



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Announces Plan to Improve the Naturalization Test

Memorandum Announces a Decennial Revision Schedule

WASHINGTON — U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is revising the current naturalization test with improvements to ensure it continues to serve as an accurate measure of a naturalization applicant’s civics knowledge and that it reflects best practices in adult education assessments. The goal is to create a meaningful, uniform, and efficient test that will assess applicants’ knowledge and understanding of U.S. history, government and values.

This spring, the former USCIS director signed the [Revision of the Naturalization Civics Test Memorandum \(PDF, 202 KB\)](#). This memorandum announces the revision of the naturalization test and formalizes a decennial revision schedule of the naturalization test based on adult education best practices.

“Granting U. S. citizenship is the highest honor our nation bestows,” said USCIS Acting Director Ken Cuccinelli. “Updating, maintaining, and improving a test that is current and relevant is our responsibility as an agency in order to help potential new citizens fully understand the meaning of U.S. citizenship and the values that unite all Americans.”

In December 2018, USCIS formed a naturalization test revision working group with members from across the agency. The working group has been reviewing and updating the naturalization test questions. The working group will also assess potential changes to the speaking portion of the test. USCIS is soliciting the input of experts in the field of adult education to ensure that this process is fair and transparent. After careful analysis of the pilot, and thorough officer training, USCIS will set an implementation date in December 2020 or early 2021.

Section 312 of the Immigration and Nationality Act outlines the English and civics requirements for naturalization. By law, candidates for naturalization must have “...an understanding of the English language, including an ability to read, write, and speak words in ordinary usage in the English language...” and “...knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history, and of the principles and form of government, of the United States...” This test revision will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements, and USCIS will pilot it this fall.

In Fiscal Year 2018, USCIS naturalized nearly 757,000 people, a five-year high in new oaths of citizenship. The naturalization test revision is a key part of preparing legal immigrants to fully exercise their rights and meet their responsibilities.

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