



U.S. Citizenship
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NATURALIZATION: **BECOMING A U.S. CITIZEN**

OBJECTIVES

- Overview of SCDD and USCIS
- Naturalization Eligibility Requirements
- The Naturalization Process
- How to Request a Disability Accommodation



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CA STATE COUNCIL on DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



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Established by state and federal law; an independent, federally-funded state agency. (a.k.a. The State Council, SCDD, CA State Council)

Our Vision

Californians with developmental disabilities are guaranteed the same full and equal opportunities for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as all Americans.

The STATE COUNCIL's Work



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- **Empowering individuals and their families** through activities and systems navigation that teach self-advocacy skills and support self-determination.
- Work on advancing **public policy and systems change** to help people gain more control over their lives.
- **Building capacity** in our community and within systems.

DHS OVERVIEW



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Before: Dept. of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Service

- 🔥 Inspections
- 🔥 Border Patrol
- 🔥 Deportation
- 🔥 Investigations
- 🔥 Adjudications
- 🔥 Records and Information
- 🔥 Refugee and Asylum

Now: Dept. of Homeland Security U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

- 🔥 Immigration Benefits/Adjudications
- 🔥 Records and Information
- 🔥 Refugee and Asylum

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

- 🔥 Border Patrol

Inspections at Ports of Entry

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

- 🔥 Investigations Enforcement
and Removal

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



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- Vote
- U.S. Passport
- Run for elected office
- Work for the U.S. Government
- Upgrade family petitions
- Serve on a jury

NATURALIZATION PROCESS



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Prepare Form N-400,
Application for Naturalization



Submit Form N-400, documents
and fees to USCIS



**Receive USCIS receipt and
biometrics appointment
notices**



Go to the biometrics appointment
to be fingerprinted and photographed



Receive USCIS appointment notice
for naturalization interview



Complete the interview



Receive a decision from
USCIS on your Form N-400



Receive a notice to take
the Oath of Allegiance



Take the Oath of Allegiance to
the United States

STATUTORY PERIOD



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In general, the statutory period is the five-year (or three-year, if married to a U.S. citizen*) period before the date of application and up to the date of the Oath of Allegiance.

2016

JANUARY						
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2021

JANUARY						
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FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY



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Generally, to become a naturalized citizen, applicants must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a U.S. lawful permanent resident
- Meet continuous residence and physical presence requirements
- Live in the USCIS district where they apply
- Have good moral character



Applicants must also show:

- Basic understanding of English
- Knowledge of U.S. history and government
- Attachment to the U.S. Constitution

TIME AS A PERMANENT RESIDENT



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Naturalization applicants must be a lawful permanent resident for...

- 3 years, if married to a U.S. citizen*
- 5 years, for all other lawful permanent residents
- Some exceptions apply for military service members, veterans and some children born abroad to U.S. citizen parents



3-3-3 REQUIREMENT



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If applying for naturalization based on marriage to U.S. citizen, at time of filing...

- Applicant must have 3 years as a lawful permanent resident;
- Applicant must be married to same U.S. citizen for 3 years; and
- U.S. citizen spouse must be a citizen for 3 years.



CONTINUOUS RESIDENCE



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Applicants must have continuous residence in the U.S. during the statutory period.

If outside the U.S. on 1 trip...	Continuous residence
Less than 6 months	Has met this requirement
6 months to 1 year	Must provide additional evidence
More than 1 year	Has not met this requirement

PHYSICAL PRESENCE



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“Physical presence” is the time applicant has been physically present in the U.S.

- Physical presence is cumulative (can be multiple trips compiled), and trips one day or more outside U.S. count against “physical presence.”
- Applicants must spend HALF of statutory period physically in U.S. (Must have 18 or 30 months total during statutory period)

JURISDICTION

Applicants must live in the state or USCIS district where they apply for naturalization for at least **three months** before they can be naturalized.

<https://egov.uscis.gov/office-locator/#/>



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GOOD MORAL CHARACTER (GMC)



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- Applicants **must** show good moral character during statutory period and up to the Oath of Allegiance.
- Committing certain crimes **during** statutory period shows a lack of good moral character.
- Examples of GMC:

<https://www.uscis.gov/policy-manual/volume-12-part-f>

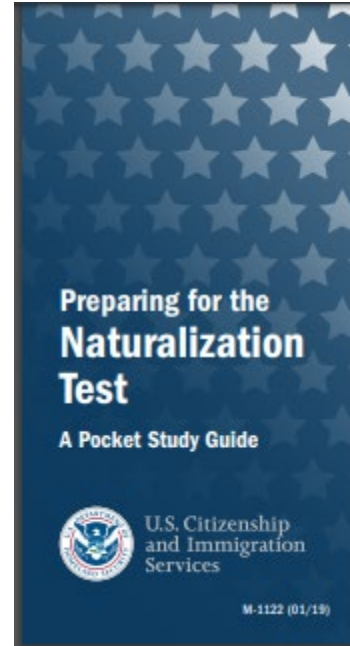
KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH & CIVICS



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Applicants must...

- understand, speak, read, and write basic English
- have knowledge of U.S. history and government



Note: Some applicants, because of age and time as a permanent resident, or because of a medical condition, may have different English and civics requirements.

ENGLISH EXEMPTIONS



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At the time of filing...

Applicant is at least:	Lived as a permanent resident in U.S. for:	Applicant does not take the:	Applicant takes the:
50	20 years	English test	civics test in their language
55	15 years	English test	civics test in their language
65	20 years	English test	simplified civics test in their language

ATTACHMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION



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Applicants must show that they:

- Support the principles of the Constitution, and
- Supports the good order and happiness of the United States.



DISABILITY EXCEPTION



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OMB No. 1615-0060; Expires 03/31/2019
**Form N-648, Medical Certification for
Disability Exceptions**

"MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL'S CERTIFICATION" must be certified by a medical professional before certifying this form, the medical professional must complete Form N-648 for additional information which is also located in the instructions.

Completing and Certifying This Form

Questions or items must be answered fully and accurately. Answers should utilize common terminology, without

<https://www.uscis.gov/n-648>

Request for Disability Exception (Form N-648)

- Applicants who have a medical condition that *impairs their ability to learn or demonstrate their knowledge* can request an exception to the English and/or civics tests.
- Their doctor must complete Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions.
- Only medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, or clinical psychologists licensed in the U.S. and its territories can complete this form.

LEGAL GUARDIAN, SURROGATE, or DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE



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- When an applicant is unable to undergo any part of the naturalization examination because of a physical disability, developmental disability, or mental impairment, a legal guardian, surrogate, or an eligible designated representative completes the naturalization process for the applicant
- The guardian, surrogate, or representative addresses every requirement for naturalization and bears the burden of establishing the applicant's eligibility for naturalization

WAIVER OF THE OATH



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- USCIS may waive the Oath of Allegiance because of a physical disability, developmental disability, or mental impairment
- An applicant who needs an oath waiver because of a physical disability, or developmental disability, or mental impairment, may make this request, with the assistance of a legal guardian, surrogate, or designated representative

OATH WAIVER REQUEST



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- Request can be done by submitting:
 - Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions (Form N-648 <https://www.uscis.gov/n-648>); or
 - A written request with a written evaluation by an authorized medical professional
 - Field offices should work with the legal guardian, surrogate, or designated representative **before** the initial examination to obtain all the necessary documentation

WHO CAN BE A LEGAL GUARDIAN, SURROGATE, or DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE



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- Who can be a legal guardian, surrogate or designated representative:
 - A person who a proper court has designated as the applicant's legal guardian or surrogate and who is authorized to exercise legal authority over the applicant's affairs; or
 - A U.S. citizen spouse, U.S. citizen parent, U.S. citizen adult son or daughter, or U.S. citizen adult brother or sister, who is the primary custodial caregiver and who takes responsibility for the applicant

FILING FOR NATURALIZATION



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Application for Naturalization (Form N-400)

- Paper file Form N-400 by downloading from uscis.gov/forms or file online by creating a myUSCIS account if paying fee
- Review the form/website for instructions, requirements and supporting documentation
- Filing fees and address to send application can be found on website: <https://www.uscis.gov/n-400>
- Fee waiver and reduced fee waiver also available

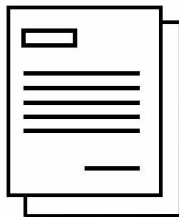
WHAT TO BRING



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Documents

- Appointment notice
- Permanent resident card
- ID
- Passports and re-entry permits, if any
- Birth, Marriage, Divorce, Death certificates, if any
- Court documents for convictions, if applicable
- Legal name change documents, if applicable
- Originals of what you submitted

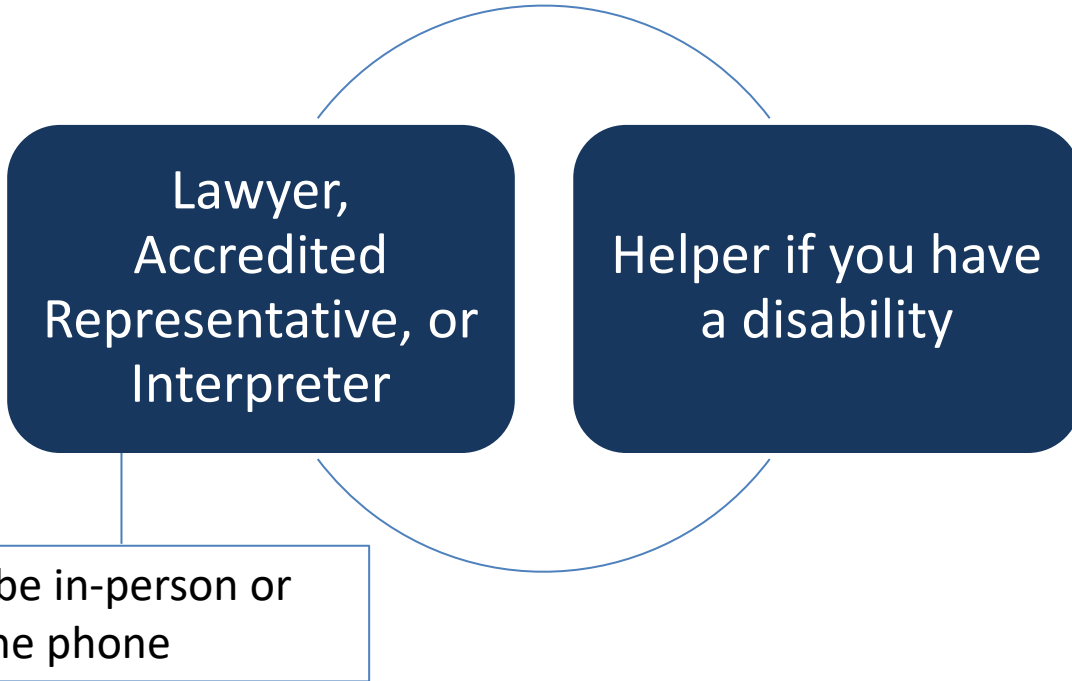


Mask



Blue or Black Pen

WHO CAN COME WITH YOU



THE PERSONAL INTERVIEW



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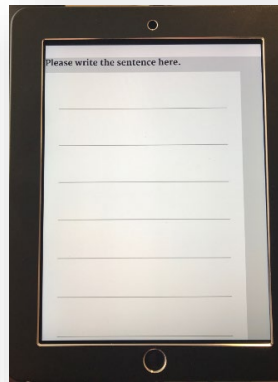
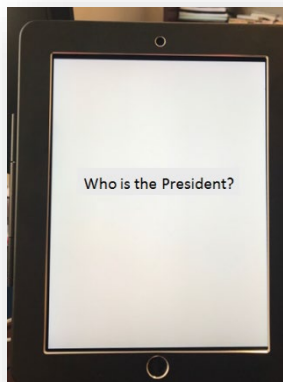
An Immigration Services Officer will:

- Place you under oath
- Give the reading and writing tests
- Give the civics test
- Assess ability to speak and understand English
- Review the Form N-400 to determine eligibility

IN-PERSON INTERVIEW



- Plastic screen separates you from the officer
- Reading and writing test is on the tablet
- You will review your information on the tablet
- You will sign the tablet



AFTER THE INTERVIEW



- The officer will give you a document with the outcome.
- If you are approved, you may attend an oath ceremony on same day or a later date.
- The oath ceremony is when you become a U.S. citizen.
- If you do not pass, you will have a second interview in 60 to 90 days.
- The officer may request more evidence from you in a letter.

CITIZENSHIP RESOURCE CENTER



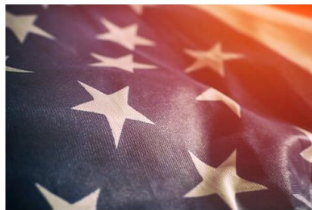
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Topics



Learn About Citizenship

Learn about the naturalization process and eligibility requirements to become a U.S. citizen.



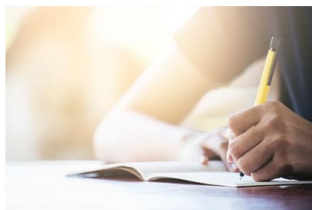
Apply for Citizenship

Apply for naturalization to become a citizen. File your N-400, Application for Naturalization, online.



Find Study Materials and Resources

Find free study materials and resources to prepare for



Resources for Educational Programs

Educators can find materials to supplement classroom

Educational tools and information to prepare for citizenship:

- Practice tests
- Study materials
- Vocabulary words
- Videos
- Audio learning
- Find an English or civics class
- Materials for teachers too!

www.uscis.gov/citizenship

CITIZENSHIP RESOURCES



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The Naturalization Process

Becoming a United States Citizen

S. C. I. S. Naturalization process presentation on becoming

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

0:09 / 14:31 • The Naturalization Process >

The Naturalization Process: Becoming a United States Citizen (ASL)

USCIS 81.4K subscribers

786

Share Save

This block shows a screenshot of a YouTube video player. The video title is "The Naturalization Process: Becoming a United States Citizen (ASL)". The video content features a woman in a purple jacket speaking. The video player interface includes a progress bar at 0:09 / 14:31, a play button, and a volume icon. Below the video player, the channel name "USCIS" is displayed with a verified badge and "81.4K subscribers". The video has 786 likes and options for "Share" and "Save".

ASL Naturalization Process
video on the USCIS
YouTube Channel

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wG0HTjg_2TE

SELF-HELP TOOLS AND RESOURCES



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The [USCIS webpage](#) offers the following free services:

- ✓ Request and review [disability accommodations](#)
- ✓ Check your [case status](#)
- ✓ [Change your address](#)
- ✓ Check [processing times](#)
- ✓ Ask a question about your case
- ✓ “[How Do I](#)” fact sheets
- ✓ Download [forms](#)
- ✓ [Online filing](#) (for some forms)
- ✓ [Explore My Options](#)
- ✓ Create an account on [myUSCIS](#)
- ✓ [Ask Emma](#)

Or call the Contact Center at 800-375-5283.

AVOID SCAMS

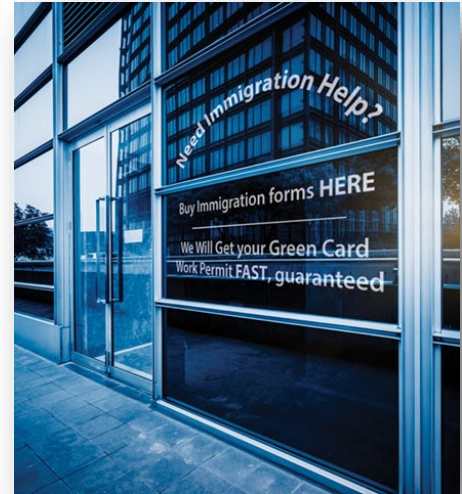


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Visit the [USCIS Avoid Scams](#) webpage to learn more about:

- [Form filing tips](#);
- Common immigration scams;
- How to [report immigration scams](#); and
- How to find [legal services and help](#).

THE WRONG HELP
CAN HURT
BEWARE OF IMMIGRATION SCAMS



NEED LEGAL ASSISTANCE?



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- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) accredited representatives are eligible to represent you before USCIS.
 - They must work for an approved non-profit, religious, charitable, social service or similar organization.
- Immigration attorneys can also assist.
 - Check for license to practice law and background for previous suspensions
- Immigration consultants/preparers cannot provide legal assistance.
 - They can only do simple clerical functions.

HELPFUL REMINDERS



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- If you cannot file online, be sure to submit the correct version of the form and mail certified/registered.
- Name changes may not be allowed for all USCIS districts.
- Give yourself extra time to look for parking and clear security.
- Visit our website or call Contact Center at 800-375-5283 for general information.
- Make sure to update all address changes within 10 days of moving on our website or in your account.
- New receipt notices will have a 2 year automatic extension of current green card.
- If you're feeling sick for any reason, request a schedule with no penalty by either calling the Contact Center or writing directly to the office.

AUTHORITY: SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT



- Section 504 states: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by an Executive agency. . . .”
- Individual served or encountered
 - Examples: applicants and petitioners, witnesses, stakeholders, representatives, guests at naturalization ceremonies

N-648 OR ACCOMMODATION REQUEST



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- Accommodation = Modification
 - An accommodation is a change in a USCIS practice or procedure that allows a qualified individual with a disability to participate in our programs and activities and access our benefits.
- N-648 = Exemption
 - With this form, your medical professional may suggest you should be exempt from all or part of the English language and US Civics testing requirements

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS INFO IN THE USICS POLICY MANUAL



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- Volume 1, General Policies and Procedures, Part A, Ch. 6
- Volume 12, Citizenship and Naturalization, Part C

PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS WEBPAGE



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[https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/disability-accommodations-
for-the-public](https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/disability-accommodations-for-the-public)



ACCOMMODATION EXAMPLES

- Accompany: relatives/guardian may accompany applicant during USCIS visit
- Wheelchair loan: request wheelchair from USCIS
- Reschedule: can request a reschedule of appointments
- Expedited Scheduling: can request an expedite request due to urgent/humanitarian medical or health needs
- Home Visit: USCIS can visit applicants at their home/hospital if applicant cannot visit USCIS for their interview
- Simplified Language: applicants can request officers state questions in simple language
- Nonverbal Communication: relatives/guardian may assist during the interview

HEARING ACCOMMODATIONS



- Sign Language Interpreters/Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs)
- Captioning/CART
- Pocket Talker/ALD
- Writing/Typing

HEARING RELATED ACCOMMODATIONS



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- Deaf Interpreters
- Home Sign
- Foreign Language Sign Language Interpreters (SLIs)
- Bringing your own SLI
- Vocabulary in interview
- Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)

VISION RELATED ACCOMMODATIONS



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- Braille
- Large Print
- Oral reading and writing tests

OTHER NATURALIZATION TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS



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- Breaks
- Extra time
- Civics test in writing (vs. orally)

HOW TO MAKE YOUR REQUEST



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- Online:
<https://egov.uscis.gov/erequest/displayAccomForm.do?entryPoint=init&roPageType=accommodations>
- Online request forwarded to assigned office
- Appointment Date needed...
- Description- detailed as possible
- Include phone number AND email
- Include with application when filing
- If necessary, call Contact Center 800-375-5283

WHEN TO MAKE YOUR REQUEST



- To request Sign Language Interpretation, Captioning, and/or Home Visit:
Request as soon as you receive your appointment notice
- Everything else:
At the time of the appointment

WHAT TO EXPECT After Making REQUESTS IN ADVANCE



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- Sign language Interpreter- CONFIRMATION.
- An email summarizing the granted accommodations.
- When clarification is needed, a phone call or email to you.
- Accommodations are provided.

ACCOMMODATIONS DENIALS



- If your request is denied, the Public Disability Access Coordinator has been consulted.
- To request reconsideration of a denial, you can:
 - Use online tool:
<https://egov.uscis.gov/erequest/displayAccomForm.do?entryPoint=init&sroPageType=accommodations> or
 - Email the USCIS employee that you have been working with on the accommodation
- Requests must be made 7 days after receipt of denial

YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE:



You will not get a response saying that your request...

- Was 'forwarded on & you'll hear back'
- Has to be made in a different way.
- Needs medical documentation (few exceptions).

WHAT IS NOT A DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION REQUEST



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The following are not **disability accommodation requests**:

- Exemption/N-648
- Inability to speak English NOT due to a medical condition
- Case Status

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINTS



- The public may seek recourse by filing a complaint with DHS' Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL):
<https://www.dhs.gov/file-civil-rights-complaint>
- For instructions, go to the footer of the USCIS website main page (www.uscis.gov)- look under Accessibility, then File a formal complaint

State Council's Regional Offices



North Coast (Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino)
northcoast@scdd.ca.gov (707) 463-4700

North State (Butte, Tehama, Plumas, Lassen, Glenn,
Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, Trinity) northstate@scdd.ca.gov
(530) 895-4027

Sacramento (Alpine, Colusa, Sierra, El Dorado, Nevada,
Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba)
sacramento@scdd.ca.gov (916) 263-8134

North Bay (Napa, Solano, Sonoma)
northbay@scdd.ca.gov (707) 648-4073

Bay Area (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco,
San Mateo) bayarea@scdd.ca.gov (510) 286-0439

North Valley Hills (Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin,
Stanislaus, Tuolumne) northvalleyhills@scdd.ca.gov
(209) 473-6930

Central Coast (Santa Clara, Monterey, Santa Barbara,
Ventura, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz)
centralcoast@scdd.ca.gov (408) 324-2106

Sequoia (Fresno, Kern, Mariposa, Madera, Kings, Tulare,
Merced) sequoia@scdd.ca.gov
(559) 222-2496

Los Angeles losangeles@scdd.ca.gov (818) 543-4631

Orange County orangecounty@scdd.ca.gov (714) 558-4404

San Bernardino (San Bernardino, Riverside, Inyo, Mono)
sanbernardino@scdd.ca.gov
(909) 890-1259

San Diego Imperial (San Diego, Imperial)
sandiego@scdd.ca.gov (619) 688-3323

QUESTIONS?



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ABOUT THIS PRESENTATION



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- Date of last revision: 4/13/23. This presentation is current only as of the date of last revision.
- Date of legal review: 4/13/23.
- Any references in documents or text, with the exception of case law, relate to fictitious individuals.
- This presentation contains no sensitive Personally Identifiable Information (PII).
- Information/content taken from the public USCIS [website](#).
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