

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Naturalization Process for Non-U.S. Citizen Trainees

1. Purpose: To inform HASC PSMs on the naturalization process for non-U.S. citizen trainees during initial entry into the Army.

2. Facts:

a. Potential Soldiers requesting naturalization are identified by the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) and informed of the expedited naturalization process before enlisting. Trainees are given Forms N- 400 (Application for Naturalization) and N-426 (Request for Certification of Military or Naval Service) to complete and hand carry to the gaining Reception Battalion. These Trainees are also provided an information paper on the naturalization process, which has links to the immigration information website.

b. USAREC recruited the following number of non-U.S. citizens over the last three fiscal years (FY):

Non-Citizens	FY21	FY22	FY23
Regular Army	601	606	818
Army Reserve	191	144	173

c. Upon arrival at one of the four Reception Battalions, (Fort Moore, GA; Fort Jackson, SC; Fort Sill, OK; and Fort Leonard Wood, MO) trainees are again identified by a query of the "F" code (non-U.S. citizen) in the Reception Module. They are then provided a briefing and given another opportunity to begin the naturalization process if they had not started it during the recruiting phase. If necessary, cadre assist trainees with filling out Forms N-400 and N-426.

d. During the first week of Basic Combat Training (BCT), the unit naturalization representatives identify and assist trainees requiring naturalization. Forms N-400 and N-426 are collected and the Form N-426 is sent to the Brigade Commander for approval (O-6 level approval authority). The N-426 is usually signed within 10 days but no later than 30 days and returned to the unit naturalization representative. Commanders and certifying officials may not decline to process or act upon the request, nor deny the request, based on the trainees' time in service. Commanders and certifying officials are not permitted to impose local restrictions or prerequisites, such as minimum training or service requirements, as a condition of certifying honorable service.

e. During weeks two through ten of BCT, the unit naturalization representatives verify and collect required forms and other required documentation. Representatives also ensure the required forms are either entered online or mailed to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) Lock Box in Chicago, IL. If done online, the trainee is given a case number. If mailed to the Chicago Lock Box, immigration personnel will distribute the application to the local USCIS field office. An excel spreadsheet with the names of individuals requesting naturalization is also provided to the local field office along with BCT graduation dates.

f. The goal is to have trainees become citizens prior to graduating from ten weeks of BCT. However, there are circumstances that may prevent naturalization prior to BCT graduation, and

the process must continue during Advanced Individual Training (AIT). In these cases, the local USCIS field office is notified as to what AIT location the trainee has relocated. The trainee will then be serviced by the USCIS field office at the new AIT location.

g. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Service is the authoritative data source for numbers of trainees naturalized through this process. TRADOC was not actively tracking the number of trainees naturalized by graduation. TRADOC has now established a process to collect data by month beginning FY2024 (OCT 2023).