

CUNY Citizenship Now!



- **CUNY CN! has provided free immigration legal services for 16 years**
- **7 immigration centers throughout 5 boroughs of NYC**
- **26 part-time centers at city council members' offices**
- **Assist 10,000 individuals each year**
- **Almost 6,000 assisted each year with naturalization issues**
- **Have assisted over 100,000 people since its founding**
- **Assisted over 13,000 people with information during our annual week-long Daily News/CUNY Citizenship Now! Call-In**
- **Nearly 400 volunteers active in the past year**
- **New York Citizenship in Schools Collaboration with New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA)**
- **New York State Department of State Office of New Americans (ONA) naturalization and DACA work**

CUNY Citizenship Now! Model

- Participants pre-register before event
- On day of event, sign-in, receive screening sheets.
- Trained volunteers
 - screen for eligibility and bars,
 - Complete Fee Waiver Application (I-912)
 - Complete Naturalization Application (N-400)
 - Including a passport station
 - Conduct quality review at checkout

Prepare Beforehand for Day of Event

- Have on-going trainings for volunteers & staff concerning the different stations.
 - Screening/Checkout
 - Application assistance
 - Fee Waivers
 - Passports
- Volunteers need to know what they are doing. Must have good checklists!!
- Full-time volunteer coordinator!!

Day of Event

- Have paddles for “questions” and for notifying when the volunteer is ready to assist a participant.
- Have clearly marked stations (e.g., signs) so that participants can easily move from station to station.
- Have volunteers who will help with flow (escorting participants from station to station based on green/blue stickers; participants w/ red sticker do not proceed, etc.)

Volunteers

- Do not assume that because someone is an immigration attorney that they automatically know or have experience with
 - Naturalization law, or
 - Immigration consequences of criminal dispositions
- Usually volunteer attorneys must be trained on naturalization law and how to appropriately screen cases.

Set-up

- Have a team that is responsible for logistics
 - Shipping materials
 - Setting up the morning of the event
 - Taking care of the location
 - Taking care of ordering food for volunteers
 - Taking down at the end of the event

Allow Participants to Pre-register

- Have a system in place to permit participants to pre-register before the event
 - And get screened for eligibility
 - And advised of what documents to bring to the event
- Do not permit participants to proceed through the event if they did not bring the required documents (e.g., certificate of disposition, etc.)

Day of Event

- At the beginning of event, during orientation:
 - Introduce supervisors of each station so that
 - Everyone knows who the supervisors of each station are, and
 - Volunteers know who to approach with questions about their roles.

Day of Event

- Have roles for volunteers and staff and ensure that everyone knows and sticks to her/his responsibilities.
- Clear communication among supervisors.
- Have experienced staff oversee volunteers and staff at each station to ensure that people carry out their responsibilities.
- Creates efficiencies!!

Citizenship Guide

- Each participant receives a Citizenship Guide.
- Describes each question on the N-400.
- Empowers participants to understand why USCIS asks certain questions.

Thank You!



- **Thomas J. Shea, Esq.**
- **Senior Staff Attorney, CUNY Citizenship Now!**
- **(212) 652-2035**
- **Thomas.Shea@mail.cuny.edu**
- **www.cuny.edu/citizenshipnow**