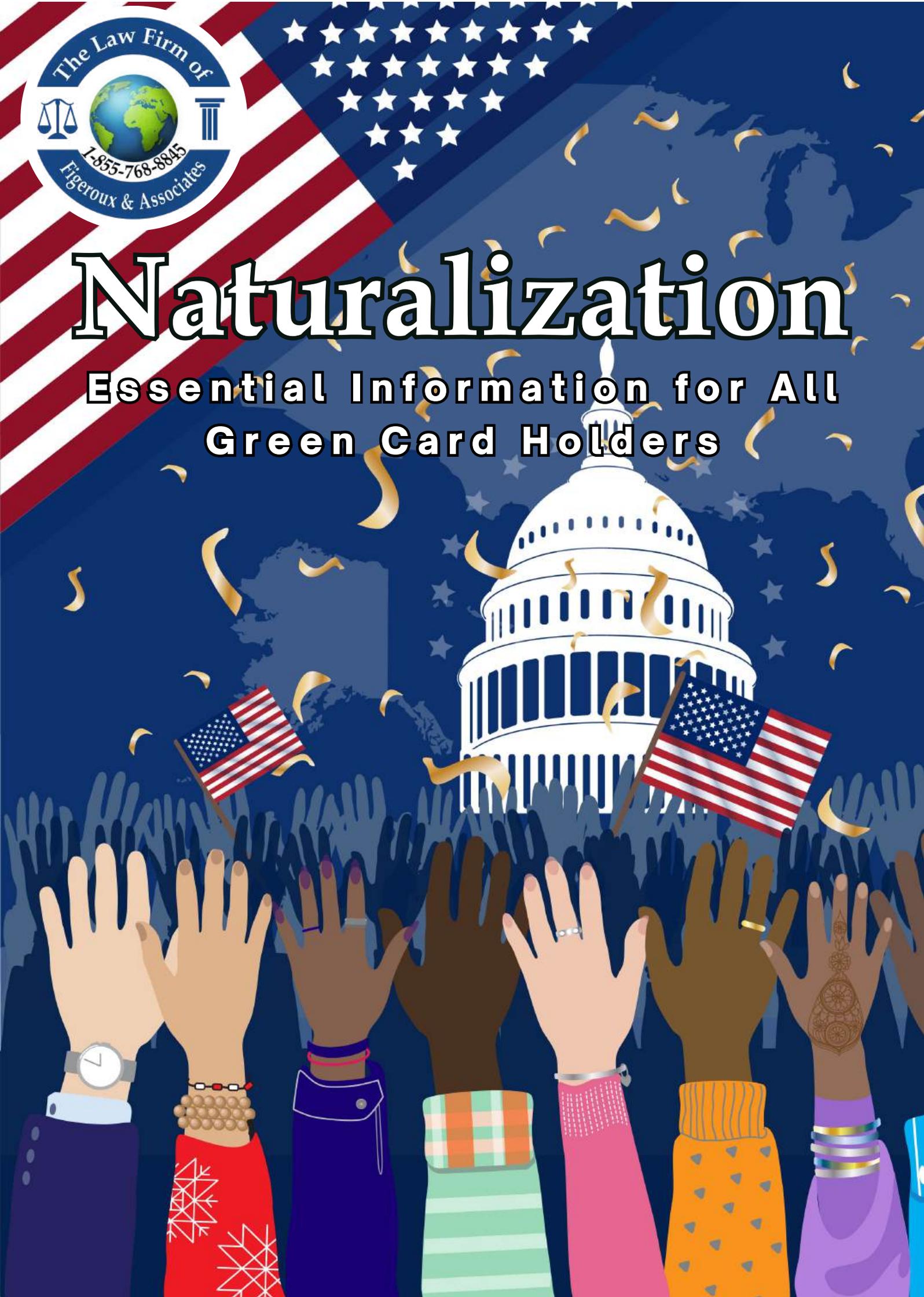




Naturalization

Essential Information for All
Green Card Holders





Naturalization & Red Flags: What Every Green Card Holder Should Know Before Filing for U.S. Citizenship

Presented by Figeroux & Associates, 26 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11242 | Tel: 855-768-8845 | www.askthelawyer.us

I. Introduction

Naturalization is the final step in the immigration journey for many lawful permanent residents (LPRs). It is the pathway that transforms a green card holder into a full-fledged U.S. citizen, with all the rights, protections, and responsibilities that come with it. Yet, while the process may seem straightforward on the surface, it is filled with legal nuances and potential pitfalls that can lead to delays, denials, or even deportation.

At Figeroux & Associates, we've worked with thousands of clients across New York and beyond, many of whom approach us too late—after they've filed on their own and run into serious legal trouble. This article is our way of helping you avoid that mistake. Whether you're thinking about filing your Form N-400 (Application for Naturalization) or have already filed and now face complications, understanding the legal framework is essential to safeguarding your future.

This comprehensive guide walks you through every major element of the naturalization process. We'll explain the legal requirements such as lawful admission as a permanent resident, the continuous residence and physical presence tests, and the language and civics exams. We'll also highlight the waivers and exceptions available to certain applicants, such as older adults or those with disabilities.

Importantly, we'll also focus on what many other guides overlook: **red flag issues**. These are the hidden dangers that can derail your application—or worse, trigger removal (deportation) proceedings. From tax

issues and criminal records to long absences from the country, undisclosed fraud in your original green card application, or even voting when you're not allowed to, these matters require serious legal attention.

We've included a step-by-step breakdown of the naturalization process so that you know what to expect. But more than that, we've offered real-world solutions, legal strategies, and a clear call to action: **Don't go it alone. Consult with an immigration attorney before you file.**

At Figeroux & Associates, we offer professional, compassionate, and thorough legal guidance. Your future as a U.S. citizen deserves to be handled with care and expertise. Call us today at **855-768-8845** or visit www.askthelawyer.us to schedule a consultation. Remember, citizenship is your right—but it's also your responsibility to get it done right.



Section II: Understanding the Naturalization Process

Becoming a U.S. citizen is one of the most important milestones in the life of an immigrant. For green card holders, or lawful permanent residents (LPRs), the naturalization process provides not only greater stability and rights but also the opportunity to fully participate in civic life—from voting in elections to obtaining a U.S. passport.

However, many applicants do not fully understand the requirements, stages, or risks associated with naturalization. This section offers a detailed look into the naturalization process so you can approach it with clarity and confidence—with the experienced legal team at Figeroux & Associates by your side.

1. What is Naturalization?

Naturalization is the legal process by which a non-citizen voluntarily becomes a citizen of the United States. It involves submitting an application (Form N-400), undergoing background checks, passing English and civics tests, attending an interview, and finally taking the Oath of Allegiance.



Why Naturalize?

- Protection from deportation
- Right to vote
- Access to federal jobs and benefits
- Ability to sponsor more relatives
- Eligibility for a U.S. passport

Naturalization is a right—but it's not automatic. It comes with responsibilities, and legal eligibility must be proven.

2. Who is Eligible to Apply for Citizenship?

The main categories of people eligible for naturalization include:

- Lawful Permanent Residents (Green Card holders)** for at least 5 years.
- LPRs married to U.S. citizens** for at least 3 years and living in marital union.
- Military service members** with honorable service.

All applicants must also meet other key requirements: continuous residence, physical presence, good moral character, and knowledge of English and U.S. government.

3. Key Benefits of Naturalization

- Voting Rights:** Only U.S. citizens can vote in federal elections.
- Family Reunification:** Citizens can petition for more family members, with faster processing.
- Travel:** U.S. passport holders enjoy visa-free travel to many countries.
- Employment Opportunities:** Federal jobs are often reserved for citizens.
- Security:** Citizens cannot be deported and enjoy full constitutional protections.

4. The Application Timeline

The process can take between 6–14 months, depending on USCIS workload and your case. Here's a typical timeline:

- Form N-400 submission**
- Biometrics appointment**
- Interview & testing**
- USCIS decision**
- Oath ceremony**

Every step is a legal checkpoint. An experienced attorney ensures that you are properly prepared and represented throughout.

5. Legal Review Before Filing

Many applicants don't realize that even a seemingly minor issue—like a short trip abroad or a dismissed arrest—can lead to delays or denials. Worse, if the USCIS officer finds an old legal issue that affects your original green card status, they may try to reopen that case.

That's why consulting a trusted law firm like **Figeroux & Associates** is essential. We conduct detailed background reviews to identify and resolve risks before you apply.

6. Interview & Decision

The naturalization interview is often the most stressful part. You'll be asked questions about your application, background, travels, and moral character. You'll also need to pass:

English speaking, reading, and writing tests

Civics test (unless waived or exempted)

Many denials result from not being prepared for this interview—especially for applicants with complex immigration histories.

7. The Oath of Allegiance

The final step is the naturalization ceremony. You'll recite the Oath of Allegiance and receive your naturalization certificate. Only then do you officially become a U.S. citizen.

Conclusion: Why This Step Deserves Legal Guidance

Naturalization is both a legal and life-changing event. Every year, thousands of applicants are denied citizenship due to small mistakes, criminal records, missed deadlines, or misunderstood requirements. Some even face deportation proceedings they never saw coming.

Figeroux & Associates helps you approach this process with full confidence. We'll evaluate your case, guide you through every form and interview, and protect your rights throughout.

Call us today at **855-768-8845** or visit www.askthelawyer.us. Don't gamble with your future—*ask the lawyer first.*

The Law Firm of Figeroux & Associates was founded to serve our clients, but also to contribute to the greater good.

Schedule a Consultation Today

Stop Procrastinating! Hire The Law Firm of Figeroux & Associates!

We Will Solve Your Problems with Empathy!

We Solve Problems and Educate!



Ask the Lawyer with Brian Figeroux, Esq. You have questions, we've got the answers! Whatever your legal issue or concern, contact us now.

SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION - CALL 855-768-8845 OR VISIT WWW.ASKTHELAWYER.US



Section III: Basic Legal Requirements for Naturalization

Part 1 of 3: Lawful Permanent Residence, Continuous Residence & Physical Presence To qualify for U.S.

citizenship through naturalization, green card holders must meet several legal requirements. These rules are set by the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and enforced by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). If you fail to meet even one of these requirements—or if there's a problem in your immigration history—you may be denied or, in some cases, referred for removal (deportation) proceedings.

Below, we explore each core requirement in detail, beginning with the most fundamental: your green card status.

1. Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) Status

To file for naturalization, you must first be a **lawful permanent resident** (green card holder). This means:

- You were granted a green card through family sponsorship, employment, asylum, refugee status, or another legal path.

- You have held that status for a required number of years: **5 years**, or **3 years** if you are married to and living with a U.S. citizen.

Important Tip: If your green card was obtained through fraud—or if there were mistakes in your original application (such as undisclosed arrests or a sham marriage)—these issues can be discovered during the naturalization process and may lead to revocation of your green card or worse.

Solution: Before applying, have your immigration history thoroughly reviewed by an experienced attorney at Figeroux & Associates. We'll identify any red flags and guide you on the best strategy.

2. Continuous Residence

USCIS requires applicants to have “continuously resided” in the U.S. for at least:

5 years before filing (for most applicants)

3 years before filing (if applying based on marriage to a U.S. citizen)

What Does Continuous Residence Mean?

You must have maintained a primary home in the U.S. and not taken extended trips abroad.

Trips longer than 6 months can disrupt your continuous residence.

A trip of **more than 1 year** almost always breaks the continuity and may reset the clock entirely.

Red Flag: Many applicants mistakenly think that having a reentry permit or valid green card is enough. But even with legal reentry, USCIS can still view a long absence as abandoning your residence.

Solution: If you've had a long absence, consult us. We may be able to preserve your eligibility or help you restart the clock strategically.

3. Physical Presence

This is different from continuous residence. The physical presence requirement means:

You must have been **physically present in the U.S. for at least half** of the required residency period.

That's **30 months** out of 5 years, or **18 months** out of 3 years (for spouses of U.S. citizens).

How It's Calculated:

All your travel dates matter.

USCIS looks at your Form N-400 and passport stamps.

If your trips abroad add up to more than half of the required time, you'll likely be denied.

Tip: Short, frequent trips may still count against your physical presence if they're too close together or if you spend more time abroad than in the U.S.

Solution: At Figeroux & Associates, we help calculate your presence accurately and advise whether you're ready to file—or if you need to wait longer or take legal action to preserve eligibility.





Section III: Basic Legal Requirements for Naturalization

Part 2 of 3: Good Moral Character & English/Civics Requirements

4. Good Moral Character

To be eligible for U.S. citizenship, you must demonstrate “**good moral character**” (GMC) for the statutory period:

5 years prior to filing (or **3 years** if applying based on marriage to a U.S. citizen).

But what is “good moral character”? USCIS looks at your entire life, not just the last 3–5 years. They can even deny your application based on older conduct if they believe it reflects ongoing moral concerns.

Common Red Flags That Could Affect GMC:

- Arrests or convictions** (even if expunged or sealed)
- Failure to pay taxes** or file tax returns
- Failure to pay child support**
- Lying to immigration authorities** or submitting false information
- Alcohol or drug abuse**
- Prostitution, gambling, or smuggling**
- False claims to U.S. citizenship** (even on a job or voter registration form)

Many people wrongly assume that if their green card was approved, they’re in the clear. Not true. During naturalization, USCIS can reopen past issues—including issues from your original green card application—and deny your N-400 or even begin **removal proceedings**.

✓ Solution:

An experienced immigration lawyer can review:

- Your **criminal history**
- Your **immigration file**
- Your **tax and financial records**
- And help you **remedy any red flags** before filing.

At **Figeroux & Associates**, we've helped many clients clean up their records, file legal motions to vacate old convictions, and submit full disclosures with supporting documents to protect their application.

5. English Language & Civics Requirements

Unless you qualify for an exemption, you'll need to pass a **spoken English interview**, a **reading and writing test**, and a **civics test** (covering U.S. government and history).

📖 English Requirement:

- Demonstrate ability to **read, write, and speak** basic English.
- The USCIS officer will evaluate this during your naturalization interview.

🧠 Civics Test:

- As of now, applicants must answer **6 out of 10** questions correctly from a list of 100 possible questions.
- The test is conducted **orally**.

🔄 Retesting:

- If you fail either the English or civics test, you are given **one more chance** to pass—typically within 60–90 days.

Exemptions from English and Civics Tests

You may be **exempt from English**, or eligible to take the **civics test in your native language**, if:

- You are **50 years old** and have lived in the U.S. as a permanent resident for **20 years**, or
- You are **55 years old** and have lived in the U.S. as a permanent resident for **15 years**.

These are known as the “**50/20**” and “**55/15**” rules.

Disability Waiver (Form N-648): If you have a **documented physical or developmental disability or mental impairment**, you may be excused from one or both tests. The waiver must be certified by a licensed medical professional and approved by USCIS.

Figeroux & Associates Can Help You Prepare

Many clients delay filing for naturalization because they fear the English test or have legal complications. That's where our legal team comes in. We:

- Help you understand your eligibility
- Prepare you for the English and civics test
- Help file exemption or disability waivers when applicable
- Prepare legal arguments to support your moral character

Becoming a U.S. citizen is too important to leave to chance. A denial can delay your dreams—or trigger far more serious consequences.



Requirements

Section III: Basic Legal Requirements for Naturalization

Part 3 of 3: The Oath of Allegiance & Summary of Requirements

6. The Oath of Allegiance

The final step in the naturalization process is taking the **Oath of Allegiance**. Until you take the oath, you are not a U.S. citizen—even if your N-400 is approved.

During this short but meaningful ceremony, you'll pledge your loyalty to the United States, formally renounce allegiance to any other country, and affirm your commitment to support and defend the U.S. Constitution and laws.

The Oath includes promises to:

- Support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States
- Renounce allegiance to any foreign state or sovereign
- Bear arms or perform noncombatant service in the U.S. Armed Forces if required
- Perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required

Once completed, you'll receive your **Certificate of Naturalization**, making you a full U.S. citizen.

Exemptions or Modifications to the Oath

Some individuals may qualify for:

- **Modified language** in the oath due to religious or moral objections (e.g., refusal to bear arms for pacifist reasons)
- **Waiver of oath for disabled applicants** unable to understand or communicate the oath's meaning (must file Form N-648)

USCIS may also waive the oath requirement for minors or people with certain mental impairments who otherwise qualify.

✔ **Summary: Legal Requirements Checklist**

Before filing your Form N-400, make sure you meet **all** of the following requirements—or work with a qualified attorney to resolve any complications:

Requirement	Details
LPR Status	You have a valid green card and held LPR status for 3 or 5 years.
Continuous Residence	You have lived continuously in the U.S. for the required period (3 or 5 years) without long trips abroad.
Physical Presence	You were physically in the U.S. for at least half of the required residency period.
Good Moral Character	No recent or serious criminal issues, tax problems, immigration fraud, or unresolved legal issues.
English & Civics	You can speak, read, and write basic English and pass a civics test unless you qualify for an exemption.
Oath of Allegiance	You are willing and able to take the full oath—or qualify for an approved modification or waiver.

Why This Section Matters

Each requirement may seem straightforward—but USCIS applies them rigorously. Failing to meet even **one** could result in denial or worse. Many people unknowingly apply too early, miscalculate travel dates, omit criminal history, or assume that past errors have been forgiven. But immigration authorities have access to decades of records and may reopen old matters during your N-400 review.

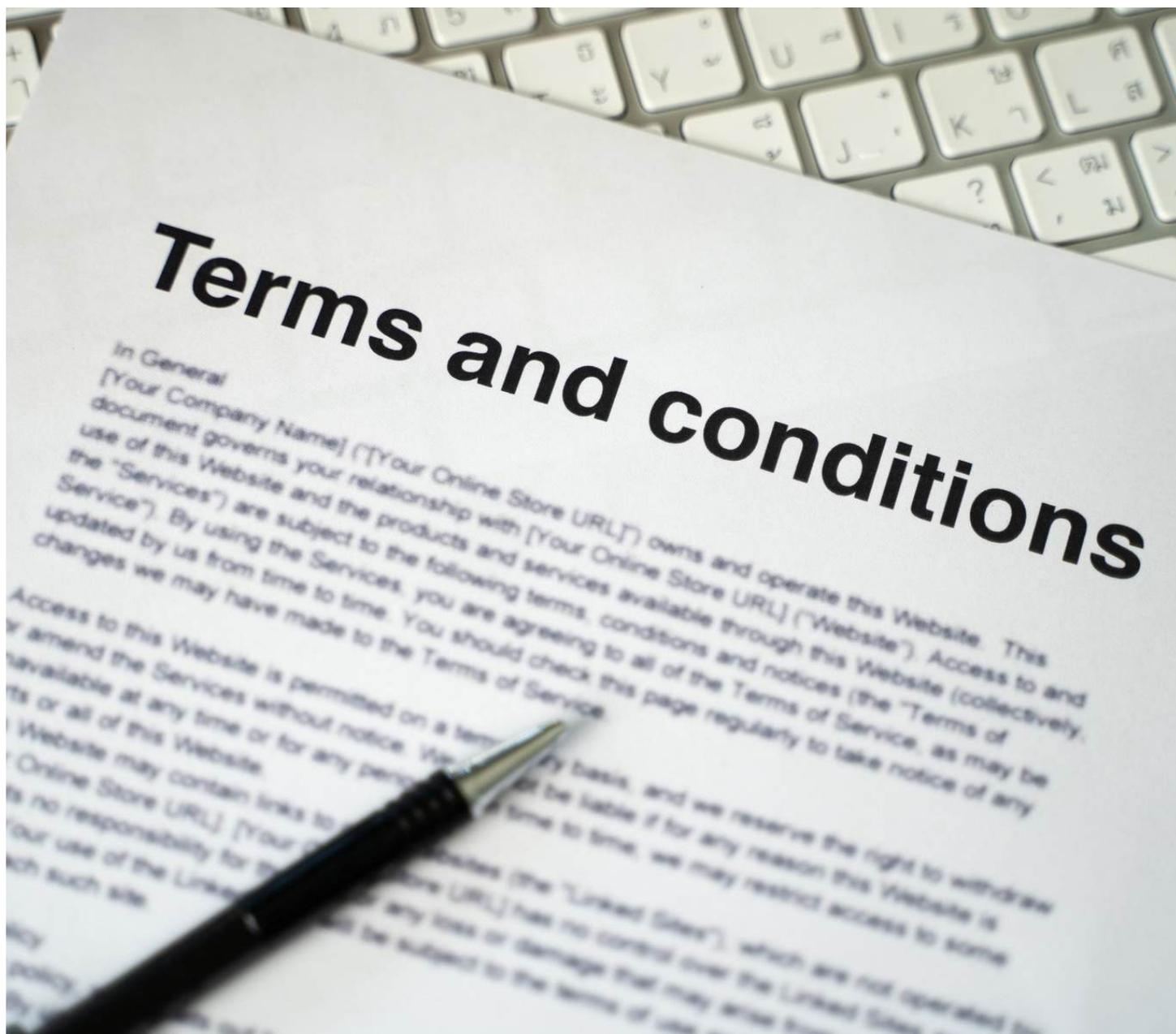
That's why the law firm of **Figeroux & Associates** is here for you.

How Figeroux & Associates Can Help

- **Full eligibility review** before you apply
- **Customized legal strategies** for waivers, exemptions, and red flags
- **Representation at USCIS interviews**
- **Follow-up on delays or adverse decisions**

If you're serious about becoming a U.S. citizen, don't take shortcuts. Get the legal guidance you need from professionals who've helped thousands succeed.

☎ Call **855-768-8845** or visit www.askthelawyer.us to schedule your consultation. Your path to citizenship starts with smart, legal advice.



Section IV: Waivers & Exceptions

IV. Waivers & Exceptions: When the Standard Rules Don't Apply

U.S. immigration law recognizes that some lawful permanent residents face unique circumstances that may prevent them from meeting every naturalization requirement in the usual way. For that reason, USCIS allows for several **waivers and exceptions**—especially for older adults, people with disabilities, or long-time residents who meet special criteria.

These waivers can make the path to citizenship easier, but they require careful legal preparation, supporting documents, and sometimes even medical certifications. Filing incorrectly or without legal support may result in delays or denial.

At Figeroux & Associates, we've helped many clients qualify for these waivers successfully. Below, we'll break down the most common types of waivers and how they work.

1. English Language Exemption

Under certain conditions, an applicant may be **exempt from the English requirement**, meaning they will not have to demonstrate their ability to speak, read, or write in English. However, they must still take the civics test (in their native language, with an interpreter).

You qualify for the English exemption if:

You are **50 years old or older** *and* have lived in the U.S. as an LPR for **20 years** (“50/20” rule), OR
You are **55 years old or older** *and* have lived in the U.S. as an LPR for **15 years** (“55/15” rule)

In these cases, you can take the civics test in your native language with the help of an interpreter.

2. Special Consideration for the Civics Test (“65/20” Rule)

Even if you still have to take the civics test, you may qualify for **simplified test questions** if:

You are **65 years or older** and
Have been an LPR for **at least 20 years**

This is known as the “**65/20 rule**.” Applicants who qualify are given a **shorter list of civics questions** to study (20 instead of 100) and are tested in their native language.

3. Disability Waiver (Form N-648)

If you are **unable to learn English and/or civics due to a medical condition**, you may qualify for a full **disability waiver** using **Form N-648**.

Conditions that may qualify:

Alzheimer’s disease or dementia
Intellectual disabilities
Stroke-related impairments
Severe mental illness
Developmental disabilities

To apply, you must:

File **Form N-648** with your N-400
Submit medical documentation from a **licensed medical doctor, clinical psychologist, or doctor of osteopathy**
Clearly show that the condition affects your ability to meet test requirements and is not temporary

USCIS reviews these carefully and may require additional documentation or interviews. An attorney can ensure the waiver is properly completed and supported.

4. Waiver or Modification of the Oath

Some applicants may request a **modification** or even **waiver** of the Oath of Allegiance under special circumstances.

You may qualify for an oath modification if:

You have **religious or moral objections** to bearing arms or performing military service.

You may also be **excused entirely** from the oath if:

You have a **mental impairment** that makes you unable to understand the meaning of the oath. A medical waiver (Form N-648) is required.

5. Accommodations for Applicants with Disabilities

Applicants with disabilities who are **not requesting a waiver** may still ask for **reasonable accommodations**, such as:

- Extended time during the interview
- Assistance with reading or writing
- A sign language interpreter
- Interviews conducted at home or hospital (in rare cases)

These requests must be submitted early, and it's best to do so with legal guidance to ensure that the accommodation is appropriate and documented.

Legal Support Makes the Difference

Many naturalization waivers and exceptions are underutilized because applicants:

- Don't know they qualify
- Submit incomplete or unsupported forms
- Get rejected due to missing or confusing medical documentation

At **Figeroux & Associates**, we help:

- Determine if you qualify for exemptions or waivers
- Work with doctors to properly prepare and certify medical waivers (N-648)
- Draft legal cover letters and prepare you for interviews

We've seen how these waivers change lives—and we know how to get them approved.

Key Takeaways

Waiver Type	Who It Helps	What It Covers
50/20 or 55/15	Older immigrants	Exemption from English requirement
65/20	Elderly, long-term residents	Simplified civics questions
N-648 Waiver	Disabled applicants	Full waiver of English and/or civics tests
Oath Modification/Waiver	Religious objectors or mentally impaired	Customized or waived oath requirement

Need Help? Call Figeroux & Associates

Citizenship is your right—but if you're facing challenges with language, age, health, or mental capacity, you may qualify for a special path. Let us guide you through it.

Call **855-768-8845** or visit www.askthelawyer.us today.



Section V: Step-by-Step Guide to Filing for Citizenship

Part 1 of 2 – Preparing to Apply through the USCIS Process (Approx. 1,000 words)

V. Step-by-Step Guide to Filing for Citizenship

Filing for U.S. citizenship is a structured, legal process with clearly defined steps. But despite how “simple” the process might appear on the USCIS website, each stage presents potential risks—especially if you're unaware of the red flags in your background. That's why proper preparation and legal guidance are critical.

This guide will walk you through each stage, from preparation to oath ceremony, while highlighting where mistakes commonly occur—and how **Figeroux & Associates** can help you avoid them.

Step 1: Confirm Your Eligibility

Before filing Form N-400, make sure you:

- Are at least **18 years old**
- Are a **lawful permanent resident (LPR)** for 5 years (or 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen)
- Meet the **continuous residence** and **physical presence** requirements
- Can demonstrate **good moral character**
- Can pass the **English and civics tests**, or qualify for an exemption
- Are willing to take the **Oath of Allegiance**

🔍 **Common Pitfall:** People often miscalculate the 5- or 3-year LPR period, especially if their green card was backdated or issued after years of asylum or TPS. Others overlook trips abroad that may have broken continuous residence.

Our Solution: At Figeroux & Associates, we perform a full eligibility check before anything is filed. We review your immigration history, travel dates, arrest records, tax filings, and more.

Step 2: Gather Supporting Documents

You'll need to collect and submit important documents with your N-400. These include:

- **Green card (front and back)**
- **Marriage certificate** (if applying through a U.S. citizen spouse)
- **Proof of spouse's citizenship**
- **Tax returns** for the last 3–5 years
- **Travel records** (passport stamps, I-94 travel history)
- **Selective Service registration** (if applicable)
- **Evidence of good moral character** (e.g., child support compliance, community involvement)
- **Certified court dispositions** for any arrests or convictions
- **Disability waivers (Form N-648)**, if applicable

🔍 **Common Pitfall:** Many people omit crucial records—especially old court documents or tax transcripts. USCIS will not approve an application without full documentation.

Our Solution: We help clients assemble a complete and well-organized file with all required and optional supporting documents to strengthen the case.

Step 3: Complete and Submit Form N-400

The **Form N-400** is your official application for naturalization. It can be submitted:

- **Online** through a USCIS account
- **By mail**, with supporting documents and the filing fee

Filing Fee (as of 2024): \$640 plus \$85 for biometrics = **\$725 total** (Fee waivers or reductions are available in certain financial hardship cases.)

Common Pitfall: Mistakes on the N-400 are among the top reasons applications are delayed or denied. These include incorrect dates, failure to disclose travel or criminal history, or even signing the form incorrectly.

Our Solution: We professionally complete your N-400, double-check every answer, and submit the correct documentation to USCIS with a legal cover letter to clarify any complex issues.

Step 4: Attend Your Biometrics Appointment

After filing, USCIS will schedule a **biometrics appointment** at an Application Support Center (ASC). You'll provide:

- Fingerprints
- Photograph
- Signature

This data is used to:

- Conduct a background check with the FBI
- Confirm your identity

- Check against any criminal or immigration violations

 **Red Flag:** If you have an unresolved criminal record, your fingerprints may trigger further investigation, or a Request for Evidence (RFE).

Our Solution: We run background checks in advance and resolve any criminal or immigration issues before you're fingerprinted.

Step 5: Prepare for the Interview

Once your biometrics and background check are cleared, USCIS will schedule your **naturalization interview**—usually 6 to 12 months after you file. During this interview:

- The officer reviews your N-400 answers
- You take the **English test**
- You take the **civics test**
- The officer may ask about your background, travel, taxes, employment, marriage, or children

 **Common Pitfall:** Applicants often fail to bring required documents or forget how they answered specific questions on their N-400. Contradictions or vague answers can lead to delays, denials, or additional questioning.

Our Solution: We conduct **mock interviews** and prepare you thoroughly. We also attend interviews with you, where appropriate, to ensure your rights are protected and your responses are consistent.

Up next: **Part 2** of this section will cover:

- **The decision and oath ceremony**
- **What to do if you're denied**
- **Filing appeals or reapplying**
- **How Figeroux & Associates supports clients at every stage**

Section V: Step-by-Step Guide to Filing for Citizenship

Part 2 of 2 – Interview Results, Oath Ceremony, and Denials

Step 6: USCIS Decision – Approval, Continuation, or Denial

After your naturalization interview, USCIS can take one of three actions:

Approval

- If you pass your English and civics test and your background checks are clear, USCIS may approve your application on the spot or shortly after.
- You'll receive a notice for your **oath ceremony** within a few weeks.

Continued

- If USCIS needs more information, documents, or if you failed a test, your case will be **“continued.”**
- You'll receive a **Request for Evidence (RFE)** or be rescheduled for a second test/interview.

Denied

- If you fail to meet eligibility requirements (residence, moral character, etc.), USCIS may deny your application.
- The denial letter will explain the reason(s), and you may appeal or refile later.

Common Pitfalls Leading to Denial:

Failing the civics or English test twice
Not responding to a Request for Evidence on time
Criminal history, false claims to citizenship, or tax issues
Contradictions between the N-400 and your interview responses

Our Solution: Figeroux & Associates helps avoid denials by:

Identifying and addressing issues **before** filing
Preparing you for interviews with mock sessions
Responding to RFEs promptly and thoroughly
Filing appeals or reapplications strategically if you're denied



Step 7: The Oath of Allegiance Ceremony

Once your application is approved, you'll receive a **Form N-445**, the notice of your **naturalization ceremony**. This is the final step.

At the ceremony:

- You return your green card
- You take the **Oath of Allegiance**
- You receive your **Certificate of Naturalization**

Congratulations! You are now a U.S. citizen.

Important Post-Oath Steps

- Apply for a U.S. passport**
- Update your Social Security records**
- Register to vote**
- Sponsor eligible family members**
- Change legal status with employers or schools**

Once naturalized, your immigration status is secure and you cannot be deported for past actions (unless the naturalization was obtained through fraud).



What If You Are Denied?

If your application is denied, you have two main options:

1. Request a Hearing (Form N-336)

You have **30 days** to request a hearing with a different USCIS officer.
This is a second chance to clarify or correct what went wrong.
We can prepare a legal argument, submit new evidence, and accompany you to the hearing.

2. Re-apply

If the issue was something temporary (e.g., failing the test), you can simply **reapply**.
You may need to wait until you meet all eligibility requirements again.

Do NOT ignore a denial—some denials may indicate a serious issue that could risk your green card. For example:

- Claims of past fraud or illegal voting
- Old arrests that could now trigger removal

A moral character finding that may have long-term effects

Our Solution: Figeroux & Associates can:

- Analyze the denial letter
- File an N-336 appeal
- Resolve criminal, tax, or immigration issues before you refile
- Guide you through litigation or motions to reopen

Why Legal Help Matters at Every Stage

The N-400 application may look simple—but it’s a legal declaration. Every “yes” or “no” answer, every trip abroad, every past mistake matters. Without a lawyer, you may unknowingly risk your future.

At Figeroux & Associates, we:

- Provide a full **risk assessment** before filing
- Resolve **red flag issues** like arrests, fraud, or absences
- Assist with **disability waivers, interpreter requests, and fee waivers**
- Represent you at **interviews, hearings, and appeals**
- Help you **get it right the first time**

Final Thought

Citizenship is a major life step. It grants rights, protections, and a deeper connection to the country you now call home. But one mistake can cause delays or even jeopardize your status.

Don’t risk it. Ask the Lawyer.

Call **Figeroux & Associates** today at **855-768-8845** Visit www.askthelawyer.us

Let our experience protect your future.





Section VI: Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

VI. Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

Every year, thousands of green card holders are denied U.S. citizenship for avoidable mistakes. Some errors seem small—like forgetting a date or misunderstanding a question—but they can have serious consequences, including delays, denials, and in extreme cases, referral for removal proceedings.

At **Figeroux & Associates**, we've seen how even highly qualified applicants face problems simply because they filed alone or with unqualified "immigration consultants." This section outlines the **most common naturalization mistakes**—and how working with a qualified immigration attorney can help you avoid them.

1. Filing Before You're Eligible

Timing matters. Many people mistakenly file before they meet the continuous residence or physical presence requirements. Even if you've had a green card for 5 years (or 3 if married to a U.S. citizen), a long trip abroad can disrupt your eligibility.

Common Scenario: A green card holder spent 7 months abroad and filed for citizenship assuming it wouldn't affect their case. USCIS denied the application due to a break in continuous residence.

✔ **Solution:** Always calculate your time in the U.S. accurately. At Figeroux & Associates, we verify dates against passport stamps and I-94 records before filing.

2. Omitting Criminal or Immigration History

Some applicants don't disclose arrests or citations, thinking "it was just a ticket" or "it got dismissed." Others fail to mention prior immigration violations like overstays or working without authorization before getting a green card.

● **Problem:** USCIS conducts a deep background check. If you fail to disclose something they discover later, they may accuse you of lying or misrepresentation.

✔ **Solution:** Disclose everything. We request FBI records, run local background checks, and obtain certified court dispositions in advance. If needed, we prepare legal explanations to show rehabilitation or eligibility despite past mistakes.

3. Not Paying Taxes or Child Support

USCIS expects naturalization applicants to fulfill **all civic duties**—including filing taxes and meeting child support obligations. Failing to do so may result in a finding of **lack of good moral character**.

● **Example:** An applicant who didn't file taxes for two years and owed back support was denied naturalization and flagged for immigration review.

✔ **Solution:** We help clients:

- File missing tax returns

- Enter IRS payment plans

- Resolve child support issues

- Submit proof of compliance to USCIS

4. Relying on Unqualified "Immigration Helpers"

Many people use non-lawyers—often friends, family, or unlicensed immigration "consultants." These individuals may mean well but are not legally qualified. One small mistake can cost you everything.

● **Warning:** If an error is made, only an attorney can legally represent you before USCIS, correct filings, or defend you in court if something goes wrong.

✔ **Solution:** Figeroux & Associates provides full legal representation—before, during, and after the naturalization process. We defend your rights and handle the legal complexities others miss.

5. Failing to Prepare for the Interview

The naturalization interview is not just a civics quiz. It's also a legal review. The officer will go over your N-400 form line by line, verifying every answer.

● **Risk:** Applicants who forget what they wrote on the form, bring the wrong documents, or contradict themselves during the interview can raise red flags.

✔ **Solution:** We provide:

Mock interviews

- A complete review of your N-400 and case history

- Legal representation at the interview (when necessary)

- A document checklist to make sure you bring everything required

6. Not Updating USCIS on Changes

If you move, get married/divorced, travel abroad, or are arrested while your application is pending, you **must inform USCIS**. Failure to update can be seen as dishonesty or negligence.

● Example: A client failed to inform USCIS of a new arrest that occurred while waiting for the interview. USCIS discovered it and denied the application, citing lack of transparency.

✓ Solution: We handle all correspondence with USCIS and ensure your application stays up to date and in compliance.

7. Submitting Incomplete or Incorrect Forms

Even a minor paperwork error—like failing to sign a form, using outdated versions, or leaving blanks—can result in delays or rejections.

● Risk: USCIS may reject your application outright or send it back with a request for evidence, delaying your process by months.

✓ Solution: Our team ensures every form is properly completed, signed, submitted on time, and backed by legal cover letters if needed.

Summary: Mistakes Can Be Costly

Mistake	Consequence	Legal Remedy
Filing too early	Denial, wasted fees	Legal eligibility review
Omitting history	Denial, fraud finding	Full disclosure with support
Unpaid taxes/support	Denial or referral	Compliance or payment plans
Using non-lawyers	Serious errors	Professional legal counsel
Poor interview prep	Inconsistencies, delays	Mock interviews & coaching
Ignoring updates	Delays or denial	USCIS notifications filed
Form errors	Rejections or RFEs	Complete legal filing

The Figeroux & Associates Advantage

We've seen it all—from simple filing mistakes to complex denials that could have been avoided with proper guidance. Don't take chances with your future.

Call 855-768-8845 Visit www.askthelawyer.us Office: 26 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11242

Ask the Lawyer... before it's too late.

Section VII: Red Flag Issues That Can Lead to Denial or Deportation

Part 1 of 3 – Absences, Taxes, and Child Support

VII. Red Flag Issues That Can Lead to Denial or Deportation

While naturalization opens the door to the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, it also exposes your full immigration history to fresh legal scrutiny. Many green card holders are shocked to learn that problems—even from years ago—can not only lead to **denial of their N-400** application but in some cases, **trigger removal (deportation) proceedings**.

At **Figeroux & Associates**, we conduct a full legal audit before any N-400 is filed to ensure our clients are protected. This section details the most dangerous **red flag issues**, how USCIS detects them, and what you can do about it.

1. Absences of More Than 6 Months from the U.S.

USCIS closely reviews international travel history for compliance with the **continuous residence** and **physical presence** requirements.

● Red Flag:

Trips of more than 6 months may be considered a break in continuous residence.

Trips over 1 year almost always reset your eligibility clock and raise suspicions of abandoning your permanent resident status.

Even short frequent trips can raise questions if you appear to be living abroad more than in the U.S.

⚖️ Legal Impact:

Your N-400 can be denied.

USCIS may question whether you ever intended to make the U.S. your permanent home.

In serious cases, your green card can be challenged.

✅ Solution:

We help clients **document ties to the U.S.**, such as home ownership, job records, taxes, and family connections.

If the time abroad exceeded a year, we may advise waiting to reestablish continuous residence or explore legal options like **Form N-470** (Preservation of Residence for Employment Abroad).

2. Failing to File Taxes or Pay Tax Debt

U.S. citizenship requires adherence to federal law—including tax obligations. USCIS sees failure to file or pay taxes as a violation of **good moral character**.

● Red Flag:

Not filing federal or state income tax returns
Filing as a "non-resident" while holding a green card
Owing back taxes without a payment plan

 **Legal Impact:**

Denial of N-400
Accusation of tax fraud or misrepresentation
Referral to IRS or ICE

 **Solution:**

We coordinate with tax professionals to **file or amend returns**.
Help you establish an **IRS payment plan** and submit proof to USCIS.
If there was an honest mistake, we draft **legal statements of explanation** to mitigate impact.

3. Failure to Pay Court-Ordered Child Support

Supporting your children—whether you live with them or not—is a legal obligation in the U.S. Failure to pay child support is considered a **moral character issue**.

 **Red Flag:**

Delinquent or unpaid child support
Court orders showing missed payments
Wage garnishment records for non-payment

 **Legal Impact:**

Denial of citizenship based on lack of good moral character
Possible referrals to family court
May be used as a basis for further immigration review

 **Solution:**

We help clients:
Obtain **compliance letters** from child support agencies
Enter **payment arrangements** if behind
Submit proof of regular payments and resolution to USCIS

 **Key Takeaway**

These first three red flags—absences, taxes, and child support—may seem unrelated to immigration. But they speak to your commitment to the laws and obligations of the United States, which USCIS weighs heavily when deciding whether to grant you the full rights of citizenship.

Each of these issues is resolvable—but only **before you apply**. Once flagged during processing, you may face long delays or even removal proceedings if your original green card eligibility is called into question.

Figeroux & Associates Legal Advantage

We don't just fill out your forms—we protect your future.

Before we file your N-400, we:

Audit your travel history
Verify tax compliance
Resolve child support issues

Build a strong legal case that anticipates and neutralizes red flags

Call **855-768-8845** or  Visit www.askthelawyer.us to schedule your consultation.



Section VII: Red Flag Issues That Can Lead to Denial or Deportation

Part 2 of 3 – Fraud, False Claims, and Unlawful Actions

4. Misrepresentation or Fraud in Your Green Card Process

Naturalization opens up your **entire immigration history** to renewed scrutiny. USCIS is authorized to **re-examine your original green card application** and any supporting documents to verify if you were lawfully admitted to the U.S.

● Red Flag:

- You entered into a **sham marriage** to obtain a green card
- You used **false documents**, or lied on a prior immigration application
- Your sponsor committed fraud you weren't aware of
- You failed to disclose **prior names, marriages, or arrests**

⚖️ Legal Impact:

- Denial of your N-400
- Revocation of your green card (through rescission)
- Referral for **removal proceedings**

USCIS uses interviews, database checks, and old records to uncover inconsistencies—sometimes from cases filed **10–20 years ago**.

✔ **Solution:**

If you suspect there was a problem with your original green card case, you must consult an immigration attorney *before* filing. At Figeroux & Associates, we:

- Obtain and review your full immigration file (FOIA request)
- Identify any past missteps or errors
- Explore legal remedies (e.g., reopening or correcting the old case)
- Build a legal strategy to protect your current status

5. Assisting Someone to Enter the U.S. Illegally

Helping another person enter or stay in the U.S. illegally—whether it’s a relative, spouse, or friend—can lead to major immigration consequences.

● **Red Flag:**

- Driving someone across the border illegally
- Providing false documents to help someone enter
- Paying or arranging for someone’s illegal entry
- Harboring undocumented individuals

Even if you were not prosecuted criminally, USCIS may view this as “**alien smuggling**”, which can bar you from naturalization and affect your moral character.

⚖️ **Legal Impact:**

- Denial of naturalization
- Triggering of inadmissibility or removal
- USCIS may refer your case to ICE for further investigation

✔ **Solution:**

If you’ve ever helped someone enter or remain in the U.S. unlawfully—even if it was decades ago—speak with us before applying. We will:

- Review the facts carefully
- Prepare a legal explanation or waiver strategy
- Determine if your actions fall under **exceptions for family unity** (in some cases, helping a spouse or child can be forgiven)

6. False Claims to U.S. Citizenship

This is one of the **most serious** red flags in immigration law. A false claim to U.S. citizenship—whether on a job application, public benefits form, or voter registration—can lead to **lifetime bars** from both naturalization and legal status.

● **Red Flag:**

- Marking “U.S. Citizen” on a job application
- Checking the “U.S. Citizen” box on a FAFSA or public benefits form
- Using a fake birth certificate or passport
- Telling an employer or school you’re a citizen

USCIS is not required to prove that you knew it was wrong—**intent may not matter** in some cases.

⚖️ **Legal Impact:**

- Immediate denial of naturalization
- Possible **removal from the U.S.**
- No waiver or forgiveness in most cases

Even a **single false claim**, made years ago, can ruin your citizenship hopes.

✔ **Solution:**

If you're unsure whether you ever made a false claim—especially during work or school—you need a legal review. We can:

- Evaluate whether your situation meets any rare exceptions
- Provide legal declarations of misunderstanding or mistaken form completion (where appropriate)
- Advise you *not to file* if the risk is too high and guide you on long-term strategies

7. Voting in a U.S. Election as a Non-Citizen

Another serious violation is voting in any federal, state, or local U.S. election when you are **not yet a citizen**.

● **Red Flag:**

- Registering to vote (even at the DMV)
- Voting in any U.S. election
- Signing forms claiming to be a citizen to vote

Many applicants don't realize that **motor vehicle departments and social service offices often register people automatically**, and if you don't actively opt out, your registration can be used against you.

USCIS now checks state voting rolls to verify whether you've registered or voted unlawfully.

⚖️ **Legal Impact:**

- Denial of N-400
- Referral for removal proceedings
- Possible permanent ineligibility for any immigration benefit

✔ **Solution:**

We've helped clients:

- Obtain **voter registration records** from local election boards
- Submit legal declarations explaining mistaken or automatic registration
- Argue lack of intent or actual voting when appropriate

These are delicate cases that must be handled with care and legal precision.

Don't File Until You Know the Risks

These types of red flags are **not just red tape**—they're legal landmines. Filing without knowing how your past actions or errors may be interpreted can have devastating consequences.

👛 Let Figeroux & Associates Safeguard Your Application

We are immigration attorneys who:

- Know the red flags
- Know how USCIS screens cases

- Know how to defend our clients before, during, and after filing

If you've ever helped someone illegally, made a false claim, or fear your green card history is flawed, do **not** file without speaking to us.

📞 Call 855-768-8845 🌐 Visit www.askthelawyer.us

Ask the Lawyer. Protect your future.



Section VII: Red Flag Issues That Can Lead to Denial or Deportation

Part 3 of 3 – Arrests, Convictions, and Controlled Substances

8. Arrests and Criminal Convictions

Even though you may already have a green card, **any arrest or criminal conviction**—including those that happened *before* or *after* your permanent residency was granted—can derail your citizenship application.

Many applicants are shocked to learn that their case is denied not because they were convicted, but because they **failed to disclose** the arrest. In other cases, the conviction itself is considered a "**crime involving moral turpitude**" or a "**removable offense**."

8.1. What USCIS Considers

USCIS reviews:

- Arrest records (including those with no charges filed)
- Dismissed or expunged cases
- Traffic offenses with jail time or reckless conduct

- Domestic violence, theft, DUI, drug possession, assault, or fraud

Even **juvenile or sealed cases** must be disclosed on the N-400 form.

● Common Criminal Red Flags:

- **Shoplifting or petty theft:** Can be seen as a crime involving moral turpitude
- **DUI/DWI:** Can lead to denial, especially if there are multiple offenses
- **Domestic violence:** Often results in both immigration and criminal consequences
- **Marijuana possession:** Still a federal crime, even if legal in your state
- **Drug trafficking or sale:** Grounds for permanent inadmissibility and deportation

⚖ Legal Impact:

- Denial of citizenship based on lack of **good moral character**
- Possible referral to **ICE** for removal proceedings
- Revocation of green card in serious or repeated offenses
- Ineligibility for any immigration benefits (if the crime is classified as an aggravated felony)

Even **non-violent and misdemeanor** offenses can be enough for USCIS to deny you.

✅ Solution:

Before filing, we obtain and review:

- **FBI background checks**
- **State RAP sheets**
- **Certified court dispositions** from all jurisdictions where you've been arrested or charged

Then, we:

- Analyze whether the conviction affects eligibility
- File for post-conviction relief (in certain states)
- Prepare legal memos to establish rehabilitation, remorse, and passage of time
- In some cases, **advise clients not to file yet**, and help rebuild eligibility over time

At Figeroux & Associates, we've helped clients who:

- Were arrested for fights or domestic issues
- Have multiple DUIs
- Committed minor fraud unknowingly
- Carried marijuana across state lines

9. Controlled Substances and Drug Offenses

While marijuana may be legal under state law, **U.S. federal immigration law still classifies marijuana as a controlled substance.**

● Red Flag:

- Any **drug possession**, even small amounts
- **Marijuana use or involvement**, even without arrest
- Medical marijuana card holders

Legal Impact:

Inadmissibility to the U.S. Ineligibility for citizenship Potential green card revocation No waiver available for most drug offenses (except for a **single offense of 30g or less of marijuana**)

Solution:

If you've had any drug-related incidents—whether criminal or medical—we must **review all documentation**. We may:

Pursue **record vacatur** or expungement

Delay filing to demonstrate good moral character over time

Submit legal arguments regarding eligibility or hardship

Drug cases are particularly sensitive. Never assume your green card protects you from immigration consequences.

10. Multiple Minor Offenses

Even if no single crime would disqualify you, a **pattern of minor offenses**—such as repeated shoplifting, loitering, or alcohol-related offenses—can collectively show a lack of good moral character.

USCIS officers are trained to look at:

The number of arrests

Time frame between offenses

Whether rehabilitation has occurred

Our Approach:

At Figeroux & Associates, we:

Work to expunge or reduce convictions where possible

Prepare strong letters of community support

Help clients document **rehabilitation** (e.g., counseling, employment, family life)

Delay filing when necessary to give time for a clean record to build

Final Word on Criminal Red Flags

Filing your N-400 without legal review when you have a criminal record—**no matter how minor**—is a **high-risk move**. Many people assume that because they were not deported when arrested, they're safe. But naturalization is a fresh review of your entire background.

Don't gamble with your future. Even green card holders with spotless lives for decades have lost everything due to a single bad judgment in their youth.

The Figeroux & Associates Defense Strategy

Before we file your N-400, we:

Obtain and analyze your entire criminal and immigration history

Identify hidden risks that USCIS will uncover
Build a legal plan to protect your rights, explain your past, and defend your future
Offer representation in interviews, hearings, and appeals if needed

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Ask the Lawyer—before your past becomes your future problem.



Section VIII: How an Attorney Can Help You Navigate the Process

VIII. How an Attorney Can Help You Navigate the Process

Applying for U.S. citizenship is more than just filling out a form—it's a legal proceeding that evaluates your entire history in the United States. From immigration status and family history to criminal records and moral conduct, USCIS conducts a comprehensive review before granting you the privilege of naturalization.

That's why **partnering with a qualified immigration attorney is essential**. At **Figeroux & Associates**, we've seen too many people suffer delays, denials, or even deportation simply because they didn't have proper legal representation.

In this section, we explain the critical ways an attorney can protect, support, and empower you through the naturalization process.



1. Pre-Filing Case Review: Identifying Red Flags Early

The first step in our process is a **full legal audit** of your immigration history, background, and potential red flags. Before you even file Form N-400, we examine:

- Your green card process (was it lawfully granted?)
- Travel history (did you break continuous residence?)
- Arrests, citations, or sealed convictions
- Tax and financial history
- Public benefits use or false claims to citizenship
- Employment and marital history

Why This Matters: USCIS doesn't just look at your application—they dig into every detail of your past. If they uncover something you didn't mention (even by accident), you risk being denied or flagged for immigration court.

✔ **What We Do:** We uncover and address these issues *before* USCIS does. This gives you a stronger, safer path to approval.

2. Form Preparation and Document Management

Mistakes on Form N-400 are one of the **most common reasons** applications are rejected, delayed, or denied. These include:

- Incorrect dates or answers
- Omissions of travel, arrests, or marital history
- Misunderstanding a question and giving a “false” answer

What We Do:

- Professionally complete and review all forms
- ✔ Ensure accurate disclosure of your entire history
- ✔ Draft supporting legal memoranda to explain complex issues
- Include the right evidence and organize it for USCIS

We make sure your file is **airtight** and prepared with the precision expected by a federal agency.

3. Interview Preparation and Legal Coaching

The naturalization interview can be stressful—even for well-qualified applicants. USCIS officers may ask challenging or unexpected questions, especially if you have red flags like absences, past arrests, or questionable moral conduct.

✔ What We Do:

- Conduct mock interviews so you know what to expect
- Review your N-400 line-by-line so you avoid contradictions
- Prepare you to pass the English and civics tests with confidence
- Provide strategies for handling sensitive questions

If necessary, we can **attend the interview with you** to ensure your rights are protected and your case is fairly evaluated.

4. Responding to RFEs, Continuances, or Delays

What We Do:

USCIS may issue a **Request for Evidence (RFE)** or place your case in **continuance** if they need more documentation or time to review your case.

Respond promptly and thoroughly to RFEs
Help gather additional evidence that proves your eligibility
Draft persuasive legal responses to avoid denial

We also track your case closely and follow up with USCIS if delays exceed normal processing times.

5. Handling Denials, Appeals, and Reapplications

If your application is denied, you still have options—but only if you act quickly and wisely.

Form N-336: Request a hearing on the denial with a new USCIS officer

Motion to Reopen: File new evidence that supports your case

Reapply: After fixing the issue or allowing time to pass

What We Do:

Analyze your denial letter and determine the best legal strategy

File and argue appeals, hearings, or litigation if necessary

Represent you in removal proceedings, if your case escalates

6. Long-Term Strategy & Peace of Mind

Even if you're not ready to file today, we help you **build a timeline** and legal game plan for the future. That might include:

Clearing old criminal records

Resolving tax or support issues

Accumulating more time for continuous residence

Citizenship is a lifetime benefit. It's worth doing right.

Why Choose Figeroux & Associates?

We're more than form fillers—we're your legal defenders, advisors, and advocates. Our firm has helped **thousands of immigrants** become U.S. citizens with confidence, dignity, and full legal support.

Here's what sets us apart:

Over 20 years of experience in immigration law

In-depth legal screenings and red flag analysis

Courtroom-tested attorneys ready to defend your case

Bilingual legal team and community-focused approach

Call 855-768-8845 Visit www.askthelawyer.us Figeroux & Associates – 26 Court Street, Brooklyn, 11242



Section IX: Case Studies and Real-Life Scenarios

To fully understand the importance of legal guidance in the naturalization process, it helps to look at **real-life cases** that illustrate both common challenges and how the law firm of **Figeroux & Associates** helped clients navigate them.

Below are **true-to-life examples**—based on composite client experiences—that showcase how complex situations were resolved successfully through expert legal support.

Case Study 1: A Long Absence That Almost Reset the Clock

Client: Marie, a Haitian green card holder for 7 years **Issue:** Took a 9-month trip abroad to care for a sick parent **Filed N-400 on her own** without realizing the trip broke her continuous residence

USCIS Response: Case placed on hold. She was asked to prove she didn't abandon her U.S. residence.

Our Intervention:

We filed evidence of strong U.S. ties: mortgage statements, tax filings, employer leave letters

Submitted a legal memorandum explaining the humanitarian reason for the trip

Marie avoided denial and was approved after her second interview

Lesson: Long absences can break eligibility—but with proper documentation and legal argument, they can be explained.



Case Study 2: Arrest Sealed, But Still a Threat

Client: Jorge, Dominican permanent resident **Issue:** Arrested for shoplifting 15 years ago; charges dismissed and record sealed

USCIS Response: Fingerprints revealed the arrest; Jorge didn't mention it on his N-400

Our Intervention:

Submitted certified court disposition and fingerprints

Provided affidavit explaining the misunderstanding about sealed records
Demonstrated 15+ years of clean record and community involvement

Result: Application approved. Jorge became a citizen.

Lesson: Even sealed or dismissed cases must be disclosed. We help you present them correctly and mitigate the impact.

Case Study 3: A False Claim That Nearly Caused Deportation

Client: Anita, Jamaican green card holder, applied for a retail job years ago **Issue:** Checked "U.S. citizen" on the form by mistake

USCIS Response: During the naturalization interview, she admitted to checking the box but thought it referred to "work eligibility"

Our Intervention:

Submitted the original job application and offer letter

Filed a legal brief arguing **lack of intent and understanding**
Highlighted her clean immigration record and English challenges

Outcome: USCIS accepted the explanation and granted her naturalization.

Lesson: False claims are serious, but not always fatal. Intent, context, and timely legal action can save your case.

Case Study 4: Tax Troubles Nearly Derailed Everything

Client: Emeka, Nigerian permanent resident for 6 years **Issue:** Owed \$9,000 in back taxes and hadn't filed for two years due to job loss

USCIS Response: Flagged during background check; requested proof of compliance

Our Intervention:

Partnered with a tax preparer to file missing returns

Helped client enroll in an IRS payment plan
Submitted IRS transcripts and payment proof to USCIS

Result: Citizenship granted; Emeka was able to sponsor his wife soon after

Lesson: Tax debt is not a dealbreaker—but **hiding it is**. Transparency and compliance can preserve eligibility.

Case Study 5: A Misstep on the Voter Form

Client: Lucia, Guyanese green card holder **Issue:** DMV clerk registered her to vote during license renewal

USCIS Response: Found voter registration in public database Lucia never voted, but her N-400 was denied for false claim to citizenship

Our Intervention:

Obtained state voter records showing no ballots cast
Submitted affidavit from Lucia and DMV copy of automatic registration form
Filed a new application with a legal memo detailing no intent or action

Outcome: Approved after reapplication. Lucia now votes legally as a citizen.

Lesson: Many applicants are unknowingly registered to vote. We can help undo the damage and explain it to USCIS.

Real Lives, Real Legal Wins

These stories illustrate why **no two cases are the same**. The law is complex, and even the most honest mistake can spiral into a crisis without legal protection.

At **Figeroux & Associates**, we:

Investigate your full history before you file
Defend you from past mistakes
Prepare you with strategy, not just paperwork
Fight for the outcome you deserve

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Section X: Final Recommendations and Resources

Naturalization is more than a process—it's a legal journey with permanent consequences. While becoming a U.S. citizen brings undeniable benefits, it also opens up your entire history to USCIS scrutiny. That's why every lawful permanent resident considering naturalization should proceed with knowledge, preparation, and **legal protection**.

Top Recommendations from Figeroux & Associates

1. Don't File Alone

Even straightforward cases can be denied due to minor errors.

If you've ever had an arrest, tax issue, or long trip abroad, consult an attorney.

2. Disclose Everything

Honesty is essential. USCIS can access court records, travel history, and employment files.

Sealed or expunged records must still be disclosed on the N-400.

3. Fix Problems First

If you owe taxes or child support, resolve them **before** filing.

If you suspect there was fraud or misrepresentation in your green card process, get legal help immediately.

4. Prepare for the Interview

Know your N-400 form inside and out.

Practice answering questions and prepare for the civics and English tests.

Bring all required documents and be confident—but honest.

5. Use Legal Representation When Needed

A lawyer can identify risks, build a strong case, and protect your rights during interviews or hearings.

If your application is denied, legal help is critical to appeal or refile correctly.

Additional Resources

USCIS Official Naturalization Guide: uscis.gov/citizenship Civics Study Tools & Practice Tests: uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-the-united-states Form N-400 (Application for Naturalization): uscis.gov/n-400 Disability Waiver (Form N-648): uscis.gov/n-648

With over 30 years of legal experience, we've helped thousands of immigrants become citizens—with pride, dignity, and protection. Whether you're ready to file or just starting to explore your options, we are here for you.

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Citizenship is your right—but getting it wrong can cost everything. Ask the Lawyer before you file. Protect your future today.

