

Angeles and San Diego and the suboffice of Fresno.

Background

Enhancing the naturalization process for all eligible immigrants is an INS priority. The goal is to focus on lawful permanent residents who gained their status in the 1980s through the legalization program and are now becoming eligible to apply for naturalization, as well as those permanent residents who have not yet chosen to become United States citizens. The best public awareness program is the speedy, efficient delivery of a quality product. The INS will implement an enhanced program to process the additional filings resulting from awareness activities and permanent residents motivated recently to seek citizenship. A key element of the program is the naturalization pilot project.

A cooperative agreement will be awarded to a nonprofit, voluntary organization which, depending on the scope of its program, will work closely with either or both district directors at Los Angeles and San Diego and/or the officer-in-charge at Fresno and their appropriate staffs. In cooperation and consultation with the INS field offices, the organization will develop creative approaches to reach out to potential naturalization applicants from a wide range of various ethnic groups individually or en masse to complete and file their naturalization applications.

The organization will also help applicants meet their English language and civics requirements, assist the INS in the naturalization process and provide follow-up educational programs on citizenship responsibilities.

An objective of the cooperative agreement is to ensure the provision of appropriate information and assistance to eligible naturalization applicants.

Purpose

The INS intends to empower local community groups to develop a viable programmatic relationship with INS field offices to provide naturalization applicants from diverse groups with general information, technical assistance and educational opportunities to complete their applications and prepare for their naturalization interviews. To do so, the INS seeks proposals from organizations that have experience in developing creative and innovative approaches (utilizing various multi-media packages and state-of-the-art information system technologies) of screening and assisting eligible applicants in the immigration

application process, and can demonstrate accessible, credible educational programs for required English and civics proficiencies.

Program Description

The pilot project is designed to develop and implement a program enhancing public awareness of naturalization in urban and rural areas of southern California. Organizations shall propose to conduct programmatic activities in the following INS jurisdictions: only the Los Angeles district, only the San Diego district, only the Fresno suboffice, or any combination of two or all three of these jurisdictions. Proposals should specify in which jurisdiction(s) the organizations will conduct the pilot project and the strategies they will pursue, and describe the level of effort they will exert in each jurisdiction. Additionally, proposals should address the following critical elements:

Part I: Targeted Population

Outreach efforts emphasizing naturalization under the cooperative agreement shall be directed to a wide-range of ethnic groups or particular classes of immigrants in urban and rural areas of the INS jurisdictions stated above in which the organization will conduct pilot project activities. Classes would include, for example: Those lawful permanent residents who obtained status through the legislation or special agricultural programs during the 1980s and are now becoming eligible to apply for citizenship; lawful permanent residents from particular ethnic groups who have not been fully motivated to apply for naturalization; and elderly applicants from diverse ethnic groups who may require special educational programs tailored to their needs. Proposals should emphasize how the organization can develop effective systems enabling applicants to electronically file their naturalization applications with the INS field office(s), and may include a discussion of how certified educational entities, if approved by the INS, would test naturalization applicants on the English and civics requirements, especially the ability to speak English words and phrases in ordinary usage.

Proposals should define the characteristics of the targeted ethnic groups or particular classes as well as the organization's qualifications to reach large segments in a credible manner through educational and public informational activities.

Part II: Pilot Project Strategies

Proposers are encouraged to develop creative approaches for providing a comprehensive program that will assist the widest possible targeted audiences. Proposals should discuss how the organization, either functioning by itself or directing and coordinating a consortium of entities, will develop strategies to implement the following activities:

A. Make eligible persons from a wide-range of ethnic groups aware of the naturalization process through general outreach projects such as the production and distribution of brochures, flyers, posters, public service and other media announcements/productions, public forums, media events, and similar activities.

1. In consultation and cooperation with the INS, the organization shall produce and disseminate the multi-media informational items to the public.

2. Any media or multi-media promotional, educational or instructional materials developed by the organization must be reviewed and approved by the INS for technical accuracy and proper emphasis prior to production.

3. All informational items disseminated shall mention INS as a source for assistance, information and action, and shall include the correct addresses of local INS office(s).

4. Upon request, the organization shall provide the INS with all print mechanicals and master tapes of video/audio media items produced under this agreement in a timely manner.

B. Assist persons individually or in groups to prepare and file complete, fully-documented, naturalization applications with local INS offices.

1. Screen applicants carefully to determine eligibility for naturalization and reduce INS adjudication time,

2. Develop creative ways of assisting applicants in group processing programs and assist INS, when necessary, in making arrangements and performing other tasks related to group processing.

3. Develop innovative ways of filing naturalization applications, making use to the fullest extent possible of state-of-the-art electronic systems, in cooperation with local INS offices.

4. Develop and maintain records of individual naturalization applicants, including those assisted to prepare and file their applications at INS offices.

C. Assure that applicants meet the English, and United States history and government knowledge requirements of the naturalization law.

1. Screen applicants to determine if they can speak, read and write English