

## US Citizenship

A certificate of citizenship is a document issued by the USCIS as proof of a person having obtained U.S. citizenship through derivation or acquisition at birth, when they were born outside the United States. Qualified applicants for a certificate of citizenship fall under the following categories: Any child born in the U.S. automatically acquires citizenship, even if the child's mother was in the U.S. illegally.

Even if a child is born outside the U.S., the child can automatically acquire citizenship if at least one parent was a citizen of the U.S. at the time of the child's birth.

Children under the age of 18 holding green cards may be naturalized if petitioned by a U.S. citizen parent.

Individuals born and raised outside the United States, unaware of having acquired U.S. citizenship through their parents or grandparents and have therefore failed to fulfill U.S. residency requirements may claim citizenship through the Doctrine of Constructive Retention.

### Naturalization

Naturalization is the process by which an alien becomes a U.S. citizen. In order for an individual to go through the naturalization process, the alien has to meet certain requirements. An individual can become a U.S. citizen in the following situations: A permanent resident who has lived in the U.S. for five years

Spouses of U.S. citizens who have lived in the U.S. as a permanent resident for three years

Asylees who have lived in the U.S. as permanent residents for five years

Permanent residents with one year of U.S. military service.

In order to obtain naturalization, an applicant must: Be 18 years old

Have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence

Show that he or she has been a person of good moral character for the statutory period

Show that he or she is attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States

Be able to read, write, speak, and understand words in ordinary usage in the English language

Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history and of the principles and forms of government of the United States

Take an oath of allegiance

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