



LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF HAWAI'I



IMMIGRATION: NATURALIZATION

REMEMBER:

This is meant to provide general information, and does not provide specific legal advice about your individual case. The law often changes. Each case is different.

Hawai'i Immigrant Justice Center *at the*
Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i
924 Bethel Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

www.legalaidhawaii.org

Legal Aid's Hotline:

O'ahu: 808.536.4302

Neighbor Islands: 1.800.499.4302



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Aloha United Way

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Revised July 2012. I1 Naturalization.

How to become a United States citizen

In order to become a U.S. citizen:

1. You must be at least 18 years old.
2. You must have been a *lawful permanent resident* of the U.S. for at least five (5) years. However, if you obtained your permanent residency because of marriage to a U.S. citizen and you are still married to that person, you can apply after only three (3) years as a lawful permanent resident.
3. You must have lived in the U.S. for at least half of the last five years (or half of the last three years if you are applying as the spouse of a U.S. citizen).
4. You must have *good moral character*. Any criminal arrests or convictions should be discussed with us or with another attorney. Before filing, it is important to know whether any past crimes will affect your eligibility. There are certain crimes that can make you ineligible for citizenship, and that can even result in your arrest and deportation.
5. You must be able to speak, read, and write basic English. The only exceptions are for people who are either:
 - 55 years or older **AND** have had their green card for at least 15 years,
 - 50 years or older **AND** have had their green card for at least 20 years.
6. You must be able to pass a test on U.S. History and Civics. The questions will come from a list of 100 possible questions. If you qualify, you may be able to take the test in your own language. If you are 65 years or older **AND** have had your green card for at least 20 years, you will be asked questions in your own language from a list of only 25 questions.
7. If you have a mental or physical disability that makes you unable to learn English or pass the U.S. History and Civics test, you might still be eligible to become a U.S. Citizen. You will need a doctor or psychologist to state on INS form N-648 what your condition is and why the symptoms of your condition prevent you from learning English and/or passing the U.S. History and Civics test.
8. You must take an oath of allegiance to the United States. There are some modified oaths that are permissible if your religion forbids you from taking the complete oath.

Resources

- You may request forms from the U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) Forms Line at 1-800-870-3676, or you can download all forms at www.uscis.gov. The forms are often accompanied by instructions, so review the instructions if you have any questions.
- For further information about the naturalization process, you may call the USCIS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283, visit the uscis.gov website, or visit an information center.
- The USCIS Honolulu Field Office is located at: 500 Ala Moana Boulevard, Building 2, Room 400, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813. The Field Office provides limited customer service assistance. USCIS recommends using their web resources and phone hotlines prior to visiting the Field Office.