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Naturalization can be simply termed as the process where a foreign national becomes an American citizen voluntarily. There are many eligibility requirements you need to satisfy prior to applying. You have to be a permanent resident (green card holder) for five years and it is three years if you are married to a US citizen and still living with the US citizen spouse.

Other significant requirements include fulfilling continuous residence and physical presence. If you are not married to a US citizen, you should have resided in the US for a continuous period of five years after getting into the US as a permanent resident. If you are married to a US citizen, the period is reduced to three years after admission to the US as a permanent resident.

If you are married to a US citizen, you should have been physically present in the US accumulatively for eighteen months within three years prior to the date of applying for citizenship. If you are not married to a US citizen, you should have been physically present in the US accumulatively for thirty months within five years before the date of filing the application. This requirement is cumulative but not continuous. There are other requirements as well.

What is the Declaration of Intent and who should file?

In certain cases, lawful permanent residents (LPR) are required to submit a Declaration of intent when they file their naturalization application. Though not mandatory for all applicants, some states want this to be submitted if the LPR wishes to conduct business or engage in certain professions in that state.

A LPR who is at least 18 yrs old can file this declaration. Make note that the applicant has to be in the US while filing the form. Form N-300 is the form used to file Declaration of Intention and it has to be filed with the USCIS.

Filing Procedures:

Your application has to be complete and free from errors. Place a copy of the permanent resident card in the package. Two passport sized photographs are also mandatory. It has to be taken within 30 days of applying and if it is a digital photograph, it should be at least 3.5 mega pixels. Pay attention to all such details.

Information regarding the supporting document list is detailed in the instructions pages that accompany the form. Mail the entire package to the USCIS Lockbox facility at Dallas. If you opt for express mail or courier, send it to the USCIS lockbox facility at Lewisville. I f you like to receive e â€“ notification for your submitted application, complete Form G-1145E and include it in the package.

A check or money order for $250, the submission fee has to drawn on a US bank or other financial institution payable to the US Department of Homeland Security. Do not use Initials DHS or USDHS Read the filing instructions carefully before filing. If you send a check, it will be converted into electronic funds. The USCIS will make a copy of the check and destroy the original one.

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