

I. INTRODUCTION

This memorandum is directed to all employees who process naturalization applications. Its purpose is to increase your awareness of the Citizenship and Immigration Services' (CIS) commitment to high quality work and to review critical actions to ensure the accurate and effective application of the laws, regulations, policies, and instructions governing naturalization. This is a structured, standard approach to ensure that consistency and quality processing are in place in all offices. It is not intended to be a readjudication of each case.

The revised Naturalization Quality Procedures outlined in Sections II - IX of this document must be used for all N-400s filed on or after March 1, 2004, and for all N-400s interviewed on or after March 1, 2004. These streamlined procedures are to be followed even if the case was filed or initially interviewed with the previous versions of the NQP 4 worksheets.

Interviews include: initial exams, re-exams, second hearings, etc.



The instructions of the November 29th and April 15th memoranda had previously been superseded by the May 23rd memorandum. **This memorandum supersedes the instructions of the May 23, 1997 memorandum, the related Questions & Answers and the clarifying instructions, for all N-400s filed or interviewed after the implementation dates of NQP 4. Offices must keep a copy of the November 29, 1996, the rescinded April 15, 1997, and the May 23, 1997 memoranda, the Q&As and clarifying memos in local policy files.** All N-400s filed before October 1, 1998 will continue their clerical processing according to the May 23, 1997, memorandum, the related Q & As, and clarifying memoranda. All cases for which an initial interview was conducted before November 1, 1998 will be processed to conclusion according to the May 23, 1997, memorandum and the related Q & As and clarifying memoranda.

NQP 4 has been updated through 9/30/03.

Service Centers, at their discretion, may clerically process cases received prior to October 1, 1998 according to NQP4 procedures. All N-400 Processing Worksheets previously placed in the file should remain in the file. The following notation should be prominently written or stamped on Form N-650A, Clerical Processing Worksheet to the left of "A#":

NQP3 case transferred to NQP4 clerical processing

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A. Processing Worksheets

There are three N-400 Processing Worksheets that will be discussed during the course of this memorandum. They are:

- The N-400 Pre-Processing Worksheet (Form N-650A, Rev. 9/30/03) which will be referred to as the Pre-Processing Worksheet.
- The N-400 Adjudication Processing Worksheet (Form N-650B, Rev. 9/30/03) which will be referred to as the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.
- The N-400 Continuation Processing Worksheet (Form N-650C, Rev. 9/30/03) which will be referred to as the Continuation Processing Worksheet. This worksheet also contains a blank area that can be used for additional remarks or local processing instructions or information.

**See Attachment 1, N-400
Processing Worksheets**

**Clerical Worksheet is
now called Pre-
Processing Worksheet**

B. Completing the N-400 Processing Worksheets

1. Service centers must use the N-400 Pre-Processing Worksheet (Form N-650A, Rev. 9/30/03) for all N-400 applications received in the service center on or after March 1, 2004. No other processing worksheet or pre-screening worksheet may be used as a supplement to the Pre-Processing Worksheet.

**See Attachment 1, Pre-
Processing Worksheet.**

The Pre-Processing Worksheet must have been completed before an applicant is scheduled for an initial examination on the naturalization application. Service Centers are authorized to ship N-400 applications at any point after fee receipt and data entry to those offices that request the cases and state that they will be responsible for the completion of all required processing. In general, for those cases that have not been requested by an interviewing office, the Pre-Processing Worksheet must have been completed before shipping a file to a local office. Service Centers must continue to send N-400s that have not been requested to Field Offices when the file transfer request procedures outlined in Attachment 2 cannot be completed due to a conflict resolution code (“A, D, F, or P” File Transfer Indicators). In this case, the lines on the Pre-Processing Worksheet that relate to file transfer requests and the line titled “A-file relates to applicant” do not need to be completed before the file is shipped to the interviewing office.

(See Policy Memo 53)

**See Attachment 2,
Naturalization File
Transfer Procedures.**

The Pre-Processing Worksheet must be placed in the file or

attached to every N-400 application received in the service center on or after March 1, 2004. The Pre-Processing Worksheet must be placed on top of all other documents on the right side of the file. For those offices that take an action on a N-400 before the A-file has been received or a T-file has been created, the Pre-Processing Worksheet must be fastened on top of the N-400 application. The Pre-Processing Worksheet must contain the identifiably written initials or unique employee identification number of the person completing each action and the actual date each action is completed. The Pre-Processing Worksheet must remain on the top of the right side of the file until the Adjudication Processing Worksheet is placed on top of it. When the Continuation Processing Worksheet is used, it must be placed on top of the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

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2. Interviewing offices must complete all unfinished required actions on the Pre-Processing Worksheet. Interviewing offices must only use the current Adjudication Processing Worksheet, and when appropriate the Continuation Processing Worksheet, for cases for which the interview is conducted on or after March 1, 2004. Interviewing Offices must **not** use their own local processing sheets.

3. All offices are prohibited from making any changes to the attachments--including the Pre-Processing Worksheet, Adjudication Processing Worksheet, and Continuation Processing Worksheet. All local reproduction of the attachments must be equivalent to the procedures described in 8 CFR § 299.4(a), (b)(1)&(2), and (d). All offices may utilize the "Additional remarks" portion of the Continuation Processing Worksheet for local processing notes. Suggestions for changes or revisions may be made, in writing, to CIS/BPR. If CIS/BPR approves such changes, a revised Processing Worksheet or other attachment will be distributed.



**CIS/BPR stands for
Citizenship and
Immigration
Services/Business
Process and
Reengineering Branch**

All offices are authorized, and encouraged, to use the Processing Worksheets and attachments furnished by CLAIMS 4. At all times, the version of these Worksheets and attachments furnished by CLAIMS 4 at the time the Worksheet or attachment is executed shall satisfy the NQP4 requirements.

All Processing Worksheets must contain identifiably written initials of the person completing each action and the actual date each action is completed. Service center contract employees may always use their unique contract employee identification number in place of their initials. Identifiable initials are those that are routinely used and readily recognized by co-workers and supervisors. A record of each employee's name and written initials must be maintained locally to ensure that each employee's

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initials can be readily identified.

All notations on the Processing Worksheets must be made in ink. Whiteout and erasures must not be used to correct completed actions on any of the Processing Worksheets. When making a correction to a worksheet, use a single line strikeout and initial and date the correction. The applicant's A number must be clearly written in the designated space at the top right corner of each Processing Worksheet used.



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No photocopying of a pre-signed Processing Worksheet or name stamp may be used to indicate the person who completed the step in the process. No ditto marks or arrows to indicate the same person has performed multiple actions may be used. The clerk or officer may, however, use a date stamp after entering his or her initials or unique contract employee identification number.

All notations written within the Remarks section of any Processing Worksheet must be initialed and dated. When a pre-printed standard notation is circled, the circled notation does **not** have to be initialed or dated.

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II. NATURALIZATION FILE TRANSFER PROCEDURES

During the N-400 process the review of an applicant's A-file is critical to confirming that the applicant is eligible for naturalization. It is important that all offices comply with the instructions in the Naturalization File Transfer Procedures in Attachment 2. In general, all file transfer requests (FTR) for N-400 applications filed on or after October 1, 1998, will be conducted by the service center. In those instances when an interviewing office requests cases and states that they will be responsible for the completion of all required processing, any remaining FTRs and pre-processing must be performed by the interviewing office.

**See Attachment 2
Naturalization File
Transfer Procedures**

In accordance with Attachment 2, service centers may forward T-files to local offices after an FD-258 Control Number (if fingerprints are required) has been transcribed on the Pre-Processing Worksheet. In these cases, any remaining FTRs and pre-processing must be performed by the interviewing office. In those instances when an interviewing office requests cases and states that they will be responsible for the completion of all required processing, the proper documentation of the FD-258 Control Number is the responsibility of the interviewing office. Refer to Section III Fingerprint Check Integrity.

**Refer to Section III
Fingerprint Check
Integrity**

Upon receipt of the A-file, the service center or local office processing the application must be certain that the A-file is acknowledged in Central Index System, RAFACS/NFTS, and CLAIMS 4. Each office has the responsibility to continuously monitor which interfaces are functioning for this purpose.

Unless the A-file is actually present, it must not be acknowledged in CLAIMS 4 at the time of data entry. The CLAIMS 4/RAFACS/NFTS interface will notify CLAIMS 4 that the A-file has been received. Before a case is scheduled for interview on a T-file, receipt of the T-file must be acknowledged in CLAIMS 4.

For all N-400s that have not been requested by an interviewing office before the completion of Pre-Processing the service center must obtain the A-file or ensure that requisite A-file transfer requests have been completed prior to shipping a case for interview. If the case falls into the scheduler before the requisite file transfer requests have been completed, the service center must deschedule the interview and immediately provide the applicant with written notice that the interview has been descheduled.

III. FINGERPRINT CHECK INTEGRITY

The FD-258 Tracking System is accessible to all offices. This database posts the history of a Form FD-258 submitted through the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS) AND information that is posted in FBI Query. Detailed instructions for accessing and reading the information in the FD-258 Tracking System have already been provided to the field. Please refer to the November 19, 1997 memo, "Accessing FD-258 Tracking System," for more detailed guidance.

In addition, there have been changes to fingerprint processing as a result of the Fiscal Year 1998 Appropriations Act. New fingerprint legislation within the bill affected CIS processes for obtaining fingerprints from naturalization applicants. All Forms FD-258 submitted on or after December 3, 1997, must have been taken by CIS or a U.S. consular office at a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas, or a U.S. military installation abroad. On or after March 29, 1998, Forms FD-258 prepared at an Application Support Center (ASC), a U.S. consular office at a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas, or a U.S. military installation abroad, or a designated law enforcement agency (DLEA) are acceptable.

A. Form FD-258 Quality Review Prior to Submission to FBI

Complete, accurate, and legible Forms FD-258 must be submitted to the FBI in order to ensure that accurate data is displayed in the FD-258 Tracking System and all Rap Sheets can be easily interfiled. The ASC/DLEA and overseas (manually prepared) fingerprints must be processed according to the following guidelines.

1. ASC/DLEA Fingerprints

As stated above, all N-400 Forms FD-258 submitted on or after December 3, 1997, must have been taken by CIS or a U.S. consular office at a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas, or a U.S. military installation abroad. On or after March 29, 1998, Forms FD-258 prepared at an Application Support Center (ASC), a U.S. consular office at a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas, or a U.S. military installation abroad, or a designated law enforcement agency (DLEA) are acceptable.

See Attachment 6, Form FD-258 Fingerprint Card, for instructions on masthead review.

Beginning in July 1999, CIS began submitting all fingerprints to the FBI electronically. The FBI no longer accepts manually submitted (paper) FD-258 cards from CIS.

ASC and DLEA fingerprints are prepared with FMNS software.

2. Overseas Fingerprints

Note that there are special circumstances where an overseas applicant may not have a social security number or an A-number. When a service center has verified the non-existence of an A-number, the service center must assign an A-number to the application at the time the case is fee-receipted.

See Attachment 6, *Form FD-258 Fingerprint Card*, for instructions on masthead review.

B. FBI Status Reports

The following procedures have been developed to ensure that all cases have cleared FBI processing, and that officers have sufficient information to adjudicate applications accurately. The FD-258 Tracking System database is accessible through Mainframe Computer Linked Automated Information Management System (CLAIMS) or Reengineered Naturalization Automated Casework System (RNACS).

An application may be processed only if there is evidence of a NON-IDENT, IDENT, or two unclassifiable rejects. There must be an FD-258 Control Number transcribed on the Pre-Processing Worksheet before any naturalization applicant who is required to submit a fingerprint card (i.e., a person 18 to 75 years of age for all N-400 applicants) may be scheduled for interview.

Once a definitive response to a Form FD-258 submission is available in FD-258 Tracking System, the service center or interviewing office must transcribe the FD-258 Control Number and process date on the Pre-Processing Worksheet. If necessary, the service center or interviewing office may then override the scheduling hold on the application. A service center or interviewing office must not override a scheduling hold on an IDENT unless the Rap Sheet has been interfiled. A service center or interviewing office must not override the scheduling hold on an unclassifiable control number unless there is evidence that at least two fingerprint submissions have been unclassifiable rejects.

1. IDENTs

All IDENTs must be resolved by the time of adjudication of the application. This must be done based on FBI data and all other relevant criminal history records such as court dispositions, records of dismissal, etc.

CLAIMS 4 will automatically prevent all IDENT cases from dropping into the scheduler. Accordingly, it will be the responsibility of the service center possessing the case to release it for interview scheduling. This responsibility transfers to an interviewing office that has requested cases be shipped before the completion of all required processing. This must be accomplished by acknowledging receipt of the Rap Sheet in CLAIMS 4, and must be done only when the following steps have been completed:

- The A-file has been matched to the application, or the required file transfer requests have been completed if the A-file has not been matched;
- The FBI Rap Sheet that relates to the FD-258 Control Number has been interfiled;
- The FD-258 Control Number and process date have been transcribed on the Pre-Processing Worksheet, and the designated columns have been initialed and dated; AND
- On the Pre-Processing Worksheet, the notation “**Rap Sheet Interfiled**” has been circled within the Remarks section of the line titled “FD-258 Control # _____”.

Circle “**Rap Sheet Interfiled**”

(a) Missing Rap Sheet

With IAFIS processing, a service center will receive a copy of the Rap Sheet, generated by a Form FD-258 submission, directly from the FBI.

If a service center or interviewing office is researching a case in the FD-258 Tracking System and finds that the Form FD-258 resulted in an IDENT, but no Rap Sheet has been located, the CIS

representative at Clarksburg, WV (fax (304) 624-9029) must be notified. Include the applicant's A-number, name, date of birth, and customer identification number (CIDN). If the CIS representative in Clarksburg is unable to obtain the Rap Sheet, the office processing the application will be responsible for scheduling the applicant to be re-fingerprinted.

If an applicant fails to respond to appear at an ASC in order to submit a new Form FD-258 within at least 87 days (or in the instance of overseas fingerprinting, fails to submit a new FD-258 card), the application shall be considered abandoned and shall be denied. Undeliverable notices requesting the applicant to appear at an ASC or, for overseas customers, to submit a new fingerprint card must be returned to the office processing the N-400. The office processing the N-400 must review the file to ensure that the scheduling notice was sent to the applicant's address of record. If the notice was not sent to the applicant's address of record, the office processing the N-400 must send a new notice to the applicant's current address.

See Policy Memo 56

When an applicant has failed to appear at an ASC(or, for overseas customers, failed to submit a new FD-258), the office processing the N-400 must complete the following actions:

- Fasten evidence of the unanswered request on the left side of the file under the N-400;
- On the Pre-Processing Worksheet, circle **“FTA/RFE(failure to appear/request for evidence)-Not Received”** on the line titled **“FD-258 Control # _____”**;
- Ensure that the A-file has been matched to the application, or that the requisite number of file transfer requests have been completed; **AND**
- Issue a notice of decision.

Circle **“FTA/RFE-Not Received”**

Refer to Section V, *Adjudication Process*, for instructions on annotating decisions.

2. NON-IDENTS

Although NON-IDENT cases will be released automatically for scheduling in CLAIMS 4, service centers still have the responsibility to transcribe the FD-258 Control Number and process date before shipping a file to a local office for an interview, except in those cases when the interviewing office has requested that cases be

shipped before the completion of the pre-processing. If a case arrives at a local office without this information, the local office has the responsibility to obtain and transcribe the FD-258 Control Number and process date on the Pre-Processing Worksheet.

3. NO FBI RESPONSE IN FD-258 TRACKING SYSTEM

If a service center or interviewing office is researching a case in FD-258 Tracking System, and cannot find a response from the FBI, the CIS representative at Clarksburg, WV (fax -- (304) 624-9029) must be notified. Include the applicant's A-number, name, date of birth, and CIDN. If the CIS representative at Clarksburg is unable to locate the processing breakdown, the service center or interviewing office will be responsible for obtaining a new Form FD-258 from the applicant.

If an applicant fails to respond to appear at an ASC in order to submit a new Form FD-258 within at least 87 days (or in the instance of overseas fingerprinting, fails to submit a new FD-258 card), the application shall be considered abandoned and shall be denied. Undeliverable notices requesting the applicant to appear at an ASC or, for overseas customers, to submit a new fingerprint card must be returned to the office processing the N-400. The office processing the N-400 must review the file to ensure that the scheduling notice was sent to the applicant's address of record. If the notice was not sent to the applicant's address of record, the office processing the N-400 must send a new notice to the applicant's current address.

When an applicant has failed to appear at an ASC (or, for overseas customers, failed to submit a new FD-258), the office processing the N-400 must complete the following actions:

- Fasten evidence of the unanswered request sent on the left side of the file under the N-400;
- On the Pre-Processing Worksheet, circle "**FTA/RFE-Not Received**" on the line titled "FD-258 Control # _____";
- Ensure that the A-file has been matched to the application, or that the requisite number of file transfer requests have been completed; **AND**
- Issue a notice of decision.

Circle "FTA/RFE-Not Received"

Refer to Section V, *Adjudication Process*, for instructions on annotating decisions.

4. FORM FD-258 REJECTED BY THE FBI OR CIS

(a) Masthead Reject

The CIS may reject an overseas Form FD-258 for incorrect or incomplete masthead information. If the FBI rejects the Form FD-258 for incorrect or incomplete masthead information, a reject notice is automatically sent to the ASC that processed the fingerprints for data correction. Refer to sections (i) and (ii) below for further instructions.

(i) Overseas Form FD-258 Rejects

Whenever the CIS or FBI rejects an overseas Form FD-258 for incomplete or incorrect masthead information, the following steps must be taken:

- The service center must attempt to correct the Form FD-258¹;
- If missing Form FD-258 information cannot be completed or corrected after reviewing the applicant's application and/or A-file, then the applicant must be requested to submit a new Form FD-258. Attach the original Form FD-258 on the right side of the file under the Pre-Processing Worksheet, and stamp or write "MASTHEAD" over the fingerprint impressions; **AND**
- If the applicant does not respond with a properly prepared Form FD-258 within 87 days, issue a notice of decision.

Refer to Attachment 6 for instructions on masthead correction.

Refer to Section V, *Adjudication Process*, for instructions on annotating decisions.

¹ If the FD-258 was corrected manually, then the service center may no longer use the 2D barcode. Card information must be manually entered into the FD-258 "stand-alone" screen and the CIDN barcode label attached to the Reason Fingerprinted block of the FD-258.

If the FD-258 Tracking System shows that a fingerprint submission resulted in a masthead reject, the application may not be processed. An application may be processed only if there is evidence of a NON-IDENT, an IDENT (with an interfiled Rap Sheet), or two unclassifiable rejects.



(ii) Domestic Form FD-258

When a Form FD-258 prepared within the United States is rejected for incorrect or incomplete masthead information by the FBI, a reject notice is returned to:

- The ASC where the fingerprints were prepared; **OR**
- The service center fingerprint point of contact, if the FMNS-prepared Form FD-258 was prepared by a DLEA.

The ASC or service center fingerprint point of contact will be responsible for correcting the masthead information. If the Form FD-258 masthead information cannot be corrected, the ASC or service center point of contact must schedule the applicant to be fingerprinted.

(b) Unclassifiable Reject

(i) First Unclassifiable Reject

If a Form FD-258 is rejected by the FBI as unclassifiable, the following steps must be taken by a service center:

- The Form FD-258 must be retained by the service center until the second submission is received; **AND**
- The applicant must be sent a rescheduling notice to appear at an ASC for refingerprinting; **OR**
- The overseas applicant must be requested to submit a new Form FD-258.

If an applicant fails to respond to appear at an ASC in order to submit a new Form FD-258 within at least 87 days (or in the instance of overseas fingerprinting, fails to submit a new FD-258 card), the application shall be considered abandoned and shall be denied. Undeliverable notices requesting the applicant to appear at an ASC or, for overseas customers, to submit a new fingerprint card must be returned to the office processing the N-400. The office processing the N-400 must review the file to ensure that the scheduling notice was sent to the applicant's address of record. If the notice was not sent to the applicant's address of record, the office processing the N-400 must send a new notice to the applicant's current address.



When an applicant has failed to appear at an ASC (or, for overseas customers, failed to submit a new FD-258, the office processing the N-400 must complete the following actions:

- Fasten evidence of the unanswered request on the left side of the file under the N-400;
- On the Pre-Processing Worksheet, circle “**FTA/RFE-Not Received**” on the line titled “FD-258 Control # _____”;
- Ensure that the A-file has been matched to the application, or that the requisite number of file transfer requests have been completed; **AND**
- Issue a notice of decision.

Circle “FTA/RFE-Not Received”

Refer to Section V, *Adjudication Process*, for instructions on annotating decisions.

(ii) Second Unclassifiable Reject

An applicant may be scheduled for interview, and/or an application may be adjudicated, if two sets of fingerprints have been rejected by the FBI as unclassifiable. In those cases when an interviewing office has requested that cases be shipped before the completion of the pre-processing worksheet, this will be the responsibility of the office processing the N-400.

Evidence that an applicant has had two unclassifiable fingerprints include any of the following:

- Two unrelated control numbers from FD-258 Tracking System that indicate two fingerprints were not classifiable; **AND/OR**
- Memorandum from a service center indicating that an applicant has had two separate Forms FD-258 rejected as unclassifiable.

If two sets of fingerprints have been rejected by the FBI as unclassifiable, the following pre-processing actions must be completed by the service center before the application may be shipped to the local office:

- Transcribe the most recent unclassifiable reject FD-258 Control Number and process date on the Pre-Processing Worksheet. Initial and date the line titled “FD-258 Control Number # _____” within the designated columns and circle “**2nd unclassifiable**” within the Remarks section;
- When available, interfile the rejected Form(s) FD-258 on the right side of the file under the Pre-Processing Worksheet prior to shipping the case to the local office;
- Ensure that the A-file has been matched to the N-400 application or that the required file transfer requests have been completed; **AND**

Circle “2nd unclassifiable”

- Manually override the scheduling hold in CLAIMS 4 to release the case for interview so that the application can be adjudicated.

In those cases when an interviewing office has requested that cases be shipped before the completion of the pre-processing, these actions are the responsibility of the office processing the N-400.

5. Expiration

When an FD-258 Control Number is transcribed on the Pre-Processing Worksheet, the office in possession of the N-400 must also write the process date on the line titled "Process Date" on the Pre-Processing Worksheet. The fingerprint response expires 15 months after the date of the FBI response. In the FD-258 Tracking System, the FBI response date will be displayed as the PROCESS DATE.

An application with an expired FBI response (i.e., FD-258 Control Number) may be denied. In addition, an N-400 application may not be granted, and an applicant may not go to oath ceremony, if the FBI response has expired. This includes NON-IDENT and unclassifiable responses.

Upon request, the FBI will generate new Rap Sheets for applicants who have expired IDENT responses. Accordingly, applicants with expired IDENT FD-258 Control Numbers should not be rescheduled to appear at an ASC. An applicant with an expired IDENT FD-258 Control Number may only be scheduled for interview and/or oath ceremony when an updated Rap Sheet has been received, reviewed, and placed on the left side of the file under the N-400, Application for Naturalization. Write "Rap Sheet dated insert process date" within the Remarks section of the line titled "FD-258 Control Number # _____" and initial and date the notation.

(See Policy Memo 43)

An applicant with an expired NON-IDENT or unclassifiable FD-258 Control Number **must** be rescheduled to appear at an ASC or DLEA (domestic) or to resubmit a Form FD-258 (overseas) if his or her fingerprints have expired before a case is granted or before the time of the oath ceremony. The rescheduling must be done by the office in possession of the application.

C. Documenting Fingerprint and/or Police Checks

The FD-258 Control Number and process date, both of which result from submission of a Form FD-258 to the FBI, must always be transcribed on the line titled “FD-258 Control # _____” on the Pre-Processing Worksheet. The sole exceptions to this requirement are when the applicant is waived the requirement to submit fingerprints (75 years of age or older), or when the application has been abandoned due to the applicant’s failure to submit fingerprints.

(i) Applicants Whose Fingerprint Requirement is Waived

If an applicant is 75 years of age or older on the date of filing, the office processing the N-400 must circle “**Waived**” within the Remarks section of the first line relating to the FD-258 Control Number, and initial and date within the designated columns of that line. When a service center or a local office, if the file was shipped before the completion of normal procedures pursuant to Policy Memo # 53, receives a waiver-annotated fingerprint notice, the notice must be retained with the corresponding naturalization application. The office that receives a waiver-annotated fingerprint notice must circle “**Waived**” in the remarks section of the FD-258 Control Number line of the N-650A and annotate “**Policy Memo # 80**” in the Remarks. This will indicate that the applicant is not required to submit fingerprints and may be processed without an FD-258 Control Number.

Circle “**Waived**”

(See Policy Memo 80)

(ii) Applicants with Fingerprint Results

The FD-258 Control Number is usually seven digits; however, it may also be six digits. Offices may transcribe an FD-258 Control Number with a blank space, and schedule an applicant for interview and/or naturalization, when the missing letter accounts for an apostrophe in the applicant’s name.

For example, if the applicant’s last name is O’Toole, and the control number generated by the fingerprint submission is O 1234N this FD-258 Control Number will be acceptable for transcribing on the Pre-Processing Worksheet, and for processing an N-400 application. The space in between the “O” and the “1” is not a missing letter, but is a calculated space that takes into account the apostrophe.

IV. G-325 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION CHECKS

The CLAIMS 4 system will automatically request a G-325 Biographic Information Check on N-400 applicants. Service centers and district offices must not request applicants to submit a paper copy G-325.

If a service center receives a positive G-325 response from the FBI indicating that there is third agency information, the response must be fastened to the left side of the file under the N-400. The service center must write “Positive response to G-325” in the FBI Name Check section’s Remarks on the Pre-Processing Worksheet, and initial and date the notation. Except in those cases when an interviewing office has requested that cases be shipped before the completion of pre-processing, the service center must ensure that the FD-258 Control Number and process date have been transcribed on the Pre-Processing Worksheet, and that the A-file has been matched to the N-400 or that the required number of file transfer requests has been completed. Once this is done, the service center must transfer the case to the local office for adjudication.

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Write “Positive response to G-325”

Upon receipt of a file with an indication that a third agency has information relating to a naturalization applicant, the local office must contact the third agency and request the information.



The local office must document any request to a third agency and place such documentation on the left side of the A-file under the N-400 application. Naturalization applicants will automatically be scheduled for interview but must not be scheduled for oath ceremony until the third agency information, or documentation of its unavailability, is obtained, reviewed, and placed in the file folder. The lines on the Worksheet relating to good moral character, and when applicable, attachment to the constitution, must not be completed until the third agency check has been obtained and reviewed, or documentation of its unavailability has been obtained.

If there is a positive response and the third agency information is not disqualifying, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns on the line titled “Established good moral character,” and when applicable, on the line titled “Established attachment to the Constitution” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. Unclassified information from the third agency must be fastened to the left side of the file under the N-400 application. If the material is classified, the standard procedures for handling classified material found in the Records Operations Handbook must be applied.

The Records Operating Handbook is available on the Intranet.

V. ADJUDICATION PROCESS

A. Annotating the File

Field offices must use the N-400 Adjudication Processing Worksheet, Form N-650B (Rev. 9/30/03), for all cases where the initial interview takes place on or after March 1, 2004. **Service centers** must use this form for all N-400s filed on or after March 1, 2004, for which the application will be denied due to failure to appear for fingerprinting. This worksheet must be placed on top of all existing worksheets on the right side of the file. If used, the N-400 Continuation Processing Worksheet, Form N-650C (Rev. 9/30/03), must be placed on top of the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. The purpose of the Continuation Processing Worksheet is to document cases that are administratively closed, removed from Oath Ceremony, failed to appear for Oath Ceremony, filed Motions To Reopen, and filed for Second Hearings. In addition, it provides space for additional remarks. Offices may preprint local processing instructions or information within this section only, however the size of the outlined border must **not** be reformatted. All instructions, information, and remarks made within the outlined border of the Additional Remarks section must be initialed and dated.

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The results of an interview must always be annotated on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. Officers must check off or circle in **RED** ink all N-400 questions which are asked and answered during the interview. **In order to clearly identify the applicant's responses, the check or circle marks must be made next to the N-400 answers.** All additions, deletions, changes, and annotations made by the officer, must be in **RED** ink and numbered and noted in **RED** ink within the attestation section on the last page of the N-400 before the applicant signs. The N-400 application must always be maintained on the left side of the file as evidence of the results of the interview and for any future adjudicative action. Though printed on N-400, the Oath of Allegiance is not considered part of the N-400. Any modification or change made to Part 14: Oath of Allegiance of the N-400 does not constitute a correction to the N-400 and therefore should not be included in the attestation.



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1. Failure to Appear for Fingerprinting or to Submit Requested Evidence

If the applicant fails to appear for fingerprinting at an Application Support Center (ASC) or, for an overseas applicant, fails to submit a requested Form FD-258, and fails to notify CIS of the reason for non-appearance within 87 days of the scheduled appointment, CIS must deny the application. The officer or clerk must circle "**FTA/RFE-Not Received**" (Failure to Appear/Request For Evidence-Not Received), within the Remarks section of

the line titled “FD-258 Control #,” on the Pre-Processing Worksheet.

Once the notation above has been made, the application shall be deemed abandoned, and the case must be denied. The officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the decision within the Remarks section of the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

2. Failure to Appear for Interview

If the applicant fails to appear for the interview and fails to notify CIS of the reason for non-appearance within 30 days of the scheduled examination, CIS may administratively close the application. The officer or clerk must write the date the applicant failed to appear for the scheduled interview within the Remarks section of the line titled “Appeared for interview,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, and initial and date the notation.

Once at least 30 days has elapsed, the application shall be deemed abandoned, and the case may be administratively closed. The employee authorized to conduct systems updating and/or who administratively closes the case, must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Administratively closed,” on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

The applicant may request in writing that his/her case be reopened within one year of the date that the case was administratively closed. If the case is reopened based on the applicant’s request, the designated initial and date columns “Admin. Reopen/Applicant request w/in 1 year” must be completed. The new filing date, which will be the date of the request for reopening, shall be annotated within the Remarks section, and initialed and dated within the same section.

**NQP streamlining
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3. English/Civics Requirements

a. Meets § 312 Requirements

If an applicant passes the English and Civics requirements, the interviewing officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Met § 312 requirements at initial interview,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. No other notation is necessary.

(See Policy Memo 73)

If the officer cannot complete the interview because the applicant is unable to speak or understand English, and does not meet one of the exceptions, the officer **must stop the interview**.

See Section 3(c)
§ 312 Exceptions

In addition, the officer:



- **Must not** request the applicant to sign the N-400 application;
- **Must not** sign the N-400 application;
- **Must not** conduct the interview in the applicant's native language as a means of completing the interview unless the English language requirement is waived

If an applicant passes § 312 requirements at the time of the re-exam, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled "Met § 312 requirements at Re-Exam," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. Upon completion of the interview, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled "Indicate decision under remarks," and circle the decision within the Remarks section of that line.

b. Fails § 312 Requirements

If an applicant does not pass a portion or all of the § 312 requirements, the interviewing officer must circle the results of the examination within the Remarks section of the line titled "Met § 312 requirements at initial interview," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. Officers must circle the appropriate acronym(s) (e.g., UUE (unable to understand English), USE (unable to speak English), UWE (unable to write English), URE (unable to read English), LOK (lack of knowledge)).

c. § 312 Exceptions

i) English (50/20 and 55/15 rules)

The English language requirements may be waived for an applicant who on the date of filing the application, was over 50 years old and has been a lawful permanent resident for at least 20 years, or was over 55 years old and has been a lawful permanent resident for at least 15 years. If either exception applies, and the applicant passes the Civics requirement, which may be given in the applicant's language of choice, the interviewing officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the applicable "**50/20**" or "**55/15**" notation within the Remarks section of the line titled "Met § 312 requirements at initial interview," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. The circling of the "**50/20**" or "**55/15**" notation is only necessary if the English requirements are waived.

ii) Civics

If an applicant who is a 50/20 or 55/15 fails the Civics test, the officer must circle the results (LOK) of the Civics test within the Remarks section of the line titled “Met § 312 requirements at initial interview,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

iii) Civics (65/20 rule)

An applicant may be qualified to take a modified Civics test if on the date of filing the application, he or she was over 65 years old and has been a lawful permanent resident for at least 20 years. If an applicant passes the modified Civics test, the interviewing officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle **both “50/20” and “65/20” notations** within the Remarks section of the line titled “Met § 312 requirements at initial interview,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.



If an applicant does not pass the modified Civics test, the officer must properly annotate the results of the Civics test and circle **both “50/20” and “65/20” notations** within the Remarks section of the line titled “Met § 312 requirements at initial interview,” on the N-400 Adjudication Processing Worksheet. The circling of the 65/20 notation does not signify that the applicant met § 312 Civic requirements, it is only evidence that the applicant was given the modified test at the time of the initial examination.



iv) Applicants granted benefits under the Hmong Veterans’ Naturalization Act of 2000

For applicants granted benefits under P.L. 106-207 as amended by P.L. 106-415 and by P.L. 107-77, officers should make the annotation “Hmong Act” in the Remarks column of the “Met § 312 requirements at initial interview” line or the “Met § 312 requirements at Re-Exam” line on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. This annotation must be initialed and dated by the employee who makes the annotation.

(See Policy Memo 69-B)

v) Disability Exceptions under Section 312

Section 312(b) provides that the English and civics requirements “shall not apply to any person who is unable because of physical or developmental disability or mental impairment to comply therewith.” If an officer determines that the Form N-648, Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions, contains sufficient information to establish that the applicant is eligible for a disability exception, the officer should initial and date the “Met

(See Policy Memo 47, 87, 87-A and 87-B)

312(b) disability exceptions” line. An applicant may submit an N-648 for the first time either with the N-400, at the initial interview, or at the reexamination. Officers conducting section 336 hearings should accept and review any N-648 submitted for review at a section 336 hearing, even if no N-648 was previously submitted. For the exception to be granted at a section 336 hearing, the N-648 must be sufficient at the time of the hearing.

(See Policy Memo 47-A)

4. Re-Exam

The results of the re-examination must be annotated on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. If an applicant fails to appear for the re-examination, and fails to notify CIS of the reason for non-appearance, the case must be denied. The adjudicating officer must write the date the applicant failed to appear for the re-examination within the Remarks section of the line titled “Appeared for Re-Exam,” and initial and date the notation. The officer must also initial and date within the designated columns and circle the decision within the Remarks section of the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

If at the time of the re-exam, the applicant is still unable to meet the § 312 requirements, the officer must indicate the final results of the re-examination and initial and date the notation within the Remarks section of the line titled “Met § 312 requirements at Re-Exam,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. If applicable, the officer shall obtain supervisory concurrence prior to completing the decision. Once the case is cleared for a decision, the adjudicating officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” and circle the decision within the Remarks section of that line.

See Section VI,
Supervisory Review

5. Attachment to Constitution

The Certificate Preparation Sheet and Oath Declaration provided in **Attachment 4** must be completed and signed for every application where the initial examination is conducted using the prior version of the N-400. This, as well as evidence that would support a modified oath, must be attached to the left side of the file under the N-400 application.

See Attachment 4,
Certificate Preparation Sheet and Oath Declaration

When an examination is conducted on the current version of the N-400, the applicants should comply with the requirement of 8 CFR § 337.1(a) by printing and signing their full and complete name, as it will appear on the Naturalization Certificate, in the boxes provided under the printed Oath in Part 14 of the current N-400. In order to assist in Certificate preparation and in the quality control review of printed Certificates, the adjudicator should continue to prepare NQP Attachment # 4 for these cases. But the applicant shall not be required to sign the Oath as it appears on Attachment # 4 when the applicant

Prior versions of the N-400 are any versions with a revision date prior to 5/31/01.

(See Policy Memo 85)

has executed Part 14 on the current version of the N-400.

Those clauses of the Oath that may be deleted according to the guidelines in INA 337(a) or those phrases that can be altered according to the guidelines in 8 CFR § 337.1(b) shall be neatly deleted or altered by the adjudicator before the applicant signs the Oath on either Attachment # 4 or in Part 14 of the current N-400.

a) Full Oath

If the applicant is taking the full oath of allegiance, and has demonstrated attachment to the Constitution and form of government of the United States, the interviewing officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Established attachment to Constitution,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

b) Modified Oath

If an applicant is taking a modified oath of allegiance, the interviewing officer must draw a line through the portions of the oath that do not apply, before the applicant signs. The officer must not initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Established attachment to the Constitution,” until the applicant has established eligibility for a modified oath.

Once eligibility has been established, and the applicant has demonstrated attachment to the Constitution and form of government of the United States, the interviewing officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle “**Religious objection**” within the Remarks section of the line titled “Established attachment to Constitution,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

c) Oath Waiver

If an applicant meets the requirement for an oath waiver per PL 106-448, the officer will initial and date the “Established attachment to the Constitution” line on the N-650B. In the remarks section, the officer should circle “oath waived per PL 106-448.” The notation, “oath waived per PL 106-448” and the officer’s initials and date should be made on the Certificate Preparation Sheet and Oath Declaration or Part 14 of the revised N-400 depending on the version of the N-400 filed. The applicant granted an oath waiver and the designated representative are not required to sign the Oath of Allegiance.

(See Policy Memo 96)

6. Name Changes

Applicants requesting a legal name change must complete a Petition for Name Change form. Offices must use the Petition for Name Change provided in **Attachment 5** (if the local court having jurisdiction over the petitioner's place of residence refuses to accept the CIS form, a court required form may be used instead).

**See Attachment 5,
Petition for Name
Change**

Offices may preprint or stamp the name of the Court and Clerk of the Court on the petition; however, no part of the petition may be changed. The original signed petition must be sent to the court. A copy of the petition must be fastened on the left side of the file under the N-400 application.

7. Lost, Stolen, Mutilated, or Never Received ARC

If an applicant cannot present his or her Alien Registration Card (ARC), the interviewing officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle "**See Sworn Statement**," within the Remarks section of the line titled "Met other eligibility requirements." Applicants are still required to complete the *Record of Sworn Statement*, provided in Attachment 8, regarding the status of the Alien Registration Card. The original statement must be placed on the left side of the file under the N-400 application. An officer may, on a case by case basis, ask additional questions on any of the Sworn Statements in the attachments and, when necessary add supplemental pages.

**See Attachment 8,
Record of sworn
Statement
(Missing ARC)**

**See Attachments 7 and
8 Records of Sworn
Statement**

8. Continued Cases

If a case is continued for further documentation, the interviewing officer must circle the appropriate "**N-14**" notation within the Remarks section of the line or lines that relate to the reason(s) the case is continued on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. The officer must clearly check or describe the request for further documentation on the Form N-14, date it, and place a copy under the Processing Worksheets on the right side of the file.

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If a case is continued for other reasons not requiring additional documentation from the applicant, the interviewing officer must indicate the reason(s) for continuation within the Remarks section of the proper line, and initial and date the notation(s).

Once the reason(s) for continuance has been satisfied, the adjudicating officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line where the requirement was met. The "**N-14**" notation that was circled previously, must **not** be crossed out.

If the applicant does not establish eligibility after the initial continuation and, as a result, the application is to be denied, the adjudicating

officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” and circle the decision within the Remarks section of that line. This line is to be completed by the officer who makes the decision at the time of the interview, continued interview, or during a file review process. In cases where the denial letter is prepared at a later date, it is not necessary to re-document that action on the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

a) Related Files

An officer must obtain and review any and all files that relate to an applicant before a final decision is made. Once all files have been received and reviewed, the case may be adjudicated. Depending on local office workflow, file consolidation may occur before or after adjudication.

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9. Cases Requiring Supervisory Review

An officer must **not** issue a decision on a case requiring supervisory review until the supervisor or designated DAO has actually reviewed the file and concurred with the officer’s recommendation. If supervisory review is required, the officer must complete the line titled “Recommendation, if supervisory review required,” by performing the following steps; check the applicable box(es), initial and date within the designated columns, and circle the recommended decision within the Remarks section of that line.

**See Section VI,
Supervisory Review**

After supervisory concurrence has taken place, the adjudicating officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the decision within the Remarks section of the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks.” Refer to **Section VI, *Supervisory Review***, for clarification. Officers must **not** conduct supervisory review on cases that they adjudicated.

10. Withdrawal

If CIS has agreed to an applicant’s written request to withdraw his or her application, the adjudicating officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, and circle the decision within the Remarks section of that line. The written withdrawal request shall be placed on top of the N-400. An accented withdrawal is not considered an

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¹ The majority of states have laws mandating that crimes be reported to a central state authority. States that currently have a statutory requirement regarding arrest reporting for crime trends and statistics are: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin and

on top of the N-400. An accepted withdrawal is not considered an adjudication. NQP sworn statements, signatures on required documents (other than the withdrawal request) and requests for additional documents are not required. If CIS does not accept the withdrawal, the case will be adjudicated on its merits. The officer has the discretion to request additional documentation if he or she needs the information to support a denial.

See Section VI,
Supervisory Review

If supervisory concurrence is required, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the recommendation within the Remarks section of the line titled "Recommendation, if supervisory review required," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. After supervisory concurrence is obtained, the adjudicating officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the decision within the Remarks section of the line titled "Indicate decision under remarks," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

B. Dispositions of Arrests

Officers are required to consider all criminal charges, including those that have been dismissed, expunged, diverted, *nolle prosequere*, and "no papered," before adjudicating an N-400. However, officers are only required to request copies of dispositions of the following types of arrests and/or convictions:

- 1) All arrests/convictions during the statutory period;
- 2) All arrests/convictions on or after November 29, 1990 that may be aggravated felonies as defined in section 101(a)(43) of the INA;
- 3) All arrests/convictions for murder;
- 4) Any arrest/conviction at any time that may be the basis for issuing a Notice to Appear, whether or not the crime was an aggravated felony;
- 5) Any conviction(s) outside the statutory period that, in conjunction with a conviction within the statutory period, would require CIS to consider whether the applicant has reformed from earlier crimes involving moral turpitude;
- 6) Any arrest/conviction outside the statutory period that, in conjunction with another conviction, could preclude the applicant from establishing good moral character (e.g. a Second controlled substance offense or a second crime involving moral turpitude);
- 7) any arrest/conviction outside or inside the statutory period where the applicant would still be on probation at the time of adjudication of the



All court dispositions, abstracts, complaints, docket sheets, and probation reports must be originals or certified copies

8 CFR 335.5 is still controlling if derogatory information is revealed subsequent to the grant and prior to administration of the oath of allegiance

(See Policy Memos 64 and 78)

Wyoming. This list is found in Appendix C to the Bureau of Justice Statistics' September 1999 report "Bridging Gaps in Police Crime Data." <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/bgpcd.htm>. This list will be updated if more current information becomes available.

N-400 or may have served 180 days incarceration during the statutory period; (In these cases, the officers must request evidence of the successful completion of probation or evidence of the release from confinement date) and

- 8) only for convictions listed in 1 through 7 above, any arrest record for which a final court disposition is already in the file but the disposition **does not** reflect the date that the offense was committed or the conviction date. (Note that neither NQP3 nor NQP4 requires applicants to submit additional disposition information for arrests when the applicant has already submitted final court dispositions for the offenses and the dispositions-contain complete and adequate information.)

Regardless of the date on which the evidence was issued, the term "police clearance" means official evidence of a record of arrests, lack of arrests, or confirmation that an arrest did not result in court action from a local police department or from a state agency responsible for maintaining arrest records. When an arrest record is needed, to complete required information regarding a conviction, or to document that there were no arrests, or to document that an arrest did not lead to court action, and a state report is available, the state report should be preferred over a clearance from a local police department¹.

Court disposition information should be documented by properly authenticated documents from the court.

This is not intended to limit the discretion of any officer in requesting documentation that the officer needs to properly assess an applicant's good moral character or adjudicate an individual case. For example, an officer adjudicating a naturalization application is not required to request the court disposition for an 18-year old simple battery when the applicant has an otherwise clean record. However, the officer has discretion to request a disposition for such an offense if the officer decides that he or she needs the information to properly determine the applicant's present good moral character and such information may be necessary to support a denial on discretionary grounds.

(See Policy Memos 64 and 78)

When an officer determines that an offense does not fall within any of the previous categories, the officer must annotate, in the Remarks column of the "Established good moral character" line of the N-650B, each arrest and/or conviction for which the officer is not requesting a disposition. This applies to any arrest and/or conviction reflected on the rap sheet or revealed during the examination on the N-400. The annotation must contain the following information:

- the abbreviation “DNR” to reflect that the disposition was not requested;
- the date of the offense;
- the type of charge (e.g. possession of controlled substance); and
- the initials of the officer making the determination and the date of the annotation.

If there is not sufficient space in the Remarks column of the “Established good moral character” line, the officer should note “see N-650C” and make the annotations in the “Additional remarks” block of the N-650C.

Supervisory review is not required when the officer determines that the arrest(s)/conviction(s) are not potentially disqualifying and the disposition(s) are not needed. When “DNR” is annotated on the N-650B no supervisory review is required.

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When IDENT cases are processed in C4, the Evidence/Background Information screen of the Adjudications Module shows the line items “Court Disposition Records” and “Police/Arrest Records.” Officers have the option to update these lines to reflect either that the court dispositions or arrest records have been “requested,” “received,” “not received,” or “waived.” Currently, when the Rap Sheet contains only minor immigration violations, each of these lines is updated to “waive.” As of the date of this memorandum, both for pending cases and for newly interviewed cases, for cases where there are no criminal charges for which dispositions are required, officers should update the “Court Disposition Records” and “Police/Arrest Records” lines to “waived”. For cases where any criminal dispositions are required, officers should update each of these lines to “requested”. For any cases where all criminal dispositions are already in the file or the applicant provides all dispositions at interview, and these dispositions are complete, officers should update the “Court Dispositions Records” line to “received” and the “Police/Arrest Records” may be updated to “waive”. Finally, where all criminal dispositions are in the file or provided by the applicant at the interview but the dispositions are incomplete as described in item # 8 above, officers should update the “Court Dispositions Records” line to “received” but the “Police/Arrest Records” should be updated to “requested”.

(See Policy Memos 64
and 78)

It is not proper to deny a case for lack of prosecution when an applicant fails to submit arrest dispositions requested after the initial examination. Under 8 CFR 335.7, if an applicant fails to provide information in response to a request for additional evidence after the initial examination, the case should be adjudicated on the merits. If the officer determines that there is sufficient information to make a determination on the applicant’s good moral character, the case should be adjudicated on that basis. If additional documentation would be necessary for the officer to be satisfied of the applicant’s good moral character and such documentation is not received, the

case should be denied for lack of good moral character and the “Court Dispositions Records” line should be updated to “not received.” If additional documentation is not received for a charge that, regardless of the content of the disposition documents, would not adversely affect the applicant’s good moral character, the case may not be denied on that ground.

In cases where a court disposition or police record is not available, the applicant must provide official or certified evidence from the appropriate law enforcement agency or court confirming the unavailability of the record. The documentation or evidence of its unavailability must be marked as an official or certified copy; photocopies from the applicant or their representative are **not** acceptable. This documentation must be maintained on the left side of the file under the N-400 application. The applicant must also be interviewed (and may be re-interviewed) to determine the final disposition of the arrest(s).

(See Policy Memos 64 and 78)

Dispositions of immigration violations that would otherwise be required based on the categories above do **not** need to be requested if one or more of the following circumstances exists:

Minor immigration violations do NOT include criminal violations under Title 18 United States Code (e.g., alien smuggling, aiding & abetting, false claims, counterfeit documents)

1. The Administrative file (A-file) already contains a record of the disposition (e.g., I-213, evidence that Prosecution was Declined) **OR**
2. The Rap Sheet or CIS does not show an outstanding A-file (A- number), which has not been consolidated into the immigrant visa file **OR**
3. The Rap Sheet indicates the charges were declined, or dismissed.

If the applicant’s FD-258 Control Number resulted in a “N” (NON-IDENT), “R” (REJECT-unclassifiable), or the applicant is waived (over 75), and the applicant admits to a criminal history, the officer must request all arrest records and court dispositions as described above. Once the applicant has submitted the requested documents, the officer must circle “**Criminal record in file,**” within the Remarks section of the line titled “Established good moral character,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

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Foreign Arrest

Adjudicators should follow the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) in determining the availability of foreign documents. Such records must be obtained from the appropriate authorities in the jurisdiction where the

applicant resided. Such a record is not always available, particularly from those countries which do not have relations with the United States and therefore do not have diplomatic operations here. It is also difficult for applicants who were admitted to the United States as asylees or refugees to obtain police clearances from their country of origin. This issue is covered in the Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM), Volume 9, Part IV. This volume contains a listing of various countries, as well as the availability of records for those countries and the procedures for obtaining them. If an applicant claims that a police clearance or record is not available for a foreign arrest, the officer should consult the FAM to determine if the document is available. If the record or clearance is available, the applicant shall be required to obtain one. If however a clearance is not available, the officer may photocopy the relevant page of the FAM and place it in the file on the left side under the N-400. The officer should annotate the N-400 Processing Worksheet on the line titled "Established good moral character." The "remarks" block of this same line should be annotated to reflect that the record is unavailable, with a reference to the FAM. If the FAM shows that a record is generally available, but a country is unable to provide one, a letter from the foreign government stating that the record is unavailable should be placed in the file.

(See Policy Memo 16)

C. Form FD-258 Waived and Unclassifiable Fingerprints

In cases where fingerprinting was waived because the applicant could not provide any fingerprints due to a permanent disability or two sets of fingerprints have been rejected by the FBI as unclassifiable, the adjudicating officer shall request the applicant to complete, and sign under oath, the *Record of Sworn Statement* provided in Attachment 7. The purpose of this statement is to obtain the applicant's detailed sworn testimony regarding the existence or lack of a criminal record. The original statement must be maintained on the left side of the file under the N-400 application. If the applicant admits to an arrest history, the officer must request all related arrest record(s) and court disposition(s). The Record of Sworn Statement "Fingerprints" is no longer required for applicants 75 and over.

See Attachment 7
Record of Sworn Statement
"Fingerprints"

See Section D
Police Clearances for Unclassifiables

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Currently an IBIS check and Name Check is conducted for every applicant, including those 75 and over.

After the interview has been completed, the officer must circle "**See Sworn Statement**," within the Remarks section of the line titled "Established good moral character," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. If GMC is established, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns.

For applicants who admit offense(s), once the related arrest record(s) and court disposition(s) have been received, the officer must circle "**Criminal record in file**," within the Remarks section of the line titled "Established good moral character," on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet. If upon review of the arrest dispositions, it is determined that the applicant is eligible to naturalize, the officer must also initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled "Established good moral character," and proceed with the

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adjudication of the case.

D. Police Clearances for Unclassifiable Fingerprints

An office may receive a case for which two sets of fingerprints have been rejected by the FBI as unclassifiable, or a case for which fingerprinting was waived because the applicant could not provide any fingerprints due to a permanent disability. For these cases, the officer must request, and the applicant must provide, police clearances for all jurisdictions where the applicant resided for the relevant statutory period prior to adjudicating the N-400. This does **not** apply to applicants who were 75 years of age or older (waived) on the date of filing the application. The majority of states have laws mandating that crimes be reported to a central state authority. When a state report is available, the state report should be preferred over a report from a local police department.

The restrictions on the use of CALDOJ rap sheets in the Los Angeles District in the "NQP Amendment Concerning California Department of Justice Criminal History Printouts" Policy Memorandum of May 17, 1999 are removed.

(See Policy Memo 78)

The NQP guidance stated above must be used for the adjudication of all currently pending N-400s being processed under either NQP3 or NQP4. The "statutory period" discussed in "**B. Dispositions of Arrests**" does **not** apply to other applications and petitions which follow the policy regarding fingerprint integrity found in NQP (e.g., Forms I-485, I-589, I-590, I-600, I-600A, I-687, I-700, I-817 and I-881).

E. Adjudication on Temporary Files

a. Adjudication on T-file after requisite requests

The review of an applicant's A-File during the naturalization process is critical to confirming that no incidents have taken place that would disqualify the applicant from naturalization. Interviews on applications with T-files may be conducted only when a search (made by the office (FCO) having the A-File) has been conducted and fails to produce the applicant's A-File, and the requisite number of file transfer requests have been completed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Attachment 2.

See Attachment 2,
*Naturalization File
Transfer Procedures*

The officer must **not** render a decision on a T-file until supervisory review and concurrence has taken place on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, or for Second Hearings, on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

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See Section VI,
Supervisory Review

If the requisite file transfer requests for an A-File do not produce the file, a naturalization application may be adjudicated on a T-file when ALL of the following conditions have been met.

T-file Sworn Statement is no longer required.

1. The applicant's lawful admission to the United States, required time of residence, and lack of disqualifying information in Central Index System databases has been verified through Central Index System. The latter is achieved by reviewing the Central Index System screen (9101) for violations or deportation charges (i.e., "X" will appear under VIOLATIONS and/or DACS). This is documented by placing the Central Index System (9101) screen printout on the right side of the file under the Pre-Processing Worksheet (**NOTE: An N-400 must not be adjudicated until the violation(s) and/or deportation issue(s) have been resolved**);
2. The file indicator is "N," "R," or "B," as shown in the Central Index System File Transfer Display screen (9504) and the procedures outlined in Attachment 2-*Naturalization File Transfer Procedures* have been followed;
3. All fingerprint clearance procedures have been followed; **AND**
4. a. If background checks are negative (no record), this fact and the data checks that were made/reviewed must be noted on a processing sheet that is attached to the file. A supervisory adjudications officer must review and approve the adjudication of that application on the temporary file.
4. b. If background checks are positive (a record or possible record exists), this fact and the data checks that were made must be recorded on the processing sheet. In any instance where a check is positive the information must be obtained, resolved, and made part of the record. In addition, the adjudication may not proceed until the Assistant District Director for Adjudications, or the Assistant Service Center Director, or the Officer in Charge having jurisdiction over the adjudication has reviewed and approved the decision. This authority

All T-files must contain the Central Index System screen printouts (9101) and (9504)

**See Attachment 2
*Naturalization File Transfer Procedures***

**See Section III
*Fingerprint Check Integrity***

**See Section VI,
*Supervisory Review***

**(See memo,
"Responsibilities of Adjudicators," dated 11/13/02)**

may not be delegated.

5. Because special precautions must be taken in adjudicating applications on a Temporary A-File, and to permit supervisors adequate time to review records, no same-day oath ceremony may take place if the adjudication involves a Temporary A-File. The Assistant Director for Adjudications, or the Assistant Service Center Director, or the Officer in Charge may waive this requirement in appropriate cases. Such waivers shall be in writing and placed in the file.

(i) “N”, “R”, “B”, or “Z” File Transfer Display Indicator

Codes

Once more than 90 days have passed since the initial file transfer request was initiated and the A-File has not been received, the local office may adjudicate an application on a T-file, and, if a grant, schedule for oath ceremony once the following conditions have been met:

- Immediately prior to the decision, the local office must conduct a systems check of the Central Index System screen (9504) to verify that the file transfer indicator “N” “R” “B” or “Z” has not changed; **AND**
- The office must place a current Central Index System (9504) screen printout on the right side of the file under the Pre-Processing Worksheet.

(ii) “N”, “R”, “B”, “O”, “X”, or “Z” Indicator Code Changes to “T”

If the FTI is “T” and the file transfer has been initiated within the last 30 days, the office in possession of the application may conduct the interview, however it must not grant the application until the A-File is received. If more than 30 days have passed since the “T” indicator was posted, and the A-File has not yet been received, the local office must contact the FCO to resolve the delay in the transfer. If the FCO indicates that the A-File has already been transferred, and the local office is unable to locate the file, the Central Index System file transfer display screen must be updated to an “N” indicator and the case may be adjudicated.

(iii) “N”, “R” or “B” Indicator Code Changes to “A,” “D,” “F,” “P,” “L,” “O,” “X,” or “Z”

If the FTI is “A,” “D,” “F,” “P,” “L,” “O,” “X,” or “Z” the office in possession of the application may conduct the interview; however, adjudication must not take place until the conflict has been resolved.

b. Adjudication on T-file in unusual meritorious cases without usual FTRs

Only when it is clearly in the best interest of CIS to do so, an employee who is at least an ADDE, DADDE, Naturalization Program Manager, Naturalization Site Manager, or OIC can authorize that an N-400 application proceed to interview and Oath Ceremony, if the applicant is determined to be eligible, without waiting for the completion of the usual sequence of A-File transfer requests. This unusual procedure can be done in response to a request from another government agency, compelling humanitarian concerns, or in the national interest.

When a field office judges that a case merits this exceptional handling, the N-400 should be requested from the Service Center at any point after initial data entry and the initial File Transfer Request (FTR), pursuant to Policy Memo # 53. The following procedures apply to these cases:

- The normal criminal history background checks must still be completed before the applicant is notified to appear for an initial examination.
- This procedure is authorized only for cases that have a File Transfer Indicator (FTI) of B, I, or N.
- If the FTI is I, the authorized officer should use his or her discretion to determine how long is a reasonable period to wait for a file, based on the facts of the case and the length of time since the I was entered, before allowing the case to proceed with exceptional handling.
- If the FTI is R, the office of record must be contacted to update the FTI.
- If the FTI is A, D, F, P, L, O, X or Z the office of record must be contacted to resolve the conflict and update the FTI.
- A case-specific memo, signed by the officer who authorized the use of this procedure, must be placed in the file before the Oath Ceremony. The memo must clearly explain what factor(s) caused

the determination to be made that the application should be processed without the normally required FTRs.

The interviewing Field Office is responsible for all aspects of compliance with the requirements of this procedure.

As long as the applicant is found to be eligible for naturalization, the interview can be conducted and the applicant admitted to citizenship without the A-File and without the otherwise required FTRs when an authorized officer determines that this is appropriate in any specific case.

c. Adjudication on a newly created T-file when the file housing the N-400 has not arrived at the time of a scheduled Interview

In some cases, the A-File or T-file containing the N-400 fails to arrive at the local office prior to a scheduled examination. In some of these cases, the distance that the applicant has traveled, the applicant's health or some other meritorious reason makes it unreasonable to turn away an applicant from a scheduled initial examination.

- All local offices are authorized, on a case-by-case basis, to conduct an initial examination without the A-File or T-file that contains the N-400 when the file has not arrived from the Service Center at the time of a scheduled examination.
- An N-400 must be completed for the examination. If the applicant or the applicant's representative has a photocopy of the original N-400 and supporting documentation, these should be used for the examination
- This procedure is discretionary and is to be used only when an authorized officer judges that it is to the benefit of the government to conduct the examination without waiting for the arrival of the A-File or the T-file that contains the N-400.
- This procedure is NOT authorized for any applications for which the FBI response to the fingerprint query is IDENT. A T-file must be created to house the duplicate N-400 that is required for this procedure along with the NQP processing worksheets and any documents submitted or created to process the adjudication of the case. Standard Records procedures should be followed for the creation and tracking of the T-file.
- Each office will maintain a roster, either by name or by job title, of the officers who have the authority to authorize this procedure. This authority must not be delegated below the SDAO level. In each case, the authorizing officer must initial and date in the Remarks column of the "A-File present at time of initial interview" line of the N-650B: "Original N-400 not present."

- **The case cannot be adjudicated until the A-File or T-file that contains the original N-400 has been received and reviewed.**
- Standard records operating procedures must be followed for the consolidation of the T-file created for the examination into the file that contains the original N-400.
- It will be the responsibility of the officer who makes the final adjudication recommendation to compare and reconcile the contents of the examination T-file with the contents of the file that contains the original N-400.
- The local office should follow the procedures in Attachment 2 to the NQP4 Memorandum, II, 7., **d) Files with “Initiated (sent) but not received” (“I” Indicator)** to locate an A-File and equivalent procedures to locate a T-file that contains the applicant’s N-400.

F. Motions To Reopen

If an N-400 was denied, the applicant may request CIS to reopen the case.

a) Motion To Reopen Granted

If a Motion To Reopen is granted, the original decision will then be re-adjudicated. The officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle **“Granted,”** within the Remarks section of the line titled “Motion To Reopen and Reconsider,” on the Continuation Processing Worksheet. If the approved Motion results in the N-400 denial being overturned, then the Motion must be placed **under** the N-400 application on the left side of the file, and a new Adjudication Processing Worksheet placed on top of all existing Worksheets on the right side of the file. If the approved Motion results in the denial being upheld, then the Motion must be placed on **top** of the N-400 application on the left side of the file, and a new Adjudication Processing Worksheet placed on top of all existing Worksheets on the right side of the file.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

b) Motion To Reopen Dismissed

If a Motion To Reopen is dismissed, the original decision shall be upheld. The officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle **“Dismissed,”** within the Remarks section of the line titled “Motion To Reopen and Reconsider,” on the Continuation Processing Worksheet. The officer must place a copy of the dismissed Motion on **top** of the N-400 application on the left side of the file. No additional Adjudication Processing Worksheet is required.

G. Form N-336, Request for Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings Under Section 336 of the Act

When an applicant appears for the hearing, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Appeared for Second Hearing,” on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

The eligibility annotations needed to complete the case should be annotated within the “Additional remarks” section of the Continuation Processing Worksheet and initialed and dated. Do not add a new Adjudication Processing Worksheet and do not make these annotations on the original Adjudication Processing Worksheet.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

If the case must be continued, the hearing officer must initial and date within the designated column and indicate the reason(s) for continuation within the Remarks section of the line titled “Second Hearing continued,” and date and initial the notation.

Once the reason(s) for the continuation are satisfied, the officer must make a notation within the Remarks section of the line titled “Second Hearing continued,” and initial and date the notation. If additional space is needed, use the additional remarks section located at the bottom of the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

Upon making a new decision or affirming the original, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the decision within the Remarks section of the line titled “**OFFICER** Indicate Second Hearing decision under remarks,” on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

**See Section VI,
Supervisory Review**

If supervisory concurrence is required, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the recommendation within the Remarks section of the line titled “Recommendation on Second Hearing, if supervisory concurrence required (criminal, T-file, and/or denied/withdrawn disability cases).” After supervisory review is obtained, the officer must initial and date within the designated columns and circle the decision within the Remarks section of the line titled “**OFFICER** Indicate Second Hearing decision under remarks,” on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

H. Update of Central Index System and N-400 Processing Systems

The NQP are not complete for any N-400 that results in the naturalization of the applicant until (1) all data necessary to show naturalization and to close the case has been entered into RNACS or C4 if either system processed the application; and (2) the CIS record relating to the applicant shows the Naturalization Certificate number, which Court or INS office conducted the Oath Ceremony (not required for C4 cases), the date of naturalization and any name change, when applicable. The person responsible for closing out Oath Ceremonies will do so as soon as possible after the ceremony.

Until the CIS Post Natz Error Report is available for direct access in C4 by field offices, the Interim CIS Post Natz Error Report will be distributed to field offices by the Regions. The employee responsible for manually updating CIS by making the corrections based on the error reports must complete the process by the tenth working day after the CIS Post Natz Error Report has been received in the local office. The POC will promptly notify the C4 Helpdesk when the error report work has been completed. The field office POC will send an email message to the C4 Helpdesk which lists the Alien Registration numbers and the Application ID for the corrected cases. The field office POC will send a copy of the C4 Helpdesk notification email message to the local office's Quality Assurance Analyst (QAA) for informational purposes only. The C4 Helpdesk will provide the POC with a ticket number and then will conduct a "push" on the corrected cases to update C4.

Quality assurance continues to be an important part of the naturalization process. The QA Analysts and Evaluators at each local office will conduct a QA Review *electronically*. Using the Interim CIS Post Natz Error Report and the applicable CIS and C4 screens, the District QA Analyst will ensure that the reports are being worked and that the corrections are being made in a timely manner. Refer to Attachment 14 for QA guidance for the mismatch report review.

VI. SUPERVISORY REVIEW

In addition to standard work processes, an integral part of any quality control program is supervisory review. All Records and Adjudication Supervisors are required to review and be familiar with the work performed by subordinates, and to work on improving the quality of the work produced. These requirements are stated in position descriptions, supervisory training, and performance work plans. Quality controls, measures, and practices must continue. In addition to the above, there are two categories of cases that require supervisory review before approval and three categories of cases that require supervisory review before denial or withdrawal. The categories do not preclude a supervisor from reviewing other cases at his or her discretion.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

A. Cases That Require Supervisory Review

1. Any applicant with potentially disqualifying criminal histories (other than minor immigration violations prior to admission for lawful permanent residence or adjustment of status); **and/or**
2. Applicants whose application is adjudicated on a T-file in accordance with the instructions in the previous section; **and/or**
3. Denied or withdrawn disability exception cases. Supervisory review of **approved** disability cases is not required. Supervisory review of all denied or withdrawn disability cases continues to be a requirement.

Minor immigration violations do NOT include criminal violations under Title 18 United States Code (e.g., Alien smuggling, aiding & abetting, false claims, counterfeit documents)

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

NQP supervisory review is not required for either potentially disqualifying criminal history cases or disability exception cases that are denied before the initial examination because of failure to submit fingerprints or for failure to pay a fingerprinting fee. NQP supervisory review is required if the case is denied on a T-file or on a receipt-file.

(See Policy Memo 63)

NQP supervisory review is not required regarding the adjudication of the N-400 in cases in which a disability exception was rejected, but the applicant demonstrated all elements of eligibility for naturalization and the adjudication officer's recommendation is that the N-400 be approved. In N-648 disability cases where the applicant demonstrates section 312 requirements without the benefit of an N-648, the interviewing officer should initial and date the annotation "N-648 not used" in the remarks

section of the appropriate “Met § 312 requirements” line.

B. SDAO and Designated Journeyman

The required supervisory review must be conducted by a Supervisory District Adjudications Officer (SDAO), or by a GS-12 Journeyman District Adjudications Officer (DAO) who possesses sufficient technical skills and significant experience in the adjudication of naturalization applications. The adjudications officer must have attended and completed all required NQP training, and the appointment must be documented by a memorandum maintained at the local office for future reference. The memo should state the dates the person is authorized to perform supervisory review. Officers must **NOT** conduct supervisory review on a case that they adjudicated.

(From NQP4 Training Manual)

C. SDAO Concurrence and Non-Concurrence

Upon concurring with the DAO’s recommendation, the supervisor or designated adjudications officer must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled, “Supervisory Concurrence with Officer’s Recommendation,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, or in Second Hearing cases, on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

If the supervisor does not concur with the officer’s recommendation, the supervisor must explain the reason(s) for non-concurrence within the Remarks section of the line titled “Supervisory concurrence with officer’s recommendation,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, or in Second Hearing cases, on the Continuation Processing Worksheet, initial and date the notations, and return the case to the adjudicating officer for appropriate action.

D. Designated Journeyman Concurrence and Non-Concurrence

When a designated adjudications officer is reviewing an officer recommendation, and does not concur with the recommendation, he or she must give the case to an SDAO. The supervisory officer will either concur with the officer’s recommendation, or note the reason(s) for non-concurrence within the Remarks section of the line titled “Supervisory concurrence with officer’s recommendation,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, or in Second Hearing cases, on the Continuation Processing Worksheet, and return the file to the adjudicating officer for appropriate action.

Once the officer re-affirms or changes the adjudicative decision,

and the section titled “If necessary, enter 2nd,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet has been completed, the file will be returned to the SDAO for concurrence. If the SDAO concurs with the officer’s recommendation, he or she must initial and date within the designated columns of the line titled “Supervisory concurrence with officer’s recommendation,” on the Adjudication Processing Worksheet, or in Second Hearing cases, on the Continuation Processing Worksheet. The file should then be returned to the officer so that the line titled “Indicate decision under remarks,” may be completed.

VII. REVERIFICATION

The purpose of the reverification process is to ensure that all steps in the processing of the N-400 application have been followed and annotated on the Processing Worksheets, not to review the underlying decision on the application itself.



Reverification may be conducted by any of the following:

- SDAO;
- GS-12 journeyman DAO;
- GS-9 or GS-11 DAO who has completed IOBTC; **OR**
- Quality Assurance Analyst or contractor.

All reverifiers must have all required NQP training. Reverifiers who are not SDAOs must be identified as a reverifier on a roster that shall be maintained in local files for future reference. Officers designated as reverifiers must not reverify cases that they have adjudicated. Except in cases of ‘home visit’ interview/adjudication/naturalization or in offices with severely limited staff resources, officers should not reverify cases for which they performed the Supervisory Review function. If a Quality Assurance analyst or contractor conducts reverification, they cannot conduct Quality Assurance reviews in the same office. The Pre-Processing, Adjudication, and, if applicable, the Continuation Processing Worksheets must be reviewed for completion for every case eligible for oath ceremony **before** the ceremony takes place. It is at the discretion of local offices to determine when reverification takes place, as long as it is after granting the application and before the oath ceremony. When the Adjudication Processing Worksheet has been completed, the reverifier must sign and date the reverification line at the bottom of the Worksheet. In Second Hearing cases or Motions to Reopen, the reverifier must sign and date the reverification line of the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

A. Pre-Processing Worksheet

If information is missing from the Pre- Processing Worksheet, the reverifier must enter or circle the information, initialing and dating the appropriate line. The date noted must be the date he or she makes the notation. For example, if the person conducting the reverification has the A-file at the time of reverification but does not know when it was matched to the T-file, the reverifier must complete the line titled “A-file relates to applicant” by dating and initialing the appropriate columns on that line.

B. Adjudication Processing Worksheet

If the person conducting the reverification finds that the officer or supervisor information that should have been annotated on the worksheet is missing, the reverifier must return the case to the officer/supervisor so that the Adjudication Processing Worksheet may be properly annotated. This must be done before the oath ceremony so that the reverifier may sign the worksheet reverification line before the applicant is naturalized. When the officer or supervisor completes the Adjudication Processing Worksheet after being returned by the person conducting the reverification, the officer or supervisor must initial and date the Adjudication Processing Worksheet on the lines that were completed. The information that the officer/supervisor enters on the worksheet must reflect the date that the information was actually entered on the worksheet(s) and must **not** be backdated.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

C. Form N-336, Request for Hearing on a Decision in Naturalization Proceedings Under Section 336 of the Act

If an application is approved after a Second Hearing, the reverifier must review the information on the Continuation Processing Worksheet. Once all steps on the worksheet(s) have been verified as complete and correct, the reverifier must sign and date the reverification line on the Continuation Processing Worksheet.

D. NQP 3 Cases

Cases initially interviewed before November 1, 1998, must continue to be reverified using the N-400 Processing Worksheet (Form N-650, Rev. 6/25/97). Some offices may still have cases that will be processed to completion using the procedures set forth in the May 23, 1997, memorandum (NQP 3). Only NQP 3 trained employees may process these cases.

E. Reverification Problem Solving

Managers must take appropriate actions for correcting problems. Reverifiers cannot sign until an officer or supervisor has made the necessary corrections.

VIII. QUALITY ASSURANCE

**This section supercedes
Policy memos 61 and 61A**

A. Introduction

Quality is an integral part of the naturalization process. The Naturalization Quality Assurance Program is based on generally accepted principles for quality organizations. These principles dictate that developing and implementing change to improve processes is a fundamental goal of all organizations. To do this, processes must be monitored, data collected and analyzed, and improvement opportunities identified.

B. Background

In 1998, quality assurance procedures were established for naturalization processing. Initially five stages of the process were monitored. The quality levels established have been sustained at or above compliance standards for several years. This high level of compliance allows the expansion of the quality program to other areas. To facilitate the quality expansion, the naturalization quality program has been streamlined. Included in this document are three new checklists:

- Service Center:

N-400 Pre-Processing Quality Checklist

N-400 Denied Quality Checklist

- District/Sub-Office:

N-400 Processing Quality Checklist

These new checklists are tentatively scheduled for implementation with the March 2004 interviews and data. The first QA report will then be due in April. Further instruction on sampling and conducting the review is forthcoming.

C. Scope

This program provides a standard method for measuring the quality of N-400 naturalization processing. These efforts are important to effectively monitor performance and ensure that Citizenship and Immigration Services and its customers are receiving the highest quality service possible.

The Naturalization Quality Assurance Procedures provide methodologies for evaluating the key processing requirements, from filing through case closure. Special emphasis is placed on required background

and systems checks.

D. Quality Management Responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for quality management (QM). Quality Assurance Analysts/Evaluators ensure the administration of the Citizenship and Immigration Services quality program and are assigned to conduct quality reviews. These analysts perform the function of quality managers at each location that processes N-400s. Quality Evaluators will be designated as needed to ensure all program requirements are met. Service Centers will perform quality review on all N-400 cases for which they have completed the pre-processing. They will also review all N-400 cases they denied for failure to appear for fingerprinting or other reasons. Local offices will perform quality reviews of granted N-400 cases. When conducting reviews on granted cases, if the case had been continued, complete the Continuation Processing Notes section on the N-400 Processing Quality Checklist.

E. Quality Review Procedures

The quality review procedures will assist each office in identifying processes that require additional attention and improvement. The purpose of the review process is to ensure the NQP guidance is being followed; it is **not** intended to readjudicate the merits of a case. Each District and Service Center that processes N-400 applications is required to complete a local Quality Review Plan for all locations covered by their activity.

F. Quality Review Reporting

All procedural errors are reported to the supervisor for corrective action. Each District and Service Center that processes N-400 applications is required to submit periodic reports.

The Quality QA/QE will provide a report to Regional Office or Service Center Operations. A copy will be provided to the Director or Service Center Director. Regional Offices and Service Centers will provide consolidated reports to Headquarters. Headquarters will prepare a national summary for review by the executive staff. The national summary will address critical errors and analysis of trends.

IX. TRAINING

A. Training Requirements

To establish and maintain quality and consistency in processing naturalization applications, all Regional Directors, District Directors, Officers-in-Charge, and Service Center Directors must ensure that all employees under their direction involved in the processing of naturalization applications, including the Quality Assurance Reviewer, have been trained on these procedures. This includes contract employees and any other personnel who assist with naturalization processing. Contract record employees at service centers need only be trained on the first four sections of the NQP (Introduction, File Transfer Procedures, Fingerprint Check Integrity, and G-325 Biographic Information Check). Contract record employees at field offices need only be trained on the Introduction and File Transfer Procedures portions of the memo. Contract ASC employees need only to be trained on the Introduction and the Fingerprint Check Integrity sections.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

Training sessions will be eight hours in duration for all new employees other than contract employees who will receive abbreviated training as outlined above. Each training session certifies the employee as NQP trained for three years.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision: Training for
New Employees**

All employees must be certified on this updated version of NQP (NQP 4: Updated through 9/30/03). This training on NQP 4: Updated through 9/30/03, will be four hours in duration for all employees other than contract employees who will receive abbreviated training as outlined above. This training session must be completed by March 1, 2004 and must be completed prior to processing any N-400 filed on or after March 1, 2004. These cases must contain the updated NQP Processing Worksheets.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision: Training for
all employees on NQP 4:
Updated through 9/30/03**

It is now required that all District adjudicators be re-certified as NQP trained once every three years. All subsequent re-certification training sessions will be four hours in duration for all District Adjudicators. Re-certification training must include any changes from the previous training, new policies and updates, and any other critical areas that management sees necessary.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision: Re-
certification training for
DAOs**

All trainees must complete the training roster, in Attachment 12, which will be maintained locally for future reference. Service center contract employees may use their unique identifier code in lieu of their initials. Training rosters must be completed for both initial training and re-

**See Attachment 12,
Naturalization
Quality Procedures
Training (Sample
Training Roster).**

certification training.

Regional Directors, District Directors, Officers-in-Charge, and Service Center Directors must certify on the Training Certification found in Attachment 13 that all employees under their direction involved in the naturalization process have been trained in accordance with these procedures. The original Training Certification form must be placed in the local training file for future reference.

**See Attachment 13,
*Training Certification.***

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

The procedures described in this memorandum apply only to cases filed on or after March 1, 2004, or to cases where the interview is conducted on or after March 1, 2004. Interviews include: initial exam, re-exams, second hearings, etc.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

**See Attachment 12,
*Naturalization Quality
Procedures Training
(Sample Training Roster).***

B. Trainer Certification

Training may be conducted by any employee who has received NQP 4 training.

**NQP Streamlining
Revision**

A record must be maintained in each office of those employees who have been designated by the District Director or Center Director, or their designee, to be NQP trainers.

**See Attachment 13,
*Training Certification.***