



MATURALIZATION

THE HOW AND WHY OF APPLYING BY

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SHOULD I CONSIDER U.S. CITIZENSHIP?

As a permanent resident, you have most of the rights of U.S. citizens. However, there are many important reasons to consider U.S. citizenship. Citizenship offers new rights and privileges, but comes with equally important responsibilities. As a citizen you can:

VOTE

Only citizens can vote in federal elections. Most states also restrict the right to vote, in most elections, to U.S. citizens.

SERVE ON A JURY

Only U.S. citizens can serve on a federal jury. Most states also restrict jury service to U.S. citizens. Serving on a jury is an important responsibility for U.S. citizens.

TRAVEL WITH A U.S. PASSPORT

A U.S. passport enables you to get assistance from the U.S. government when overseas, if necessary.

BRING FAMILY MEMBERS TO THE U.S.

U.S. citizens generally get priority when petitioning to bring family members permanently to this country.

OBTAIN CITIZENSHIP FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

In most cases, a child born abroad to a U.S. citizen is automatically a U.S. citizen.



APPLY FOR FEDERAL JOBS

Certain jobs with government agencies require U.S. citizenship

BECOME AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

Only citizens can run for federal office (U.S. Senate or House of Representatives) and for most state and localoffices.

KEEP YOUR RESIDENCY

A U.S. citizen's right to remain in the United States cannot be taken away.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR NATURALIZATION?

Before you apply for naturalization, you must meet a few requirements. Depending on your situation, there are different requirements that may apply to you. However, generally, an applicant for naturalization must:

- Be 18 years old or older at the time of filing Form N-400, Application for Naturalization.
- Be a lawful permanent resident (have a "green card").
- Demonstrate continuous permanent residence in the United States for at least 5 years. (In some cases, this may be 3 years if you are married to a U.S. citizen.)
- Show that you have been physically present in the United States for 30 months. (In some cases, this may be 18 months if you are married to a U.S. citizen.)
- Show that you have lived for at least 3 months in the state or USCIS district where you claim residence. Before applying for naturalization please keep in mind that if you have a parent that was a U.S. citizen, either by birth or naturalization, before you turned 18 years old, you may have a claim to citizenship. The form to file a claim to U.S. citizenship is Form N-600, Application for Certificate of Citizenship.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

These are general guidelines that do not apply to every applicant. For more information on these requirements, please visit our other pages for more information

CAN YOU SPEAK, READ, AND WRITE BASIC ENGLISH AND DO YOU HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF U.S. HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT (CIVICS)?

During your interview, a USCIS Officer will test your ability to read, write, and speak English and your knowledge of civics. Many times the reason applicants fail the naturalization test is that they cannot answer the interview questions in English. To find English and/or citizenship classes where you live, visit www.literacydirectory.org or contact your local community college or adult education program. You should be prepared for the English portion of your naturalization test when you submit your application. At your naturalization interview, you will also be tested on your knowledge of U.S. history and government (civics).



DO YOU SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLES AND IDEALS OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND ARE YOU WILLING TO SWEAR AN OATH TO THE UNITED STATES?



You must be willing to support and defend the United States and its Constitution. You declare your "attachment" or loyalty to the United States and the Constitution when you take the Oath of Allegiance at your naturalization ceremony. You become a U.S. citizen after you take the Oath of Allegiance.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN MARRIED, DIVORCED, WIDOWED, OR HAD YOUR NAME LEGALLY CHANGED?

If yes, bring a copy of your marriage certificate, your divorce or annulment decree, or the death certificate of your former spouse. If you changed your name through a court, bring a copy of the court decree that legally changed your name. Also, if your current spouse was married before, bring evidence of the termination of your spouse's prior marriage(s). Failing to show proof of your current marital status or legal name may delay your case.



HAVE YOU TRAVELED OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES SINCE BECOMING A PERMANENT RESIDENT?

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HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED, DETAINED, OR CITED BY THE POLICE OR ANY OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER?

If yes, bring documents that show the court disposition of the case to your interview. These documents show the final outcome of the case and are required for all arrests and detentions, including expunged records and plea bargains. If you were put on probation, bring evidence that you completed your probation. Failing to provide original or certified copies of court disposition documents could delay your case. Please note that uncertified photocopies are not acceptable.



ARE YOU A MAN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 26?

If you are a man between the ages of 18 and 26, you must register for the Selective Service and provide proof of your registration to USCIS. If you are 26 or older but under the age of 31, you must provide proof that you registered with the Selective Service when you were required to do so. If you were required to register and did not, you must bring to your interview both a written statement explaining why you did not register and a letter from the Selective Service System indicating your status. For more information about Selective Service registration or how to get proof that you registered, visit www.sss.gov or call 1-888-655-1825.



HAVE YOU REPORTED YOUR INCOME ON YOUR INCOME TAX FORMS?

Your tax returns are very important proof that you are eligible for naturalization. On the day of your interview, bring certified tax returns for the last 5 years (3 years if you are married to a U.S. citizen). Certified tax transcripts may be ordered by using Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 4506-T available at www.irs.gov or calling 1-800-829-1040.



ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR A DISABILITY WAIVER OR AGE-BASED EXEMPTION?

You may not need to take the English and civics portions of the naturalization test if you have a medical disability that prevents you from demonstrating knowledge of English or civics. To apply for this exemption, your doctor must complete Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions. The best time to submit this for, is with your Form N-400, Application for Naturalization. You are allowed to bring Form N-648 to your interview, but this may delay your case. Some people who apply for naturalization may not have to meet the English requirement because of their age and the length of time they have lived in the United States as a permanent resident.



10 STEPS TO NATURALIZATION



DETERMINE IF YOU ARE ALREADY A U.S. CITIZEN

You can become a U.S. citizen by birth or through naturalization. Generally, people are born U.S. citizens if they are born in the United States or if they are born abroad to U.S. citizens. You may also derive U.S. citizenship as a minor following the naturalization of one or both parents.

- Were you born in the United States or a territory of the United States? If yes, you may already be a U.S. citizen.
- Is at least one of your parents a U.S. citizen? If you have a U.S. citizen parent who is a U.S. citizen by either birth or naturalization you may already be a citizen.



WHAT TO DO:

If you are not a U.S. citizen by birth, or did not acquire or derive U.S. citizenship from your parent(s) automatically after birth, go to the next step

DETERMINE YOUR ELIGIBILITY TO BECOME A U.S. CITIZEN

In general, you may qualify for naturalization if you are at least 18 years old and have been a permanent resident for at least 5 years (or 3 years if you are married to a U.S. citizen) and meet all other eligibility requirements.





🖔 WHAT TO DO:

Visit our Naturalization Home at http://geygan.net/immigration/naturalization-home/for information on the naturalization test and available study materials.

PREPARE FORM N-400. APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION

. hen you meet all requirements to become a U.S. citizen, contact our office to complete Form N-400 to apply for naturalization. If you would like to do this yourself download Form N-400 at www.uscis.gov/n-400 or call the USCIS Forms Line at 1-800-870-3676 to request a copy.



🍟 WHAT TO DO:

- Contact our office
- Come in and sign your Form N-400.
- Get 2 passport-style photos taken.
- Collect the necessary documents to demonstrate your eligibility for naturalization.
- Review your Form N-400 and supporting documents.

SUBMIT FORM N-400. APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION

We will send in your application, photographs, documents, and fees to USCIS. Once we submit Form N-400, it will be about 2 weeks before we get your receipt notices. You can check current processing times and the status of your application by visiting www.uscis. gov or by calling Customer Service at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (hearing impaired) or our online system.

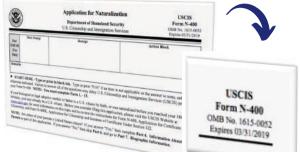
GO TO THE BIOMETRICS APPOINTMENT. IF APPLICABLE

USCIS requires applicants to be fingerprinted for the purpose of conducting Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal background checks. All applicants must have background checks completed before USCIS will schedule an interview. If you are 75 years old or older at the time of filing, you are exempted from the fingerprint requirements, but are subject to all other background checks.



WHAT TO DO:

- Receive an appointment notice that will include your biometrics appointment date. time, and location.
- Arrive at the designated location at the scheduled time.
- Have biometrics taken.
- At a later date, you will receive an appointment notice for your naturalization interview.



COMPLETE THE INTERVIEW

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. Please bring the appointment notice with you. It is very important not to miss your interview. If you have to miss your interview, you should write to the office where your interview is to be conducted as soon as possible and ask to have your interview rescheduled. Rescheduling an interview may add several months to the naturalization process, so make all attempts to attend your original interview date.

RECEIVE A DECISION FROM USCIS ON YOUR FORM N-400. APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION

You will be issued a written notice of decision.

- Granted—USCIS may approve your Form N-400 if the evidence on record establishes your eligibility for naturalization.
- Denied—USCIS will deny your Form N-400 if the evidence on record establishes you are not eligible for naturalization.

RECEIVE A NOTICE TO TAKE THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

USCIS requires applicants to be fingerprinted for the purpose of conducting Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal background checks. All applicants must have background checks completed before USCIS will schedule an interview. If you are 75 years old or older at the time of filing, you are exempted from the fingerprint requirements, but are subject to all other background checks.



🖔 WHAT TO EXPECT:

You may be able to participate in the oath ceremony on the same day as your interview. If a same day oath ceremony is unavailable, USCIS will mail you a notification with the date, time, and location of your scheduled oath ceremony. If you cannot attend the oath ceremony on the day USCIS scheduled you, return the USCIS notice Form N-445, Notice of Naturalization Oath Ceremony, to your local USCIS office. Include a letter explaining why you cannot attend the oath ceremony. Ask USCIS to reschedule you

TAKE THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES

You are not a U.S. citizen until you take the Oath of Allegiance at a naturalization ceremony. The oath is administered by USCIS at an administrative ceremony or by a judge in a judicial ceremony. A court has exclusive authority to conduct the ceremonies in certain USCIS districts. You receive your Certificate of Naturalization after taking the Oath of Allegiance.

UNDERSTANDING U.S. CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship is the common thread that connects all Americans. Below is a list of some of the most important rights and responsibilities that all citizens—both Americans by birth and by choice— should exercise, honor, and respect. While some of these responsibilities are legally required of every citizen, all are important to ensure the continued vitality of our country and democracy.

RIGHTS



- Freedom to express yourself.
- Freedom to worship as you wish.
- Right to a prompt, fair trial by jury.
- Right to vote in elections for public officials.
- Right to apply for federal employment requiring U.S. citizenship.
- Right to run for elected office.
- Freedom to pursue "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Support and defend the U.S. Constitution.
- Stay informed of the issues affecting your community.
- Participate in the democratic process.
- Respect and obey federal, state, and local laws.
- Respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others.
- Participate in your local community.
- Pay income and other taxes honestly, and on time, to federal, state, and local authorities.
- Serve on a jury when called upon.
- Defend the country if the need should arise.



DUAL NATIONALITY



Section 101(a)(22) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) states that "the term"national of the United States' means (A) a citizen of the United States. or (B) a person who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States." Therefore, U.S. citizens are also U.S. nationals. Non-citizen nationality status refers only individuals who were born either in American Samoa or on Swains Island to parents who are not citizens of the United States. The concept of dual nationality means that a person is a national of two countries at the same time. Each country has its own nationality laws based on its own policy. Persons may have dual nationality by automatic operation of different laws rather than by choice. For example, a child born in a foreign country to U.S. national parents may be both a U.S. national and a national of the country of birth. Or, an individual having one nationality at birth may naturalize at a later date in another country and become a dual national.

U.S. law does not mention dual nationality or require a person to choose one nationality or another. A U.S. citizen may naturalize in a foreign state without any risk to his or her U.S. citizenship. However, persons who acquire a foreign nationality after age 18 by applying for it may relinquish their U.S. nationality if they wish to do so. In order to relinquish U.S. nationality by virtue of naturalization as a citizen of a foreign state, the law requires that the person must apply for the foreign nationality voluntarily and with the intention to relinguish U.S. nationality. Intent may be shown by the person's statements and conduct.

Dual nationals owe allegiance to both the United States and the foreign country. They are required to obey the laws of both countries, and either country has the right to enforce its laws. It is important to note the problems attendant to dual nationality. Claims of other countries upon U.S. dual-nationals often place them in situations where their obligations to one country are in conflict with the laws of the other. In addition, their dual nationality may hamper efforts of the U.S. Government to provide consular protection to them when they are abroad, especially when they are in the country of their second nationality.

U.S. nationals, including dual nationals, must use a U.S. passport to enter and leave the United States. Dual nationals may also be required by the foreign country to use its passport to enter and leave that country. Use of the foreign passport to travel to or from a country other than the United States is not inconsistent with U.S. law.



NATURALIZATION ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET INSTRUCTIONS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS WORKSHEET?

The attached "Eligibility Worksheet" will help you decide if you are eligible to apply for naturalization. Do not send the completed worksheet to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THIS WORKSHEET?

If you are 18 years of age or older and are thinking about applying for naturalization based on your years as a Permanent Resident, you should complete this worksheet.

WHO SHOULD NOT USE THIS WORKSHEET?

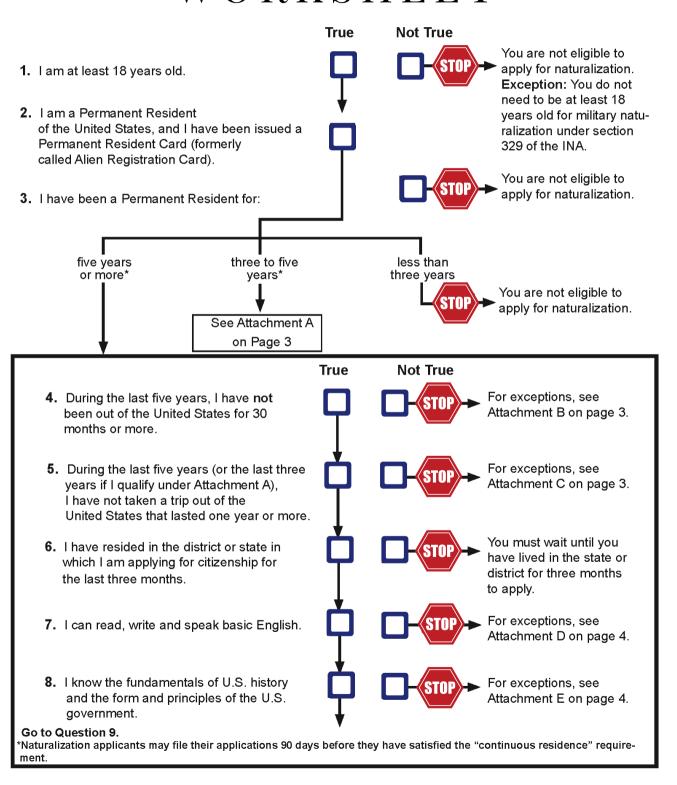
You should not use this worksheet to decide your eligibilty to apply if you are:

- Under 18 years of age and want to apply for naturalization based on your parents' or adopted parents' citizenship (see Questions 25 and 26 on pages 13-15 in A Guide to Naturalization for information on how to obtain citizenship).
- A Permanent Resident whose spouse was a U.S. citizen who died while on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces (see pages 18 and 19 in A Guide to Naturalization for information on your naturalization requirements).
- Applying for naturalization based on active duty service in the U.S. Armed Forces (see pages 18 and 19 in A Guide to Naturalization for information on your naturalization requirements).
- A spouse of a U.S. citizen who is (a) a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, (b) an employee or contractor of the U.S. Government, (c) an employee of an American institution of research, (d) an employee of an American owned firm, (e) an employee of a public international organization, or (f) a clergy member (see pages 20 and 21 in A Guide to Naturalization for more information).

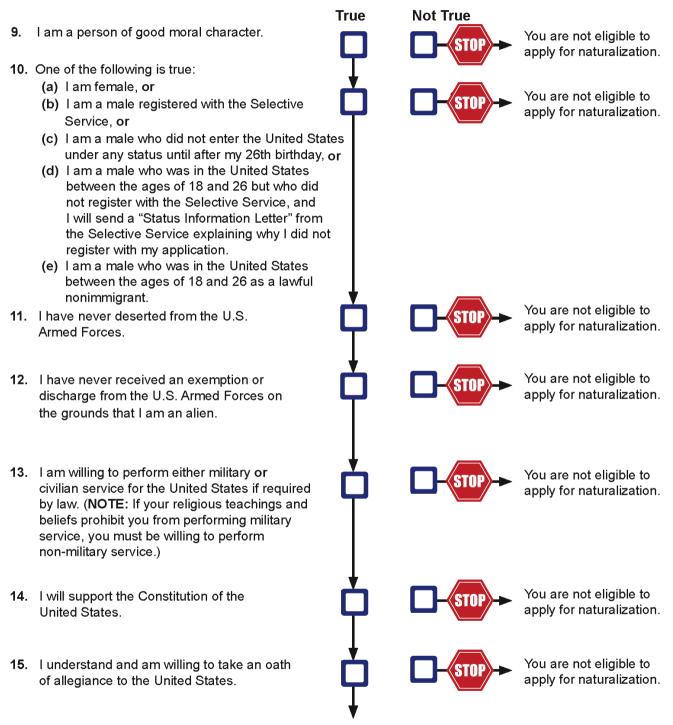
Directions for the Eligibility Worksheet:

- Answer the questions on the worksheet by checking "True" or "Not True." If you answer "Not True" to certain questions, you may be asked to answer additional questions on pages 3 and 4. Most applicants will not need to answer the questions on pages 3 and 4.
- If you have completed the worksheet and believe you are eligible for naturalization, please call the USCIS Forms Line (1-800-870-3676) to request an application (Form N-400), or download the form from the Internet at www.uscis.gov.
- If you have completed the worksheet and you still have questions regarding your eligibility, you should read A Guide to Naturalization. You may also wish to get advice from an immigrant assistance organization or immigration attorney.

NATURALIZATION ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET



NATURALIZATION ELIGIBILITY WORKSHEET



STOP HERE: You are probably eligible to apply for naturalization. Please call the Forms Line (1-800-870-3676) for an "Application for Naturalization" (Form N-400) and be sure to read *A Guide to Naturalization*.

ATTACHMENT A

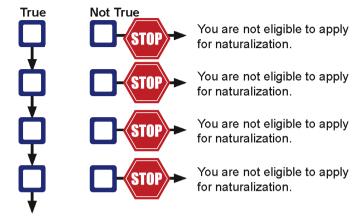
I have been a Permanent Resident for three to five years

I am married to, and living with, a U.S. citizen.

I have been married to that U.S. citizen for at least the past three years.

My spouse has been a U.S. citizen for at least the past three years.

During the past three years, I have **not** been out of the country for 18 months or more.



If you answered "True" to all four questions, go to Question 5 on page 1.

ATTACHMENT B

I have been out of the country for 30 months or more

I am: (a) A person who has served on board a vessel operated by or registered in the United States, or

- (b) An employee or an individual under contract to the U.S. Government, or
- (c) A person who performs ministerial or priestly functions for a religious denomination or an interdenominational organization with a valid presence in the United States.



True

True

You are not eligible to apply for naturalization.

If you answered "True," see pages 20 and 21 in *A Guide to Naturalization* to get more information and go to Question 5 on page 1.

ATTACHMENT C

I have been out of the country for one year or more

Since becoming a Permanent Resident, I have not taken a trip out of the United States that lasted for one year or more without an approved "Application to Preserve Residence for Naturalization Purposes" (Form N-470).

NOTE: Only certain persons can use Form N-470. See Pages 18-21 in *A Guide to Naturalization* for more information.

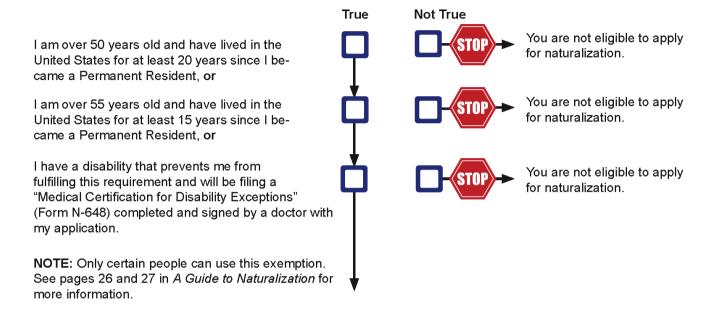
If you answered "True," go to Question 6 on page 1.



You are not eligible to apply for naturalization.

ATTACHMENT C

I cannot read, write or speak basic English



If you answered "True" to one of these questions, go to Question 8 on page 1.

ATTACHMENT C

I have a disability that prevents me from fulfilling the civics requirement

I have a disability that prevents me from fulfilling the civics requirement, and I will be filing "Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions" (Form N-648) completed and signed by a doctor with my application.

NOTE: Only certain people can use this exemption. See pages 26 and 27 in *A Guide to Naturalization* for more information.

If you answered "True" to the question, go to Question 9 on page 2.

NOW THAT YOU ARE A U.S. CITIZEN . . .



APPLY FOR A U.S. PASSPORT

Now that you are a U.S. citizen, you can apply for a U.S. passport from the U.S. Department of State. You will need to submit your original Form N-550, Certificate of Naturalization, AND a photocopy when applying for your U.S. passport. For more information, passport forms, and to find a passport acceptance facility near you please visit travel.state.gov. You may also apply for a U.S. passport for any child under the age of 18 who automatically acquired citizenship based on your naturalization.

UPDATE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY RECORD

You will need to visit Social Security so they can update your Social Security record. Wait at least 10 days after your ceremony before doing so and be prepared to show them your Certificate of Naturalization or your U.S. passport. It is important that your Social Security record is accurate because you will need your Social Security Number (SSN) to get a job, collect Social Security benefits, and receive other government services. When you are hired for a job, your employer can enter your SSN into a U.S. Department of Homeland Security web-based system, E-Verify to determine your eligibility to work in the United States. If your record has not been updated, this may impact the information your employer receives about your work eligibility. To find your Social Security office, call 1-800-772-1213 or visit ssa.gov.

REGISTER TO VOTE

As a new U.S. citizen, you may register to vote. You can register to vote by applying in person, by mail, at public assistance offices, or when you apply for or renew your driver's license. Visit the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's website at eac.gov for more information.

OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP FOR YOUR CHILD

If you have a child who is a lawful permanent resident under the age of 18 on the day you naturalize, he or she may have automatically acquired U.S. citizenship. To obtain evidence of your child's acquired U.S. citizenship status, file Form N-600, Application for Certificate of Citizenship. You can also apply for a U.S. passport from the U.S. Department of State.

SPONSOR FAMILY MEMBERS TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES

As a citizen of the United States, you may petition for certain relatives to become lawful permanent residents and obtain what is often referred to as a "Green Card." To do so, you need to sponsor your relative and be able to prove that you have enough income or assets to support your relative(s) in the United States.

REPLACING YOUR CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION

If you lose your Form N-550, Certificate of Naturalization, you may replace it by filing Form N-565, Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document You can find instructions and filing fee information online at uscis.gov/forms.You may use your U.S. passport as evidence of citizenship until you receive your replacement certificate.



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