



## U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

# Naturalization Through Military Service

If you are serving or have served in the U.S. armed forces and are interested in becoming a U.S. citizen, you may be eligible to apply for naturalization under special provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

### Eligibility

If you meet all of the requirements of either section 328 or 329 of the INA, you may apply for naturalization by filing [Form N-400](#) under the section that applies to you. You will not have to pay any fees for applying for naturalization under INA 328 or 329. As a member or veteran of the U.S. military, certain other naturalization requirements may not apply to you; for example, if you are currently active duty you may not have to reside in or be physically present in the U.S. for any length of time before you apply for naturalization. The requirements for naturalization are explained in greater detail below.

### One Year of Military Service During Peacetime

If you served honorably in the U.S. armed forces for at least one year during a period of peacetime, you may be eligible to apply for naturalization. While some general naturalization requirements apply under INA 328, other requirements may not apply or are reduced. To establish eligibility under INA 328, you must:

- Have served honorably, during a period of peacetime, in the U.S. armed forces for a period or periods totaling one year;
- Have submitted a completed [Form N-426, Request for Certification of Military or Naval Service \(PDF, 313 KB\)](#), at the time of filing the N-400 to demonstrate honorable service;
- Be a lawful permanent resident at the time of your naturalization interview;
- Meet certain residence and physical presence requirements;
- Demonstrate the ability to read, write, and speak English;
- Demonstrate knowledge of U.S. history and government;
- Demonstrate good moral character for at least five years before filing your N-400 through the day you naturalize; and
- Demonstrate an attachment to the principles of the U.S. Constitution.

For additional information on eligibility USCIS Policy Manual Volume 12, Part [I - Military Members and Their Families](#).

### Service During Periods of Hostility

INA 329 applies to all current military service members or veterans who served honorably in an active-duty status or in the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve during any of the designated periods of armed conflict listed below:

- Sept. 1, 1939 – Dec. 31, 1946

- June 25, 1950 – July 1, 1955
- Feb. 28, 1961 – Oct. 15, 1978
- Aug. 2, 1990 – April 11, 1991
- Sept. 11, 2001 – present

## Applying for Naturalization

Many military installations have a designated USCIS liaison to help you with the naturalization application process. These liaisons are typically assigned to the installation's community service center. Place your request through your chain of command to obtain a certification of your honorable military service on Form N-426, Request for Certification of Military or Naval Service. If you have already separated from the U.S. armed forces, you may submit an uncertified Form N-426 with a photocopy of your DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, or NGB Form 22, National Guard Report of Separation and Record of Service, for the applicable periods of service listed in Form N-426. Mail your completed application and all required materials to:

USCIS  
P.O. Box 4446  
Chicago, IL 60680-4446

We will review your application and conduct required security checks, which include obtaining your fingerprints. This can be done in one of the following ways:

- If you were fingerprinted for a previous immigration application, we will use these fingerprints, if available.
- If stationed abroad, you may submit two properly completed FD-258 fingerprint cards and two passport-style photos taken by the military police or officials with the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. embassy, or U.S. consulate.
- If you have questions regarding your biometrics, you can contact the [Military Help Line](#) at 877-CIS-4MIL (877-247-4645, TTY 800-877-8339) or [militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov).

**NOTE:** To help you in the process, USCIS allows you to submit your fingerprints at an application support center before you file your Form N-400. Be sure to include your A-Number and show your unexpired military ID card or Delayed Entry Program ID card.

We will review your application and send it to a USCIS field office to schedule you for an interview. You can request an interview at a specific office in a cover letter attached to your application or leave the choice of location to us.

The field office will schedule your interview to review your eligibility for naturalization and test your knowledge of English and civics. If we find that you are eligible for naturalization, we will inform you of the date you can take the Oath of Allegiance and become a U.S. citizen.

## Forms

You must complete and submit:

- [N-400, Application for Naturalization](#)
- [N-426, Request for Certification of Military or Naval Service](#) (The military must certify this form before you send it to USCIS unless you are separated from the military at the time you file your Form N-400. In that case, you may submit an uncertified Form N-426 with your DD Form 214 or NGB Form 22.)

## Posthumous Citizenship for Military Members

Generally, individuals who served honorably in the U.S. armed forces and died as a result of injury or disease incurred while serving in an active-duty status during specified periods of military hostilities may be eligible for posthumous citizenship under section 329A of the INA.

You must file [Form N-644, Application for Posthumous Citizenship](#), on behalf of the deceased service member within 2 years of their death. Upon approving the application, we will issue a Certificate of Citizenship in the name of the deceased veteran establishing posthumously that they were a U.S. citizen on the date they died.

Other provisions of the law extend immigration benefits to the service member's surviving spouse, children, and parents. For information, see the [Family Based Survivor Benefits](#) page.

Last Reviewed/Updated: 09/30/2019