

**From:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services [mailto:uscis@public.govdelivery.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, September 17, 2015 4:03 PM

**To:**

**Subject:** USCIS to Welcome More Than 36,000 Citizens During Annual Constitution Day and Citizenship Day Celebrations - Agency announces initiatives to highlight U.S. citizenship

**WASHINGTON** — U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is launching new efforts to highlight U.S. citizenship and immigrant civic integration to celebrate Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. These initiatives will also improve customer service and support aspiring citizens on their path to naturalization.

The [initiatives](#) include:

### **Naturalization Ceremonies**

From Sept. 17-23, USCIS will welcome more than 36,000 new citizens during more than 200 naturalization ceremonies. During this time—also known as Constitution Week—museums, historic and public libraries, government landmarks and national park sites will provide the backdrop for our celebration of citizenship.

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day is celebrated each year on Sept. 17 on the anniversary of the signing of the Constitution in 1787. Congress first highlighted the significance of U.S. citizenship in 1940 when it designated the third Sunday in May as “I Am an American Day.” In 1952, Congress shifted the date to Sept. 17 and renamed it “Citizenship Day.” Congress changed the designation of this day to “Constitution Day and Citizenship Day” in 2004.

USCIS invites new citizens and their families and friends to share their experiences from the ceremonies via social media using the hashtag #newUSCitizen.

Read the [list of featured 2015 Constitution Week naturalization ceremonies](#).

USCIS also announced today a renewed partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Park Service (NPS) to enhance the meaning and stature of citizenship ceremonies. Since the partnership first began in September 2006, USCIS has coordinated special naturalization ceremonies at many of the 400 NPS sites around the country, including eight events as part of USCIS’ 2015 Constitution Week celebration.

### **Customer Service Enhancements**

Beginning Sept. 19, naturalization applicants will be able to use credit cards to pay the [Form N-400, Application for Naturalization](#), fee of \$595 and the biometrics fee of \$85, if applicable. To pay using a credit card, customers may complete the new [Form G-1450, Authorization for Credit Card Transaction](#).

USCIS will also enter into a formal partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the Farm Service Agency to provide temporary office space to USCIS. From there, USCIS officers will provide services to communities with significant numbers of immigrants who are not located near a USCIS office. Services will include biometrics collection, case interviews and information presentations.

Additionally, USCIS has developed [new online tools](#) to help lawful permanent residents prepare for naturalization, locate English and citizenship classes, determine eligibility and apply for naturalization. As an initial effort, a [new interactive practice civics test is available in English](#), with other languages to follow. Individuals can also find English language and citizenship preparation classes in their local area using a [new online class locator](#).

### **Grants Supporting Citizenship and Immigrant Integration**

USCIS awarded nearly \$10 million in grants to [40 organizations](#) that will help lawful permanent residents (also known as green card holders) prepare and apply for citizenship. Located in 26 states, these organizations will receive funding to support citizenship preparation activities through September 2017. For more information, visit [uscis.gov/grants](#).

### **Citizenship Public Education and Awareness**

Beginning this month, USCIS will expand the [Citizenship Public Education and Awareness Campaign](#), launched in July 2015, into six additional states – New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts, Virginia, Washington and Arizona. The 10 participating states are home

to 75 percent of the country's lawful permanent residents.

USCIS also released a new series of [print ads in Korean, Spanish and Tagalog](#), along with new [widgets](#) (small, online applications that can be embedded into Web pages or social media sites) in English and Spanish.

### **Outreach and Engagement with Local Governments**

Today, USCIS announced new partnerships with [Houston](#) and [Seattle](#) and renewed partnerships with [Chicago](#) and the [Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee](#). With these announcements, USCIS now has a total of eight [municipal partners](#). Through these partnerships, USCIS provides information and resources to help facilitate outreach and engagement, training and technical assistance, and citizenship education.

USCIS is also committed to supporting the White House's [Building Welcoming Communities Campaign](#). Welcoming communities are cities, counties or towns that strive to bring immigrants, refugees and native-born residents together to create a positive environment for all residents.

A key recommendation of the Task Force on New Americans' [action plan](#) was to launch a campaign to support existing integration efforts, and encourage additional communities to develop and implement integration strategies tailored to their needs. USCIS' first step in responding to this recommendation will be to provide guidance on citizenship education, citizenship outreach and avoiding immigration services scams.

For more information about USCIS, visit [uscis.gov](http://uscis.gov) or follow us on Twitter ([@uscis](#)), YouTube ([/uscis](#)), Facebook([/uscis](#)) and the USCIS blog [The Beacon](#).

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