

USCIS to revise Naturalization Test

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) recently announced its intention to revise the Civics portion of the naturalization test. USCIS wants to ensure that the test continues to accurately measure applicants' knowledge of American history, government, and values.

In December of 2018, USCIS formed a working group, which has been reviewing and updating the questions on the Civics. The group has also been considering potential changes to the speaking portion of the English test, but reportedly, its focus is on the Civics test. USCIS hopes to have a pilot version of the new tests ready by the Fall of 2019, with a goal of final implementation in December 2020 or early 2021.

The Immigration and Nationality Act contains the rules regarding the English and Civics requirements. Under the law, applicants for naturalization (citizenship) must have "an understanding of the English language, including an ability to read, write, and speak words in ordinary usage in the English language." They must also have "knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history, and of the principles and form of government, of the United States..."

The USCIS website (www.uscis.gov) contains excellent study materials for the existing versions of the English test and the Civics test. If you plan to apply for naturalization, we strongly recommend that you review these materials before your naturalization interview takes place.