



July 26, 2017

PA-2017-03

## Policy Alert

SUBJECT: Biometrics Requirements for Naturalization

### Purpose

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is updating policy guidance in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to specify that every naturalization applicant must provide biometrics regardless of age, unless the applicant qualifies for a fingerprint waiver due to certain medical conditions.

### Background

Since March 1998, USCIS has waived the fingerprint requirements for naturalization applicants age 75 or older because of difficulty in capturing readable fingerprints from this age group. Electronic processing of applications and improved technology now allows USCIS to capture fingerprints for applicants of all ages and enhances the ability to confirm identity and perform required background checks.<sup>1</sup> USCIS will continue to make special arrangements to accommodate the needs of applicants with disabilities and homebound or hospitalized applicants.<sup>2</sup>

This policy does not change USCIS guidance on fingerprint waivers for naturalization applicants with disabilities who are unable to provide fingerprints or are unable to provide legible fingerprints. This policy does not change biometrics requirements associated with other immigration benefit applications. This update affects Volume 12, Part B of the Policy Manual. The guidance contained in the Policy Manual is controlling and supersedes any related prior USCIS guidance.

### Policy Highlights

- Explains that all applicants for naturalization must be fingerprinted regardless of age, except for those who qualify for a fingerprint waiver due to certain medical conditions.
- Affirms that USCIS provides accommodations to meet biometrics requirements for certain applicants who are unable to attend an appointment, to include applicants with disabilities or those who are homebound or hospitalized.

### Citation

Volume 12: Citizenship & Naturalization, Part B, Naturalization Examination, Chapter 2, Background and Security Checks [[12 USCIS-PM B.2](#)].

<sup>1</sup> See [INA 335](#). See [8 CFR 335.1](#).

<sup>2</sup> See Homebound Processing at <https://my.uscis.gov/helpcenter/article/what-is-homebound-processing>.