** (“green card”) status for **at least 5 years**, or for **3 years**, if married to a **US citizen**.
- ▶ Meet the **Residency Requirements** (number of continuous days in the US): no more than 6 months at one time outside the US in the last 5 years. See the link for below for specific residency requirements.
<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=399faf4c0adb4210VgnVCM10000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=399faf4c0adb4210VgnVCM10000082ca60aRCRD>
- ▶ Have a **Military Exemption**: *If you have a green card and are willing to enlist in the US military for active duty, the residency requirements can be expedited and the fees can be waived.*
- ▶ Look at this site below for a **brochure to determine other aspects of eligibility**:
<http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/G-1151.pdf>



How much does the application cost?

- ▶ Application fee = **\$595.00**
- ▶ Biometrics (fingerprinting) fee = **\$85.00**
- ▶ Total fee = **\$680.00**
- ▶ Exceptions in which the applicant is not required to pay the entire \$680:
Applicants 75 years of age or older are not charged a biometric fee, the total fee is \$595.
No fee is required for military applicants filing under Section 328 and 329 of the INA

Are there fee waivers available if I cannot afford to pay?

- ▶ See the fee waiver form (the I-912) at www.uscis.gov/i-912
- ▶ See the instructions for the fee waiver at www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/files/form/i-912instr.pdf
- ▶ **Keep in mind that you cannot e-file an N-400 if you are applying for a fee waiver. You must submit a paper application.**



How long does USCIS take to process your application?

- ▶ (In **Oregon**, varies in other locations) **4-6 months** after you submit your application, you will receive an **appointment** for the interview and test in **Portland**.
- ▶ You will receive an **appointment to be fingerprinted** in **Portland** within a **month or so of filing** your application and fees. You will have to be fingerprinted even if you have done so in the past.
- ▶ Be **prepared to pass your tests** within this time period.



What is the N-400?

- ▶ It is the **application** for naturalization.
<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/n-400.pdf>
- ▶ Use the **instructions** to fill out the N-400.
<http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/n-400instr.pdf>
- ▶ You will need to provide other documents with the N-400. Look at the **Document Checklist** to learn what these forms are.
<http://www.uscis.gov/files/article/attachments.pdf>



Where do I send my application?

All Applicants *(Current or former members of the military, spouses of current members of the military and close relatives of deceased members of the military should check at the site below for a different mailing address.)*

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=480ccac09aa5d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD&vgnnextchannel=db029c7755cb9010VgnVCM10000045f3d6a1RCRD>

If you reside in **Oregon**, send your application to the USCIS Phoenix Lockbox Facility at the following address:

**USCIS
P.O. Box 21251
Phoenix, AZ 85036**

For **Express Mail** or **courier deliveries**, use the following address:

**USCIS
Attn: N-400
1820 E. Skyharbor Circle S, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85034**



The English Test and Civics Exam

► The English test has 4 parts.

- (1) During the **interview**, the immigration officer will do an oral **review of the N-400 application** with you; this is **considered part of the English test**. **Do you understand the questions and can you respond** to them?
- (2) The **civics and history exam is conducted in English**. There are **100** questions and you will be asked **10** of them. You must answer **6** correctly to pass. **The questions and answers are available for study**.
- (3) There is a small **reading component**. You will be asked to read a sentence or two in English. **All the words that will be asked to read are available for study**.
- (4) There is a small **writing component**. You will be asked to **write a sentence** in English. **All the words that will be asked are available for study**.

If you fail the tests, you will have one more chance in the near future to retake the interview and exam. If you fail a second time, you must reapply and pay the \$680.00 fee again.



Are there exemptions to the testing process?

- ▶ If you are **age 50 or older** at the time of filing for naturalization and **have lived as a permanent resident** (green card holder) in the United States for **20 years** (commonly referred to as the “50/20” exception).
- ▶ **Age 55 or older** at the time of filing for naturalization and **have lived as a permanent resident in the United States for 15 years** (commonly referred to as the “55/15” exception).

*Even if you qualify for the “50/20” or “55/15” English language exceptions listed above, you **must still take the civics test.***

- ▶ You **may be permitted to take the civics test in your native language**, but only if your understanding of spoken English is insufficient to conduct a valid examination in English.
- ▶ **If you take the test in your native language, you must bring an interpreter** with you to your interview.
Your interpreter must be fluent in both English and your native language.
- ▶ If you are **age 65 or older** and **have been a permanent resident for at least 20 years** at the time of filing for naturalization, **you will be given special consideration** regarding the civics requirement. See the link below to see the abbreviated civics exam.

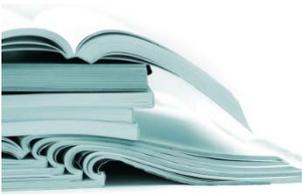
<http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/65-20q.pdf>

http://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/65-20q_Spanish.pdf



Medical Disability Exceptions to the English and Civics Exams

You may be eligible for an exception to the English and civics naturalization requirements if you are unable to comply with these requirements because of a **physical or developmental disability or a mental impairment**. To request this exception, submit [Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions](#). This form must be completed by a licensed medical or osteopathic doctor, or licensed clinical psychologist.



Where can I find materials to study for the tests?

ENGLISH

- For the 100 Civics and History Questions and Answers, see

<http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/100q.pdf>

- For the English reading vocabulary, see

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/reading_vocab.pdf

- For the English writing vocabulary, see

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/M-715_writing.pdf

See page 4 of the above document for the complete list.

- For the video, *A Promise of Freedom: An Introduction to U.S. History and Civics for Immigrants*, see

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.acfc8bb2d633f506e34f4a10526e0aa0/?vgnnextoid=807c7f64aef2b210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=c242df6bdd42a210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD>

This video is available with subtitles in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

- Watch a sample interview and test administration at:

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.acfc8bb2d633f506e34f4a10526e0aa0/?vgnextoid=64f22cac1551b210VgnVCM10000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=5efcebb7d4ff8210VgnVCM10000025e6a00aRCRD>

- For other practice materials, including audio and self-testing materials, see

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.749cabd81f5ffc8fba713d10526e0aa0/?vgnextoid=b51777f48e73a210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=4982df6bdd42a210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD>

SPANISH LANGUAGE MATERIALS

- For 100 Civics and History Questions and Answers in Spanish

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/100q_Spanish.pdf

- Listen to the question and answers in Spanish (MP3 version) @

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis-es/menuitem.88b9a0d53f10bd18d52fae1074a191a0/?vgnextoid=d6f6eafd674ce210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=cab116685e1e6210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>

- *A Promise of Freedom: An Introduction to U.S. History and Civics for Immigrants* Video (Spanish captions)

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.acfc8bb2d633f506e34f4a10526e0aa0/?vgnextoid=1a9bd63b1a43b210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=3f40d63b1a43b210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>

- The USCIS Naturalization Sample Interview and Test Video (Spanish captions)

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.acfc8bb2d633f506e34f4a10526e0aa0/?vgnextoid=aab2d63b1a43b210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=3f40d63b1a43b210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>



TEST MATERIALS in OTHER LANGUAGES

ARABIC

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/files/100q_Arabic.pdf

CHINESE

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/100q_Chinese.pdf

KOREAN

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/files/100q_Korean.pdf

TAGALOG

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/100q_Tagalog.pdf

VIETNAMESE

http://www.uscis.gov/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/PDFs/100q_Vietnamese.pdf



United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

The USCIS Website has much more information.

Home Page

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>

Citizenship Resource Center

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnnextoid=9f2e9ddf801b3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=9f2e9ddf801b3210VgnVCM100000b92ca60aRCRD>

To Purchase Study Materials from the Government Printing Office

<http://bookstore.gpo.gov/products/sku/027-002-00575-9?ctid=146>

Most of the materials available for purchase are accessible for free on the USCIS Citizenship Resource Center webpage.

Have more questions?

Need help learning English?

Want to practice for the tests?

***The Clatsop Community College Outreach Literacy Program
can help!***

503-338-2557

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