USCIS Customer Service Tools and Resources

An Overview for Libraries

Webinar will begin at 2:00 p.m. EST

Technical tips for participants:

• For the best audio connect by phone:
  • Call 1-866-299-7945, enter 9910420# when prompted, turn down your computer speakers
• All participants will be muted
• Type your questions in the chat box during the Q & A portion
What is USCIS?

Strategic Goals

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is the government agency that oversees lawful immigration to the United States.

- Strengthening the security and integrity of the immigration system
- Providing effective customer-oriented immigration benefit and information services
- Supporting immigrants’ integration and participation in American civic culture
- Promoting flexible and sound immigration policies and programs
- Strengthening the infrastructure supporting the USCIS mission
- Operating as a high-performance organization that promotes a highly talented workforce and a dynamic work culture
USCIS Local Offices

Overview

USCIS has a total of 84 local field offices in the United States. Local offices administer provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act and all other laws relating to immigration and naturalization. On an average day:

- We grant permanent residence to 2,400 people and issue 6,100 Permanent Resident Cards
- We welcome 3,200 new citizens
- We serve 9,500 customers at our 84 local offices
- We complete 23,000 applications for various immigration benefits
- We ensure the employment eligibility of more than 58,000 new hires in the United States
Community Relations

Overview

Community Relations Officers (CROs) build collaborative relationships with local stakeholders in many ways, including:

- Regular meetings;
- Special sessions with specific and targeted agendas;
- Educational presentations;
- Email dissemination of communications materials; and
- Phone conversations

USCIS has CROs in 26 locations. To locate a USCIS office, visit www.uscis.gov and click “Find a USCIS Office.”

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
USCIS-IMLS Partnership

Why partner with public libraries?

- Welcoming spaces
- Convenient locations
- Public Internet access
- Support for lifelong learning
- Information navigators (both inside and outside the library)
- More than 55 percent of people who immigrated to the United States within the last 15 years use the public library at least once per week
On June 29, 2013, former USCIS Director Alejandro Mayorkas and IMLS Director Susan Hildreth signed a formal agreement to provide immigration and citizenship information at public libraries.
USCIS-IMLS Partnership

Objective

Support libraries through public information and engagement opportunities and the distribution of educational materials and training resources on immigration and citizenship.

Key Focus Areas

- Tailored training opportunities for librarians
- Dedicated information on the Citizenship Resource Center
- Joint events at local libraries
- Dissemination of public education materials
USCIS-IMLS Partnership

Key Activities

- Provide library personnel with information on USCIS processes and educational resources
- Distribute immigration and citizenship materials to designated libraries
- Partner to combat the unauthorized practice of immigration law
- Highlight promising citizenship education practices that can be replicated
- Hold citizenship information sessions and naturalization ceremonies in local libraries
- Support outreach efforts related to USCIS's transition from a paper-based model to a secure, online environment and the E-Verify program
USCIS-IMLS Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2014

- 5 webinars provided for library audiences
- 73 naturalization ceremonies held in public libraries
- 212 naturalization information sessions held in public libraries with 4,023 individuals in attendance
- Creation of information registry called *Updates on the IMLS Initiative*. Currently there are 1770 individuals registered to receive these email updates
- USCIS staff attended 8 library related conferences, leading sessions and distributing materials
- Creation of a dedicated web page for the library community as well as a page on Citizenship Corners [http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/organizations/libraries](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/organizations/libraries)
City of Los Angeles

USCIS Engagement with Public Libraries

- Objective: Provide the city's 73 public libraries with citizenship resources and training for library personnel. Efforts include:
  - Training for library personnel on the naturalization process and available USCIS resources
  - Designating space in each library as ‘citizenship corners,’ which will contain citizenship material and resources
  - Offering a list of non-profit groups providing naturalization assistance in the local community
  - Providing access to library community rooms for citizenship and English language classes
City of Los Angeles

USCIS-City of Los Angeles Accomplishments

- Established ‘citizenship corners’ in each of the 73 Los Angeles public libraries
- Distributed over 162,000 citizenship publications and resources to Los Angeles public libraries
- Provided two training opportunities to more than 100 Los Angeles public librarians at each session on the naturalization process and USCIS citizenship preparation materials and resources
- Held citizenship-related programs (including classes and information sessions) for nearly 14,600 attendees at Los Angeles public library locations

Echo Park Library, Los Angeles, California
Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library
City of Chicago

USCIS Engagement with Public Libraries

- Objective: Provide the city's 79 public libraries with citizenship resources and training for library personnel. Efforts include:
  - Training for library personnel on the naturalization process and available USCIS resources
  - Designating space in each library as ‘citizenship corners,’ which will contain citizenship material and resources
  - Partnering with non-profit groups to offer naturalization assistance and English language and citizenship instruction in libraries
City of Chicago

USCIS-City of Chicago Accomplishments

- Distributed one copy of the USCIS Civics and Citizenship Toolkit to all 79 library branches
- Established ‘citizenship corners’ in 12 Chicago public libraries and ‘citizenship hubs’ in 17 locations
- Trained more than 50 Chicago public librarians on the naturalization process and USCIS citizenship preparation materials and resources

Brighton Park Library, Chicago, Illinois
Courtesy of the Chicago Public Library
Objective: Provide the Nashville Public Library with citizenship resources and training for library personnel. Efforts include:

- Training for library personnel on the naturalization process and available USCIS resources
- Designating space in each library as ‘New Americans Corners,’ which will contain citizenship material and resources
- Providing access to library community rooms for citizenship and English language classes
- Holding special ceremonies to raise awareness about U.S. citizenship
- Holding Naturalization Information Sessions at library branches for the public
Established ‘New Americans Corners’ in five priority Nashville Public Library branches and five community centers located in highly populated immigrant communities

Expanded the ‘New Americans Corners’ to Metro Public Schools to serve immigrant students and their families

Provided two training opportunities to Metro Government staff including members of the Nashville Public Library, Parks and Recreation, and Metro Public Schools, as well as immigrant-serving organizations on the naturalization process and USCIS citizenship preparation materials and resources
Common Questions Heard in Public Libraries

- Where can I find immigration forms?
- How can I check my case status?
- Where can I find English and/or citizenship classes?
- How do I apply for a green card?
- How do I apply for U.S. citizenship?
- What study tools are available for the naturalization test?
- How can I find legal assistance?
USCIS Online Tools

Free Resources for Individuals (www.uscis.gov)

- The USCIS website includes helpful customer service tools such as:
  - A case status tracker
  - An appointment scheduler (InfoPass)
  - Downloadable forms (All USCIS forms are free)
  - Filing tips
  - How Do I? customer guides
  - Information on our Toll-Free Customer Service Line
  - Educational materials
  - e-Request (Submit a Case Inquiry)
  - Change of Address

Please note: Online tools and 800 number are available in Spanish, as well.
Where can I find immigration forms?

- Download forms for free online at www.uscis.gov/forms
- Online forms can be completed using the latest version of Adobe Reader
- Order free forms by mail at 1-800-870-3676
- No payment is ever required for copies of our forms
Where can I check my case status?

Immigrants who have a pending application with USCIS can log in using their application receipt number to check the status of their case at https://egov.uscis.gov/casestatus/landing.do
How do I apply for a green card?

Individuals may be eligible to apply for a green card (permanent residence) through family members, a job offer or employment, refugee or asylum status, or a number of other special provisions. Information on permanent residence can be found at www.uscis.gov/greencard
How do I apply for U.S. citizenship?

To apply for naturalization, individuals will need to file Form N-400, Application for Naturalization and meet all eligibility requirements. Information on the application process can be found at www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/apply-citizenship
What study tools are available for the naturalization test?

USCIS has developed a number of free resources (both in English and several other languages) to help immigrants prepare for the naturalization test. All materials are free and available at http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/study-test
Where can I find English and/or citizenship classes?

Many community organizations and social service providers offer English and citizenship classes. Immigrants can locate class finders, service providers, and information on USCIS-funded programs at www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/find-help-your-community
USCIS Resources for Libraries

USCIS has developed an information page for libraries. This page includes helpful resources, upcoming webinars, contact details for local USCIS CROs, and much more. The page is available at www.uscis.gov/citizenship/organizations/libraries.
USCIS Email Updates

To receive emails about USCIS webinars and other messages relating to the USCIS and IMLS partnership, you may sign up for the USCIS-IMLS email list by accessing the main www.uscis.gov webpage and selecting ‘Get Email Updates’ in the upper left hand corner.
USCIS Email Updates

Then under the Outreach category, select ‘Updates from USCIS-IMLS’.

- Genealogy
- USCIS History Library

Citizenship
- Citizenship
- Citizenship Resource Center

Outreach
- Updates from the USCIS Public Engagement Division
  Invitations for all upcoming national stakeholder engagements and notification of all documents available for public comment.
- Updates from USCIS Intergovernmental Affairs
  Invitations for upcoming IGA stakeholder engagements and messages for our intergovernmental partners (federal, state, local, and tribal).
- Updates from USCIS-IMLS
  USCIS and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) are working to strengthen the relationships between local libraries and USCIS in an effort to provide immigration information and educational tools to assist librarians serving immigrant communities. Register with this topic to receive invitations and updates on USCIS-IMLS.
Citizenship Corners

Libraries play an important role in raising awareness about the naturalization process and the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship.

Create a dedicated space in your library where immigrants can find information about becoming a U.S. citizen. USCIS has developed educational materials to help prepare individuals for naturalization. These materials are ideal for setting up a Citizenship Corner in your library. Here immigrants can find the information and resources they need to start the path toward becoming a U.S. citizen.

A typical Citizenship Corner includes citizenship test preparation materials along with information about the naturalization process. Libraries can also add information about community resources, English teaching materials, and other relevant books and videos from their collections. While there are a number of immigration topics that may be of interest to libraries and their customers, USCIS recommends displaying only citizenship and naturalization related resources in the Citizenship Corner.

How to Set Up a Citizenship Corner at Your Library


2. Build your collection by purchasing other USCIS materials. Most of the following publications are also included in the Civics and Citizenship Toolkit:

   - "How to Get U.S. Citizenship"
   - "Deciphering Immigration Forms"
   - "Citizenship Timelines"
   - "Naturalization Day and Night"
   - "Families of U.S. Citizens"
   - "U.S. Citizenship Test Question Book"
Executive Action

On November 20, 2014, the President announced a series of executive actions. These actions will:

- Address illegal immigration at the border;
- Ensure that our enforcement and removal policies continue to prioritize threats to our national security, public safety and border security; Take actions to broaden opportunities for high-skilled businesses and workers; and
- Expand the use of deferred action (which lets individuals temporarily stay in the U.S. without fear of deportation) for certain individuals who came to the U.S. as children and certain individuals who are parents of U.S. citizens or green card holders.
Executive Action

- Immigrants interested in learning more about the various initiatives and expanded programs announced by the President should visit http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction

Executive Actions on Immigration

On November 20, 2014, the President announced a series of executive actions to crack down on illegal immigration at the border, prioritize deporting felons not families, and require certain undocumented immigrants to pass a criminal background check and pay taxes in order to temporarily stay in the U.S. without fear of deportation.

These initiatives include:

- Expanding the population eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to young people who came to this country before turning 16 years old and have been present since January 1, 2010, and extending the period of DACA.
Avoid Scams

These initiatives are NOT in EFFECT yet.

- USCIS will NOT accept applications for initiatives related to the President’s announcement until early to mid-2015.
- Until then, we strongly urge customers who may want to apply under these programs to be careful of immigration scams.
- Dishonest people may try to trick potential applicants and take their money by saying they will help them apply.
- Visit [www.uscis.gov/avoidscams](http://www.uscis.gov/avoidscams) to learn more about how to detect, deter, and report immigration scams and to find authorized legal service providers.
How can I find legal assistance?

- Individuals can file USCIS forms on their own, but many people need additional assistance.

- Many people offer help with immigration services. Unfortunately, not all are authorized to do so. To learn more, visit [www.uscis.gov/avoidscams](http://www.uscis.gov/avoidscams)

- Only attorneys or accredited representatives can:
  - Provide legal advice about which forms to submit
  - Explain immigration options
  - Communicate with USCIS about a specific case

- If the individual does not have enough money to hire a lawyer, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) provides a listing of attorneys in each state who provide immigration services either for free or for little cost

- For more information, see [www.uscis.gov/avoid-scams/find-legal-services](http://www.uscis.gov/avoid-scams/find-legal-services)
Next Steps – How to get involved

Finding More Information

- To find ways that your library can participate, visit the USCIS Citizenship Resource Center’s library page under the Organizations tab at www.uscis.gov/citizenship
- Subscribe to the IMLS newsletter (Primary Source) at www.imls.gov/signup.aspx
- Visit the USCIS-IMLS partnership page at www.imls.gov/about/serving_new_americans.aspx
- Register for the USCIS free email alert service at www.uscis.gov/citizenship and click on “Email Updates”
- Contact your local USCIS Community Relations Officer for further information and guidance on the support and opportunities available for libraries
- Participate in the next USCIS-IMLS webinar on citizenship resources and ways libraries can get involved along with information on the unauthorized practice of immigration law – date TBD
About this Presentation

• Authors: USCIS Office of Citizenship/Customer Service and Public Engagement Directorate
• Date of last revision: November 21, 2014
• This presentation is valid as of the date of the last revision.
• This presentation contains no sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
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