

From: CIS Ombudsman <CIS.ombudsman@messages.dhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2021 6:37 PM
To:
Subject: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is Reverting to the 2008 Version of the Naturalization Civics Test

February 25, 2021



Homeland Security

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is Reverting to the 2008 Version of the Naturalization Civics Test

Dear Stakeholder,

[The Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman](#) (CIS Ombudsman) is sending this message to make sure you are aware that in response to President Biden's [Executive Order on Restoring Faith in Our Legal Immigration Systems](#), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced it is reverting to the 2008 version of the naturalization civics test beginning March 1, 2021.

According to USCIS, applicants who filed for naturalization on or after December 1, 2020 and before March 1, 2021, with an initial interview scheduled before April 19, 2021, will be given the option to take either the 2020 civics test or the 2008 civics test. Applicants who file for naturalization on or after March 1, 2021 will be given the 2008 civics test. After April 19, 2021, USCIS will offer only the 2008 civics test, regardless of filing date. The table below illustrates these scenarios.

Helpful Resources

[CIS Ombudsman's Homepage](#)

[Case Assistance](#)

[CIS Ombudsman's Annual Report to Congress](#)

[Contact the CIS Ombudsman](#)

| N-400 Filing Date: | Initial Interview date: | Version of the Civics test: |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Before 12/1/2020 | N/A | 2008 |
| On or after 12/1/2020 and before 3/1/2021 | Before 4/19/2021 | 2008 (2020 optional) |
| On or after 12/1/2020 and before 3/1/2021 | After 4/19/2021 | 2008 |
| After 3/1/2021 | After 4/19/2021 | 2008 |

Background

The civics test is one of the statutory requirements for naturalization applicants, who must demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history, principles, and form of government of the United States.

On December 1, 2020, USCIS implemented a revised naturalization civics test as part of a decennial review and update process. However, in alignment with the President's Executive Order to make the naturalization process more accessible, USCIS determined the 2020 civics test may inadvertently create potential barriers.

USCIS' 2008 civics test was thoroughly developed over a multi-year period with the input of more than 150 organizations and was piloted before its implementation.

More Information

For more information on the naturalization civics test, please see USCIS' [Application for Naturalization](#) webpage.

The CIS Ombudsman will continue to work on requests for case assistance regarding citizenship and naturalization and will share further updates on this topic as appropriate.

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