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Citizenshipworks Opens the Door for Millions of U.S. Immigrants Eligible to Naturalize

NEW YORK – Nearly 9 million immigrants who are eligible to naturalize in the United States now have a first-of-its-kind, free online option that provides a safe and simple journey from green card to citizenship. [Citizenshipworks](#) is a new web-based platform – available in English and Spanish – that helps legal permanent residents (green card holders) navigate the naturalization process step-by-step, and can connect them to online or in-person legal help through a national network of nonprofit legal service providers.

Citizenshipworks was developed by the Immigration Advocates Network and Pro Bono Net, nonprofit leaders in innovative technology solutions to increase access to legal assistance, with support from the Knight Foundation and the New Americans Campaign.

Legal permanent residents face significant barriers to naturalization that include a lack of information about the process, the cost of legal services, application fees, and geographic barriers for those living in underserved suburban and rural communities. Citizenshipworks is the first free online tool that directly addresses these barriers by providing:

- A fully supported, plain language application experience in English and Spanish;
- Contextual information that helps users understand the questions, defines legal terminology, and explains why certain information is important;
- Checks for common legal issues that might present a problem for an applicant;
- Virtual legal assistance for those who cannot access in-person services; and
- An innovative expert system to ensure that applicants can safely complete the application on their own, or get the right level of legal assistance from a trusted network of nonprofit providers.

The advantages of citizenship are significant, including increased mobility, the ability to vote, and family reunification. Citizenship also leads to economic benefits for both new citizens and the communities in which they live.

“Citizenshipworks represents a sea change in naturalization application assistance,” said Matthew Burnett, director of the Immigration Advocates Network. “With only 10 percent of those eligible to naturalize applying each year, it’s critical that we take bold, innovative steps to reduce the barriers to U.S. citizenship and ensure that those who are eligible have full access to the democratic process.”

“There’s an app for almost everything, there needed to be an app for citizenship,” said Benjamin de la Pena, Knight Foundation’s director of community and national strategy. “We invest in technologies that help communities become more informed and engaged, and gaining the rights and responsibilities of citizenship allows new Americans to become fully engaged in their communities. “

“Integrating legal permanent residents into the nation’s civic and economic life is a priority for Carnegie Corporation of New York,” said Geri Mannion, Program Director, U.S. Democracy. “Citizenshipworks, a central component of the New Americans Campaign, provides resources to those who lack access to service providers and allows advocates and legal service providers to assist far more immigrants than ever before.”

“Our organization has come to rely on Citizenshipworks as its preferred method for providing efficient, client-centered assistance with adequate legal safeguards,” said Randy McGrorty, executive director of Catholic Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami. “It has not only transformed the way we process applications for citizenship at CLS, it has changed how we think about the process itself.”

Visit Citizenshipworks in English at www.citizenshipworks.org and in Spanish at www.citizenshipworks.org/es.

About Citizenshipworks:

[Citizenshipworks](http://www.citizenshipworks.org) helps individuals who are eligible to naturalize on their path to becoming U.S. citizens. We make applying for citizenship safe and simple, from start to finish. Citizenshipworks is a collaboration between the Immigration Advocates Network, Pro Bono Net and the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, with support from the Knight Foundation and the New Americans Campaign.