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# USCIS Clarifies Guidance on Citizenship and Naturalization for Adopted Children

Release Date : 04/21/2023

Effective immediately, we are updating Volumes 5 and 12 of the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to clarify how U.S. citizenship and naturalization provisions apply to adopted children.

This policy manual update consolidates and clarifies existing information in Volume 5 and supplements policy in Volume 12 of the Policy Manual on citizenship and naturalization. The updated guidance:

- Describes requirements for adopted children to meet the definition of a child for citizenship and naturalization purposes, including having an adoption that is considered full, final, and complete for immigration purposes;
- Explains eligibility for U.S. citizenship for adopted children who reside in the United States and how to obtain a Certificate of Citizenship;
- Explains eligibility for U.S. citizenship for adopted children who reside outside of the United States and how to apply for citizenship and issuance of a certificate; and
- Provides guidance on the acquisition of citizenship and naturalization when an adoption is disrupted or dissolved.

The updated guidance does not change the requirements for adopted children to become U.S. citizens. We are updating this guidance to help adoptive families and adoptees understand these requirements so adoptees may secure U.S. citizenship and documentation of their citizenship, if they are eligible.

Some children immigrating based on adoption automatically acquire U.S. citizenship when they are admitted to the United States as lawful permanent residents. Others do not, and their adoptive parents need to take additional steps before an adopted child turns 18 years of age for the child to obtain U.S. citizenship through an adoptive parent. Adoptees who do not obtain citizenship through their adoptive parents before turning 18 may be eligible to apply for naturalization after the age of 18.

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Last Reviewed/Updated: 04/21/2023

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