



Immigrants Will Face Fee Hike for U.S. Citizenship Application Starting Dec. 23

Lawful Permanent Residents encouraged to apply now to avoid fee hike; some will qualify for partial fee waiver

Atlanta, GA, December 5, 2016 — For the first time in six years, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will increase the fees required for many immigrant applications and petitions, including the application for U.S. citizenship. Currently, it costs \$680 to apply for naturalization. Beginning December 23, 2016, the application fee will increase to \$725. Additionally, the application fee for the Certificate of Citizenship will nearly double from \$600 to \$1,170.

“With the pending fee increase, we strongly encourage qualified lawful permanent residents not to delay in taking the important step toward becoming a U.S. citizen,” said Javeria Jamil, Staff Attorney for Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta.

While citizenship will have a higher price tag for many immigrants, UCSIS is introducing a new partial fee waiver for lower-income applicants at the same time.

“We applaud UCSIS’s recognition that immigrants who are struggling to get by still have a strong desire to become American citizens and the high cost of application fees should not be an insurmountable barrier for them,” Jamil said. “While we encouraged USCIS to expand the partial fee waiver beyond 200 percent of the poverty level, this is a step in the right direction. We suggest that immigrants who qualify for the partial fee waiver wait to apply until it goes into effect on December 23.”

Under this reduced fee program, applicants whose household income is between 150 and 200 percent of the federal poverty level guidelines qualify to pay half the application fee, or \$320. For example, a family of four with a household income between \$36,450 and \$48,600 will benefit from this new partial fee waiver. Households that earn below 150 percent of the federal poverty level will continue to benefit from a full fee waiver.

2016 Federal Poverty Level Guidelines Household Size

	100%	150%	200%
1	\$11,880	\$17,820	\$23,760
2	16,020	24,030	32,040
3	20,160	30,240	40,320
4	24,300	36,450	48,600
5	28,440	42,660	56,880
6	32,580	48,870	65,160
7	36,730	55,095	73,460
8	40,890	61,335	81,780

As of 2013, there are more than 150,000 lawful permanent residents who are eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship in Georgia alone.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta is a member of the New Americans Campaign, led by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center. The Campaign is a nonpartisan, innovative and unprecedented effort that brings together a coalition of funders, leading national immigration and service organizations, and over 100 local service providers across 18 different cities, including Atlanta, to help aspiring Americans reach their dream of citizenship. The New Americans Campaign, with its partners, sponsors the site www.citizenshipworks.org to help immigrants complete the immigration process.

About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees ("Asian Americans") in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice. Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.