



## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – Expeditious Naturalization**

### **Spouse of a U.S. Citizen Regularly Stationed Abroad and Residing Abroad at the Time of Filing**

#### **What is expeditious naturalization?**

Expedition naturalization is available to individuals who are seeking to naturalize as the spouse of a U.S. citizen who is regularly stationed abroad. The eligibility requirements for this category of naturalization applicants are outlined in section 319(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and section 319.2, Title 8, Code of Federal Regulations.

Although U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) gives priority to and provides special handling for these types of naturalization applications, an interview, which is a mandatory part of the application process, cannot be scheduled until your background checks have been completed.

#### **Where can I obtain forms and information about Naturalization Requirements?**

You may obtain the N-400 application form and a copy of *A Guide to Naturalization* from our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

#### **What requirements must I meet for naturalization under section 319(b) of the INA?**

- You must be a lawful permanent resident at the time of your interview.
- You must meet the applicable naturalization requirements outlined in sections 312 and 316 of the INA and Title 8, Code of Federal Regulations (physical presence is not required).
- You must be married to a U.S. citizen and living together in a valid marital union.
- Your U.S. citizen spouse must be “regularly stationed abroad” as:
  - A member of the U.S. Armed Forces;
  - An employee or an individual under contract to the U.S. government;

- An employee of an American institution of research recognized as such by the Attorney General;
  - An employee of an American-owned firm or corporation engaged in the development of foreign trade and commerce for the United States;
  - An employee of a public international organization of which the United States is a member by law or treaty; or
  - A person who performs ministerial or priestly functions for a religious denomination or an interdenominational organization with a valid presence in the United States.
- You must show evidence that you will depart to join your U.S. citizen spouse within 45 days of your naturalization.

**What does the term “regularly stationed abroad” mean regarding my spouse’s employment?**

The term “regularly stationed abroad” means that the overseas employment contract for your spouse clearly shows that your spouse’s employment **will continue abroad for at least one year after the date that you will be naturalized**. When possible, you should file your application prior to your departure overseas. If you are already overseas, you should file your application only if the end date of your spouse’s employment contract will allow you to meet the eligibility criterion of having at least one year remaining overseas at the time of naturalization.

**Where can the interview and naturalization take place?**

As an applicant for naturalization under section 319(b), you may be interviewed at any USCIS office of your choice in the United States, including Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. If you choose to be interviewed at our office, you will be naturalized the same day as your interview, in most cases. Please note that, if you want to change your name, you cannot be naturalized by our office. You will be required to attend your oath ceremony at a Federal Court. Court ceremonies are held only one day each month and, depending upon when in the month you are interviewed, it may take at least two months to be scheduled for a ceremony.

As stated previously, although U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) gives priority to and provides special handling for these types of naturalization applications, an interview, which is a mandatory part of the application process, cannot be scheduled until your background checks have been completed.

**May I file my naturalization application if I am a conditional resident?  
What should I do?**

If you are a conditional resident, you may file for naturalization. If you are within the 90 days of the two-year anniversary (the expiration date on your green card) or if your naturalization application will not be processed prior to your two-year anniversary, you must file a Form I-751, Petition to Remove Conditions on Residence, according to the instructions on the form. If you have already filed your I-751 Petition, please notify our office so that the Form I-751 may be considered and adjudicated at the time of your naturalization interview.

**What documents should I submit with the Form N-400, Application for Naturalization?**

- A cover letter directed to USCIS advising that you are applying for naturalization under section 319(b) of the INA. You must state on your cover letter where you wish to be interviewed.
- Application fee. Please visit our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) for a listing of the current fee.
- Fingerprint fee OR two(s) sets of FD-258 fingerprint cards.
  - If you are living overseas at the time of filing your application, you must go to a U.S. Embassy/Consulate or U.S. installation to have your fingerprints taken. You do not need to pay a fingerprinting fee to USCIS (you must check with the entity taking your fingerprints to find out if there is an associated fee).
  - If you are living in the United States at the time of filing your application, you must submit a fingerprinting fee so that you can be printed at an Application Support Center. Please visit our website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) for a listing of the current fee.
- Documentation to establish that your U.S. citizen spouse's employer is a qualifying employer and the length of your spouse's overseas assignment.

**U.S. MILITARY**

- Form DD-1278 issued no earlier than 90 days prior to the scheduled date of overseas travel, if you are authorized concurrent travel. If you cannot submit this form, the letter from your spouse's Commanding Officer that is described below must also include permission for you to reside abroad with your spouse after naturalization.
- A letter from your spouse's Commanding Officer on official letterhead certifying that he or she is your spouse's Commanding Officer and the official date of rotation (DEROS) of your spouse from the overseas assignment.

**U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCY (NON-MILITARY)**

- A letter on official agency/department letterhead that states the facts of your spouse's employment, the basis of your spouse's hire (contract, permanent employee, etc.), and the length of your spouse's overseas employment.

**ALL OTHER EMPLOYERS** (an American institution of research recognized as such by the Attorney General, an American-owned firm or corporation engaged in the development of foreign trade and commerce for the United States, a public international organization of which the United States is a member by law or treaty, or a religious denomination or an interdenominational organization with a valid presence in the United States).

- A letter on official letterhead which states:
  - The title of the official attesting to the facts in the letter;
  - The name of the institution, firm or corporation and whether the official has access to the company's records;
  - The nature of the business that the employer conducts;
  - The name of the State under the laws of which the employer was organized and the date of incorporation, etc.;
  - The ownership structure of the enterprise; and
  - The facts of your spouse's employment, the basis of your spouse's hire (contract, permanent employee, etc.), and the length of your spouse's overseas employment.
- A copy of your I-551 permanent resident card (green card)
- Proof of your spouse's U.S. citizenship (copy)
- Your birth certificate (copy)
- Your marriage certificate (copy)
- Proof of termination of all prior marriages for you and your spouse (copies)

**Where do I file my N-400 application and supporting documents?**

**You may file your application with the CIS Regional Service Center for your geographical location.**

**If your interview site will be Fairfax, Virginia,** you may file your application directly with the Vermont Service or to our office for forwarding to the Vermont Service Center. If you file your application with our office, you must mark clearly on the envelope “319(b) Case – EYES ONLY.” To avoid delays, you should file directly with the Vermont Service Center. The filing addresses follow:

Vermont Service Center		USCIS/ District Office #7
75 Lower Welden Street	OR	2675 Prosperity Avenue
St. Albans, VT 05479		Fairfax, VA 22031
Attn: Expedite Naturalization – 319(b)		Attn: 319(b) Case – EYES ONLY

**How may I follow-up on my application after filing it with either the Service Center or your office?**

Please do not make any inquiries into the status of your application until you receive your receipt notice.

**This instruction applies only if your interview site will be Fairfax, Virginia:** If more than two months have passed since filing your application and you have not received a receipt notice, or to check on the status of your application 60 days after receiving your receipt notice, you may write to us at [WASN400.OVERSEAS@DHS.GOV](mailto:WASN400.OVERSEAS@DHS.GOV). Please note that this email address is only for those individuals who want to be interviewed at our office. All other inquiries should be directed to the Customer Service line at 1-800- 375-5283.