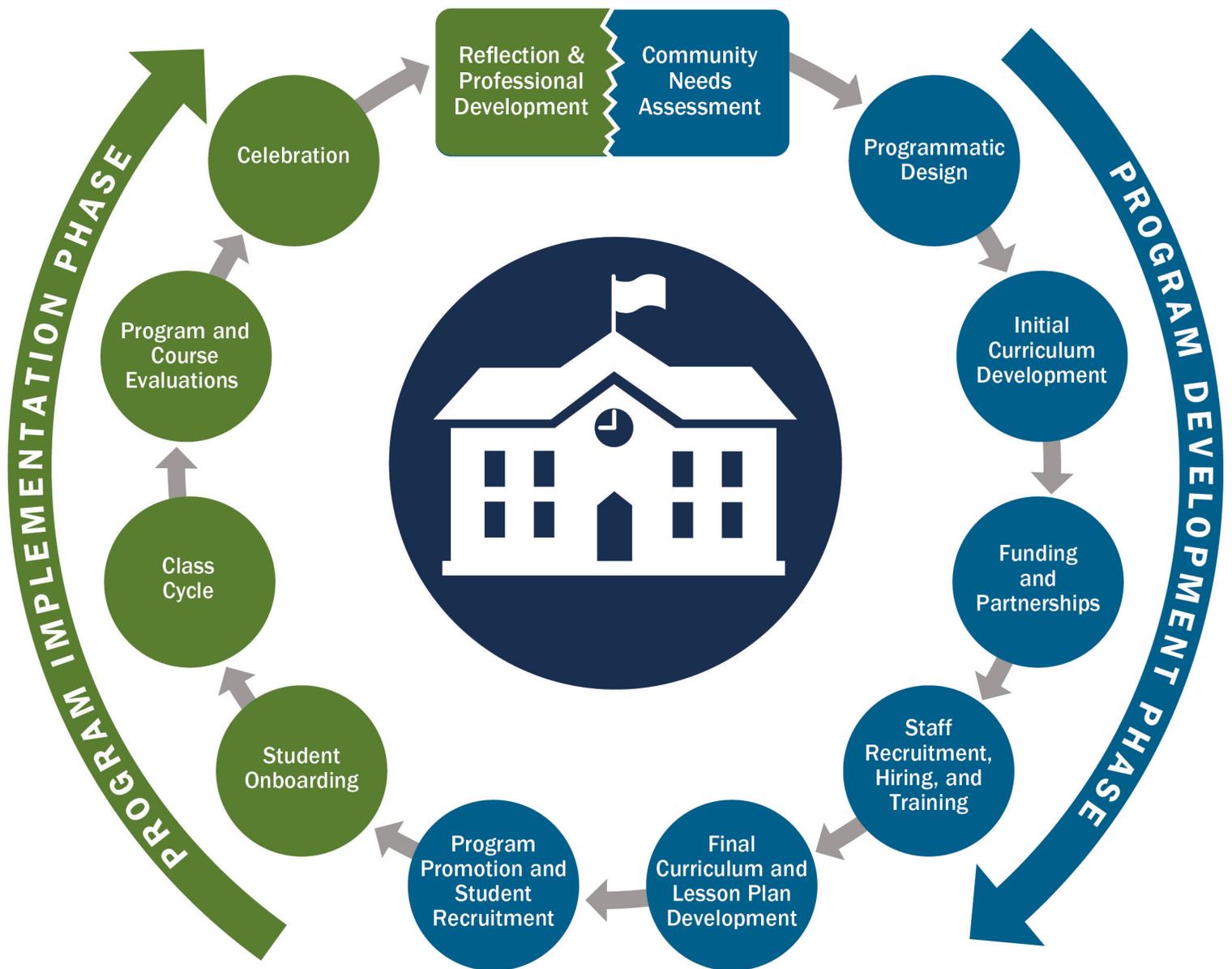


# USCIS Adult Citizenship Education Program Development Guide

## *Building an Adult Citizenship Program*





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## ***Building an Adult Citizenship Program***



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

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# Introduction

Adult citizenship education covers the content knowledge and English language skills needed to prepare for successful naturalization. Such programs help lawful permanent residents who are eligible for naturalization improve their English language skills and learn about the history and government of the United States. Many adult citizenship education programs also refer students to accredited representatives or recognized organizations for legal service. Some provide such assistance themselves or refer students to the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) website at [justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation](https://www.justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation). Equally important, though, is that high-quality adult citizenship education programs help newcomers adjust and successfully acclimate to life in the United States.

This program development guide outlines a step-by-step process to create or sustain an adult citizenship education program and includes products and resources from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for use at each stage of program development. Using this guide to establish or enhance your program can help you offer important services to lawful permanent residents, as well as your community and country.

The process outlined in this guide is divided into two main phases: program development and program implementation. Each phase is then broken down into its respective components with actions you can take and resources you can use at each step along the way. This guide is structured to facilitate both initial program development, as well as continued growth. As such, whether you have a new start-up or an established program, this guide can be a valuable resource to help you begin or enhance your adult citizenship education program.

While this guide is written in a step-by-step format, the outlined sequence is not obligatory — many steps of the process may occur in a different order or happen concurrently. It is intended for you to use in whatever way best supports your program development efforts.

The Division of Citizenship Education and Training (DCET) in the USCIS Office of Citizenship (OoC) serves to advance and professionalize the field of adult citizenship education. To that end, we created this guide and are available to provide any specific technical assistance you may need. For program development assistance, email the Division of Citizenship Education and Training at [Office.of.Citizenship@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Office.of.Citizenship@uscis.dhs.gov). We welcome the opportunity to support you

and your program as you support immigrants and your community.

## Program Development Phase

There are two main phases when building an adult citizenship education program: development and implementation. Many people believe that building a program begins with writing lesson plans and developing instructional activities. While these are vital components of program development, there are many steps to address before entering into the classroom. The Program Development Phase section of this guide will walk you through the steps to build a solid educational framework for your program.

### Part One: Community Needs Assessment

#### Step 1: Conduct a Community Needs Assessment

The first step in developing your program is determining if there is a need for adult citizenship education in your community. You most likely already know people who want to apply for U.S. citizenship from your neighborhood, job, or place of worship. However, to ensure your community would benefit from a citizenship program, first conduct a needs assessment. You should research immigrant and refugee serving organizations in your area to determine the services already offered and any possible gaps. You can use the sample community assessment tool on **page 10** to identify relevant information about organizations already providing educational or other services to newcomers in your community, and identify additional services you can provide.

### Part Two: Programmatic Design

#### Step 2: Develop a Program Plan, Structure, and Objectives

Once you have assessed available services in your area and determined a need for a citizenship preparation program, you should develop a plan, structure, and objectives for your program. Creating a clear programmatic framework and objectives will provide structure and direction for your efforts. Located on the Citizenship Resource Center at [uscis.gov/citizenship](https://uscis.gov/citizenship), the *USCIS Elements of Program Quality for Adult Citizenship Education* and *USCIS Guide to Creating an Adult Citizenship Education Curriculum* can help with this process. These resources will help you consider initial questions and identify benchmarks such as:

- What is our mission?
- What are the objectives of our program?
- Who will teach the classes?
- Who will the students be?

What is the schedule for the course(s)?  
What will be expected of students?  
What textbooks will we use?  
What supplemental instructional materials will we use?  
Where will we hold classes?  
What standardized ESL assessments will we use?  
What kind of enrollment system will we use?

In addition to the products above, USCIS has other resources to help you, including [Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants](#), the [Civics and Citizenship Toolkit](#), and publications on naturalization information and [Open Entry/Open Exit vs. Managed Enrollment](#). With so many steps in this process, create a timeline to track your program development. You can find a sample timeline to adapt and use on [page 11](#).

## Part Three: Initial Curriculum Development

### Step 3: Develop a Textbook-Based Curriculum Using USCIS Content Standards

Developing your program plan, structure, and objectives will help frame your program. However, a textbook-based curriculum is the foundation of any high-quality citizenship preparation course. A curriculum gives teachers, tutors, and volunteers an instructional framework to follow. It also ensures that instruction is provided consistently across various class levels with different instructors. Moreover, a curriculum helps you align and adapt materials, lesson plans, and classroom activities to suit your students' educational needs.

Still, knowing what to include in a comprehensive curriculum can be daunting. So USCIS has broken down the naturalization process into the skills and knowledge needed for successful naturalization and developed the [Guide to the Adult Citizenship Education Content Standards and Foundation Skills](#) (or "Content Standards"). Standards for curriculum design give you a baseline, or checklist, of what content to cover in your course. However, this list of standards is not exhaustive and should be supplemented to suit your students' and program's needs. USCIS also created the [Adult Citizenship Education Sample Curriculum for a Low Beginning ESL Level Course](#) (or "Sample Curriculum") that you can use to model your program's own curriculum, and the supplemental [USCIS Guide to Creating an Adult Citizenship Education Curriculum](#) (or "Curriculum Guide") walks you through every step of curriculum development. These three products have foundational information to develop a standards-based comprehensive adult citizenship education curriculum.

While the federal government does not promote any one textbook, using a textbook is essential to your program. In

addition to providing structure and instructional content for your course, a textbook builds student investment. Having a textbook to take home allows students to study outside of class and develop a stronger connection to the course. USCIS has an idea board for [Choosing a Textbook for Your Citizenship Class](#) on our Citizenship Resource Center.

### Digital Literacy:

One additional aspect you should consider as you develop your curriculum is digital literacy. Digital literacy has become a vital component of most educational programs, including adult citizenship education. Building digital literacy into your course curriculum will help prepare your students for successful naturalization and prepare them for life in the United States. Understanding and being able to use technology, such as computers, tablets, and smartphones, allows students to search online for accurate information, apply for jobs, and find other services. Furthermore, Form N-400, *Application for Naturalization*, can be completed online, and some components of the naturalization test are administered digitally on a tablet.

The federal government developed an online web portal that makes it easy to find updated resources and tools that teach computer and online skills at [digitalliteracy.gov](#). USCIS also has many products you can use to include digital literacy in your program. You and your students can download the USCIS Civics Test Study Tools app on mobile devices to practice the civics component of the naturalization test. More information about the app can be found at [my.uscis.gov/prep/test/civics](#). USCIS has [Interactive Practice Tests](#) for use in class or at home. Furthermore, USA Learns has a new U.S. Citizenship ESL Course located at [usalearns.org](#), which is based on the [USCIS Content Standards](#) and uses USCIS products throughout the course. This web-based course and other USCIS digital resources offer various ways to include digital literacy in your program.

After developing your content standards textbook-based curriculum, explore the [USCIS Building a Course Syllabus](#) idea board. Building your program's curriculum and syllabus will require initial effort but you will only have to do this once. After preliminary development, you can then refine and adapt your curriculum as your program grows.

### Step 4: Acquire Classroom Supplies and Supplemental Materials

As part of developing your program's curriculum, you will need to acquire a variety of supplemental materials to support your textbook and ensure all of the [USCIS Content Standards](#) are covered in your course. We suggest exploring the USCIS website for a wealth of instructional materials and resources available on

the Citizenship Resource Center, including lesson plans and activities at [uscis.gov/lessons](https://uscis.gov/lessons) that can be used to supplement your textbook. Most textbooks will need to be supplemented with instructional materials on the N-400 and naturalization interview, which are imperative to successful naturalization but not found in many citizenship textbooks on the market.

In addition to primary instructional materials, you might want to consider purchasing erasable white boards and dry erase markers for your classroom, as well as pens, pencils, and paper for students, and other instructional materials for use in your program. Since digital literacy is a necessary element of your course, and tablets and some laptops have become more affordable, consider purchasing at least one tablet for your class if your budget permits. Purchasing even one tablet for your class will help you improve your students' digital literacy. If your budget is limited and you cannot afford to purchase tablets or laptops, have students use their smartphones and small dry erase boards to mimic writing on a tablet. Between the [USCIS Content Standards, Sample Curriculum](#) and [Curriculum Guide](#), available on the Citizenship Resource Center, as well as outside materials, you will have no trouble developing a curriculum and gathering all necessary instructional materials to suit the needs of your learners and community.

## Part Four: Funding and Partnerships

### Step 5: Pursue and Gain Funding Sources

Even with a solid programmatic structure and course curriculum, you will most likely still need funding to build and sustain your program. There are a number of potential costs in developing and sustaining your program. Start-up costs could include everything from promoting your program to purchasing textbooks and supplies. Sustained costs could include paying rent and utilities and purchasing bus passes, as well as recruitment and retention efforts for staff, volunteers, and students. Before starting your fundraising, determine how much capital you will need to build and sustain your program. On **page 12**, you can find a sample budget template to adapt to your fundraising efforts. Although there are costs associated with providing classes, there are also a variety of ways to finance your program.

You can learn about federal government grant opportunities at [grants.gov](https://grants.gov). Additionally, USCIS administers a federal grant funding opportunity each year, depending on the availability of funds. To learn more about USCIS' grant program, visit [uscis.gov/grants](https://uscis.gov/grants). If you are new to fundraising, other organizations, such as the Foundation Center located at [foundationcenter.org](https://foundationcenter.org), provide resources and training on fundraising, proposal writing, and program planning. Furthermore, books on grant writing and fundraising are

also available at local public libraries and bookstores. For most programs, it will be a combination of funding sources that allows the program to thrive.

Programs that do not receive federal or state funding can generate financial support through fundraising or other activities. Many programs develop relationships with local businesses that sponsor activities by providing advertising or donating supplies. Businesses may even house your program if they feel their employees or patrons can directly benefit from it. Crowd-source fundraising websites can also help you acquire the capital you need to build and sustain your program.

### Step 6: Develop a Network of Referral and Support Agencies

Developing a strong network of referral and support agencies is important to your program's success. After completing your initial community needs assessment, identify services from other organizations that could support your program. Those partnerships can allow you to offer additional support services to your students and to create a directory of referral agencies for those students who need assistance not offered by your program. Through ongoing networking and collaboration, organizations will also be able to refer prospective volunteers, staff, or students to your program.

If your program does not offer legal services, be wary of fraudulent immigration agencies; you should only refer students to authorized immigration practitioners. The USCIS Avoid Scams webpage at [uscis.gov/avoid-scams](https://uscis.gov/avoid-scams), has information on where to find organizations with DOJ-accredited staff or a licensed immigration attorney. Your teachers, tutors, and volunteers should never try to counsel students on their own. Many students will require legal services to properly submit their Form N-400, so developing partnerships with authorized organizations will ensure that your students receive all the support they need. You can use the [USCIS Find Help in Your Community](#) webpage on the Citizenship Resource Center to find authorized organizations in your area.

English as a Second Language (ESL) literacy programs can be valuable resources for your program. Forging partnerships with such programs will help students who need higher-level English in order to participate fully in a citizenship course. You will be able to refer students with limited English to local ESL programs, which in turn can encourage students to pursue citizenship after reaching the necessary language level. Those who start in the literacy program can later be referred to your program. On **page 13**, you will find a networking and partnership tool to use as you develop a referral list for your program.

## Part Five: Staff Recruitment, Hiring, and Training

### Step 7: Recruit and Hire Staff

Lawyer(s), Teacher(s), Administrative Support Staff, Program Coordinator, etc.

Hiring qualified and experienced staff to run your program is vital to its success. USCIS has developed products to help identify key competencies to consider as you hire staff and support their professional development. These resources include [The Professional Development Guide for Adult Citizenship Educators](#) and the [Adult Citizenship Education Program Coordinator Skills and Knowledge Guide](#). You can use these resources to develop job postings and evaluate potential hires.

By using these resources and hiring trained and experienced staff, you will help professionalize the field of adult citizenship education, which benefits not only your program and staff, but also the students and community you serve. In addition, it will help make your program more competitive when applying for grants or other funding. Experienced staff will benefit from compensation that matches their level of expertise, and students will be taught by the best possible teachers in a professional environment.

### Step 8: Recruit and Onboard Volunteers

For most programs, volunteers can be just as important to the success of the program as paid staff. The [Using Volunteers to Enhance Your Adult Citizenship Program](#) idea board will provide ideas on how to use volunteers to enrich your program. Ideally, volunteers will be able to supplement teacher-led instruction. Volunteers can be tutors, conversation partners, and/or classroom aides. Volunteers can also assist with legal services by supporting a lawyer or DOJ-accredited representative you have on staff. Volunteers may assist with administering tests, after completing any necessary training, or handle administrative duties such as answering the phone, assisting with intake and registration, and filing. If you have a large pool of volunteers, consider hiring a volunteer coordinator to work with and manage them.

Once you determine what your program needs, recruit volunteers with the specific skills to meet those needs. Let prospective volunteers know what kind of help you are seeking and match their interests and abilities with your programmatic needs. You can adapt and use the sample volunteer position description and sample volunteer agreement form on [pages 14 and 15](#). There are many ways to begin recruiting efforts. Check with local programs for referrals. Word-of-mouth can help raise awareness of your need for volunteers. In addition, your program director or

coordinator could present at community events.

Consider searching for volunteers from other organizations and populations:

- Local undergraduate and graduate TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) programs
- Law schools
- Retired professionals
- Former students (once your program is up and running)
- Community volunteer referral programs

List your volunteer opportunities at [nationalservice.gov](http://nationalservice.gov).

This website promotes volunteer service by partnering with national service programs and connecting individuals with opportunities. As one of the largest volunteer service databases in the country, it serves as an excellent starting point for posting your volunteer opportunities. On [pages 14 and 15](#) you will find a sample volunteer position description and volunteer agreement form to use as you recruit and orient volunteers.

### Step 9: Orient and Train Staff and Volunteers

Once you have acquired staff and volunteers for your program, make sure they are prepared to carry out the tasks assigned to them. The first step is to provide them with an orientation before they begin working, so they can learn about what services you provide and what to expect from being a part of your program.

USCIS has [Online Volunteer Training](#) modules to equip volunteers with the basic skills and knowledge necessary to help them assist in your citizenship classroom. Volunteers can view the [USCIS Classroom Management Videos](#) to help them better understand and employ classroom management strategies. Additionally, the English Language Learner University at [lincs.ed.gov](http://lincs.ed.gov) is a valuable training resource from the U.S. Department of Education that serves to enhance the skills of educators working in the field. Furthermore, visit [uscis.gov/teachertraining](http://uscis.gov/teachertraining) for a list of free teacher training seminars in your area. USCIS offers training opportunities throughout the year around the country.

## Part Six: Final Curriculum and Lesson Plan Development

### Step 10: Use Course Curriculum to Develop Lesson Plans

Developing a complete set of lesson plans before starting classes is ambitious, but by doing so you can ensure that all necessary content is covered during a class cycle and that the content is delivered consistently across class sections and instructors. Lesson plans should align with your program's curriculum and [USCIS Content Standards](#). Teachers can create

their own lesson plans or adapt and supplement textbooks with existing USCIS lesson plans and activities. Encourage teachers and tutors to tailor whichever lesson plans they choose to meet the educational needs of their students.

There are three content areas to be covered in each adult citizenship education class: civics, ESL, and the naturalization process/N-400/interview. On **page 23**, you will find a sample lesson plan template, which will help ensure all three content areas are covered in each class. The Citizenship Resource Center provides materials to help you provide thematic instruction that is guided by Brain-Based, Adult-Education, and TESOL best practices.

## Part Seven: Program Promotion and Student Recruitment

### Step 11: Develop and Implement a Student Recruitment Strategy

After you have found suitable staff and volunteers to run your program, you will need to recruit and enroll students to fill your classroom. To do so, consider the needs of the people you want to serve. Refer back to your community needs assessment and determine if there are people that your program should target due to unmet demand for services. This population could include older immigrants, refugees, or perhaps a new population of immigrants who have recently settled in your area and need assistance.

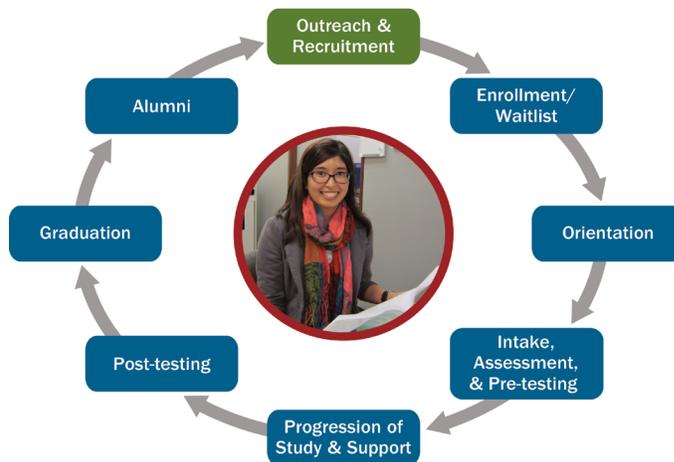
There are several ways to advertise your program to prospective students, and it is important to remember that recruitment is an ongoing process. Give your program sufficient time to recruit enough students to meet your program's goals. Then, continue recruitment efforts throughout the year to generate interest and maintain your program's reputation in the community. You can use the [USCIS Marketing Your Program](#) idea board, and other marketing materials at [uscis.gov/citizenshipawareness](https://uscis.gov/citizenshipawareness), to determine how best to advertise your program. There are many ways you can promote your program, including flyers, community presentations, media advertisements, social media, referrals, and, of course, word of mouth.

## Program Implementation Phase

Take a moment to look at and congratulate yourself on all your hard work and accomplishments before even entering into the classroom. Hopefully, this guide helps explain that adult citizenship education is much more than just helping students memorize the answers to the civics questions. It is a comprehensive effort to help lawful permanent residents work through all parts of the naturalization process,

from even before initial application through successful naturalization and beyond. Now that you have progressed through the development phase of building your adult citizenship education program, you are ready to implement it! The second phase of this program development guide will walk you through the steps to implement your program. As you do so, you will want to think about your program from a student's perspective. The Adult Citizenship Student Life Cycle diagram illustrates how a student might engage with your program.

### Sample Adult Citizenship Student Life Cycle



## Part Eight: Student Onboarding

### Step 12: Provide Holistic Orientation to Promote Retention

After promoting your program and recruiting students, the next step is to provide an orientation to introduce students to the various classes, teachers, and services available at your organization. Many students are anxious about the naturalization process and may not have been in a classroom for many years. Having an orientation that allows them to engage with your program in an informal setting will help set a positive tone for your course. A comprehensive orientation can also go a long way in terms of student retention. To help you with this process, USCIS developed an idea board on [Providing Holistic Orientation to Promote Retention](#). It is important to remember that orientation should be a separate event that takes place before intake, registration, and assessment.

### Step 13: Conduct Student Screening, Intake, and Pre-Testing

Once students have been orientated to your program, it is time to screen, register, and place them in an appropriate class and offer any other supplemental services. Screening and intake are the first parts of this process. It helps if a program staff member meets one-on-one with prospective students to fill out intake paperwork and obtain relevant

contact and background information. Include personal, educational, and employment goals, special needs, and schedule availability. You can also find out if students are working and have families, where they are from, what languages they speak, and how many years of formal schooling they have. All of this information will help you tailor your program to meet your students' needs. Fees may also be collected during the intake and registration process. Some programs charge nominal fees to cover educational materials or legal services.

You can find sample needs assessment, intake, student contract, and placement forms to adapt and use for your program on **pages 17, 19, 21 and 22**. Before students leave the intake or placement session, provide them with appropriate program information in writing to let them know when to return for classes or for an appointment to meet with legal service staff, if applicable. Be sure the information is clear and at their language level. Conduct placement testing either at intake and registration or on a specific date. Try to avoid conducting pre-testing on the first day of class. There are a variety of assessments for measuring your students' current English proficiency and educational attainment levels online.

You should select assessments that suit your program's needs. Informal and formal (standardized) assessments help identify the areas in which students need help and the subjects they want to study. These assessments can aid in making decisions about your curriculum and instruction, and assist students in setting short- and long-term learning goals. Assessing students at the beginning of a class cycle will allow you to place them in the correct class or to refer them to an outside program if your program cannot currently serve them.

The U.S. Department of Education maintains a list of National Reporting System (NRS) approved English tests in the Federal Register Notice at [federalregister.gov](http://federalregister.gov). While initially your program may not be able to invest in commercially produced standardized tests, consider using them in the future, particularly if you plan to expand your program and seek funding that requires performance reporting. Whether or not your program uses a standardized test, you should conduct an ESL assessment at the beginning of each class session. There are free ESL assessments available online and through publishers.

## Part Nine: Class Cycle

### Step 14: Start and Conduct Class(es)

Now that you have a program with high-quality standards, a textbook-based curriculum with aligned lesson plans, and staff and students, you are now ready to start your

classes! Each class cycle should have a minimum of 40 contact hours that utilize the principles and practices of both Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) and Brain-Based Adult Education. There are many methods and activities your teachers can use to provide high-quality instruction. Encourage instructors to try different approaches to determine what works best for them, their students, and your program. To help facilitate instruction, USCIS has developed a one-stop-shop of resources that teachers, tutors, and volunteers can use to provide solid adult citizenship classroom instruction. No matter what part of the naturalization test or process you are teaching, USCIS has something to offer. These educational products, and more, can be found in the Educators section of the Citizenship Resource Center and include:

- [Civics Questions and Answers for the Naturalization Test](#) in multiple languages
- Videos including the [USCIS Naturalization Interview and Test](#) (including a teacher's guide and lesson plans), [Becoming a U.S. Citizen: An Overview of the Naturalization Process](#), and [A Promise of Freedom: An Introduction to U.S. History and Civics for Immigrants](#)
- Instructional materials covering the [English Vocabulary for the Naturalization Test](#), including flash cards, vocabulary lists, and vocabulary word strips
- Study booklets and documents, including [Preparing for the Naturalization Test: A Pocket Study Guide](#) (in English and Spanish), [The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States](#), and [Learning About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons for the Naturalization Test](#) (geared to advanced or fluent English speakers)
- [Civics Flash Cards for the Naturalization Test](#) in both English and Spanish
- [Interactive Practice Tests](#) on Understanding Commands for the Naturalization Interview, Vocabulary for the Naturalization Interview, the Civics Practice Test, as well as [Preparing for the Oath](#) (an online learning tool developed by USCIS and the Smithsonian National Museum of American History)
- [Audio Files](#) that provide the civics test questions and answers with downloadable MP3 audio (in both English and Spanish)
- [Adaptable Teaching Tools](#) that provide activity ideas to help students practice what they learn in class
- Flash cards and teaching strategies that cover [Famous Americans on the Civics Test](#)
- [Tip Sheets](#), [Idea Boards](#), and [podcasts](#) on relevant instructional topics
- [Understanding Key Concepts Found in Form N-400, Application for Naturalization: A Guide for Adult Citizenship Teachers](#)
- [USA Learns Online Citizenship Course](#)

### **Step 15: Conduct Post-Testing**

After you have completed a class cycle (of between 40-60 contact hours), you should assess student outcomes. When using a formal assessment, such as a standardized test, it is recommended to post-test after a certain number of instructional hours to determine educational gains. As mentioned previously, you can find a list of NRS approved English tests in the Federal Register Notice at [federalregister.gov](http://federalregister.gov). Whether or not your program uses a standardized test, you should conduct an assessment at the end of each class cycle. USCIS has developed a tip sheet with *Strategies for Improving Post-Test Rates in a Citizenship Program*. Using ESL and/or civic knowledge pre- and post-tests will allow you to demonstrate the learning gains of your students, potentially secure funding, and help teachers assess the readiness of their learners for the naturalization interview and test.

## **Part Ten: Program and Course Evaluations**

### **Step 16: Employ Student Course Evaluations at the End of Each Class Cycle**

In addition to measuring educational outcomes, you should determine how well you are meeting the particular needs of your students. One way to do this is to employ student course evaluations at the end of each class cycle. This tool will help determine what your program is doing right, as well as areas for possible improvement. You should provide a way for students to provide feedback on the course and evaluate the program and volunteers anonymously. You can tailor the sample student program evaluation form on **page 24** to meet your program's needs. There are also online evaluation tools to gather the evaluation data you seek. Evaluation data will not only help you refine and enhance your program, but will also allow students to gain a sense of ownership and agency in their educational efforts.

### **Step 17: Employ Volunteer Program Evaluations at the End of Each Class Cycle**

It is important that you encourage volunteers to provide feedback as well. To do so, you could hold volunteer meetings, or provide a suggestion box. Tailor and use the sample volunteer evaluation form on **page 25** to meet your program's needs. Otherwise, consider using an online evaluation tool to ensure your volunteers have a voice in your ongoing program development. This evaluation data will not only enhance your program, but also make sure you and your volunteers are getting the most out of their time and efforts with your program.

## **Part Eleven: Celebration**

### **Step 18: Hold Staff and Volunteer Appreciation Events and Recognize Student Achievements**

It is important to thank your staff and volunteers and to recognize your students' achievements. Consider some simple offerings to acknowledge their work, such as a certificate, pen, tote bag, or t-shirt, which local businesses may be willing to donate. You might present these at a social gathering or awards ceremony. Potlucks are a great way to highlight the various backgrounds and cultures in your classroom and celebrate both student and staff achievement. Moreover, encourage your staff and volunteers to attend a naturalization ceremony when one of your students naturalizes. Attending a naturalization ceremony can be a unique and moving experience for both staff and students.

## **Part Twelve: Reflection and Ongoing Professional Development**

### **Step 19: Reflect on Evaluation Data with Staff and Volunteers to Further Program Development**

Program development is not a linear process; rather, it is a revolving and continual effort of development, evaluation, and enhancement. While the bulk of your work will be completed during the initial program development phase, successful programs continually assess what works for them and change what does not. Ongoing effort will help your program continue to grow and evolve to serve ever-changing demographics and community needs.

After each class cycle, review the objectives you set when designing the program and see how much progress you have accomplished. Examine multiple performance indicators, such as staff performance, educational gains, volunteer and student attendance and overall retention. You can use the *Elements of Program Quality for Adult Citizenship Education* as an evaluative guide, in addition to evaluation data and educational outcomes to make improvements. Remember, it is not enough to collect evaluation data. Be sure to use that information to celebrate successes and make necessary changes to ensure you continue to provide high-quality adult citizenship education.

### **Step 20: Provide Ongoing Professional Development and Training Opportunities for Staff and Volunteers**

Staff and volunteer professional development should be continuous and systematic. Keep in mind that professional development opportunities should expand beyond just training. Consider having tutors observe an experienced teacher or have staff pursuing DOJ accreditation shadow a

staff lawyer. Offer as many opportunities as you can to allow your staff and volunteers to gain the knowledge and skills that will further their professional development.

One great way for your staff to train and develop is to attend a USCIS training seminar. USCIS offers training opportunities throughout the year all around the country. While all USCIS training seminars are free, offering to pay for staff's professional development (maybe through travel reimbursement or paid training hours) demonstrates your appreciation of their efforts and ensures they are given the opportunity to grow professionally. This contribution will both facilitate their growth, as well as the growth of your program.

In addition to in-person trainings, USCIS has developed various other professional development tools, including the *Professional Development Guide for Adult Citizenship Educators*. You can use this guide to identify areas of strength and areas for growth. You can use its rubrics to create a systematic plan for professional development. The Citizenship Resource Center has professional development *Tips Sheets and Idea Boards* on topics, such as:

- *Using the Professional Development Guide for Adult Citizenship Educators*
- *Creating Holistic Learning Activities in the Citizenship Classroom*
- *Providing Citizenship Education in the Workplace*
- *Managing Student Levels in a Multi-Level Classroom*
- *Teaching Vocabulary in the Adult Citizenship Classroom*
- *Teaching Reading Skills for the Naturalization Interview and Test*
- *Teaching Writing Skills for the Naturalization Interview and Test*
- *Essential Ways to Enhance Learning for Older Students in the Adult Citizenship Education Classroom*

USCIS also has developed professional development podcasts on a variety of topics:

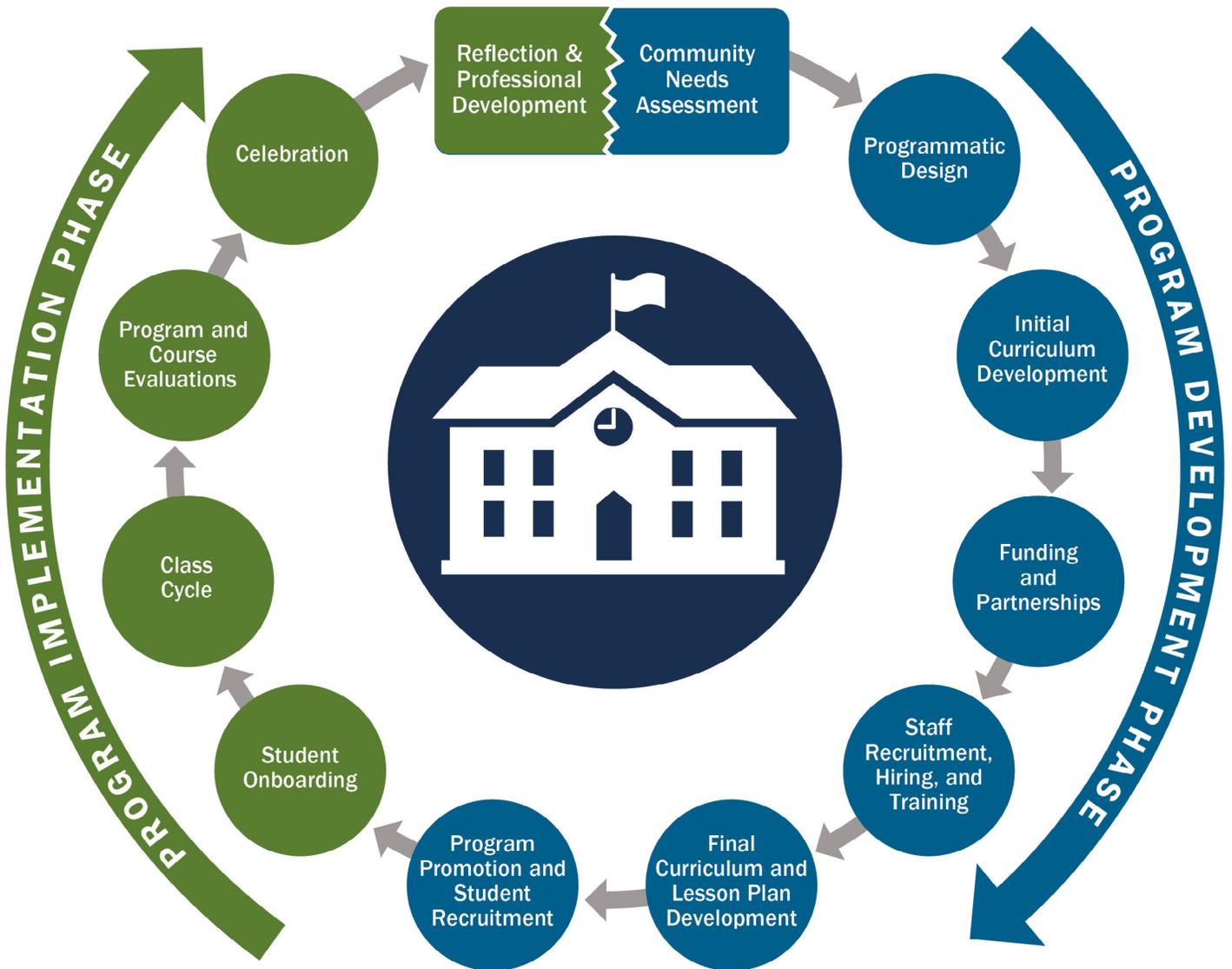
- *Instructional Tips on Interrogative Pronouns*
- *Using Dictation to Prepare Students for the Writing Test*
- *Building Vocabulary for the Naturalization Test*
- *Using Sentence Structure to Build Comprehension and Confidence*

In addition to USCIS resources, the U.S. Department of Education's Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) also provides free information on professional development opportunities at [lincs.ed.gov](https://lincs.ed.gov). As a result of initial and ongoing programmatic and professional development, you can feel confident that you will provide your staff, students, and community with the highest-quality adult citizenship education program possible! But there is one more thing...

## Bonus Step: Rejoice!!!

Congratulations! If you have worked your way through this entire guide, it is likely that you have developed or are on your way to developing a successful program that meets the professional USCIS standards in a way that supports your program, staff, students, and community. Celebrate! Your work is invaluable to your community and country. Since program development is a continual process, the USCIS Division of Citizenship Education and Training is here to provide ongoing technical assistance at every step of the way. As your program grows, please contact us with any questions you might have at [Office.of.Citizenship@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Office.of.Citizenship@uscis.dhs.gov). We are always here to help. Good luck!

# USCIS PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT WHEEL



## SAMPLE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Directions: Research service-providing agencies in your community and use this tool to record each organization currently in your area. Be sure to research immigrant and refugee-serving organizations, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), refugee resettlement, employment, literacy,

legal, and citizenship programs. Use a separate copy of this tool for each organization you find. After your research, you will have detailed information on services already being provided in your area, the organizations providing those services, and what service gaps your program can fill.

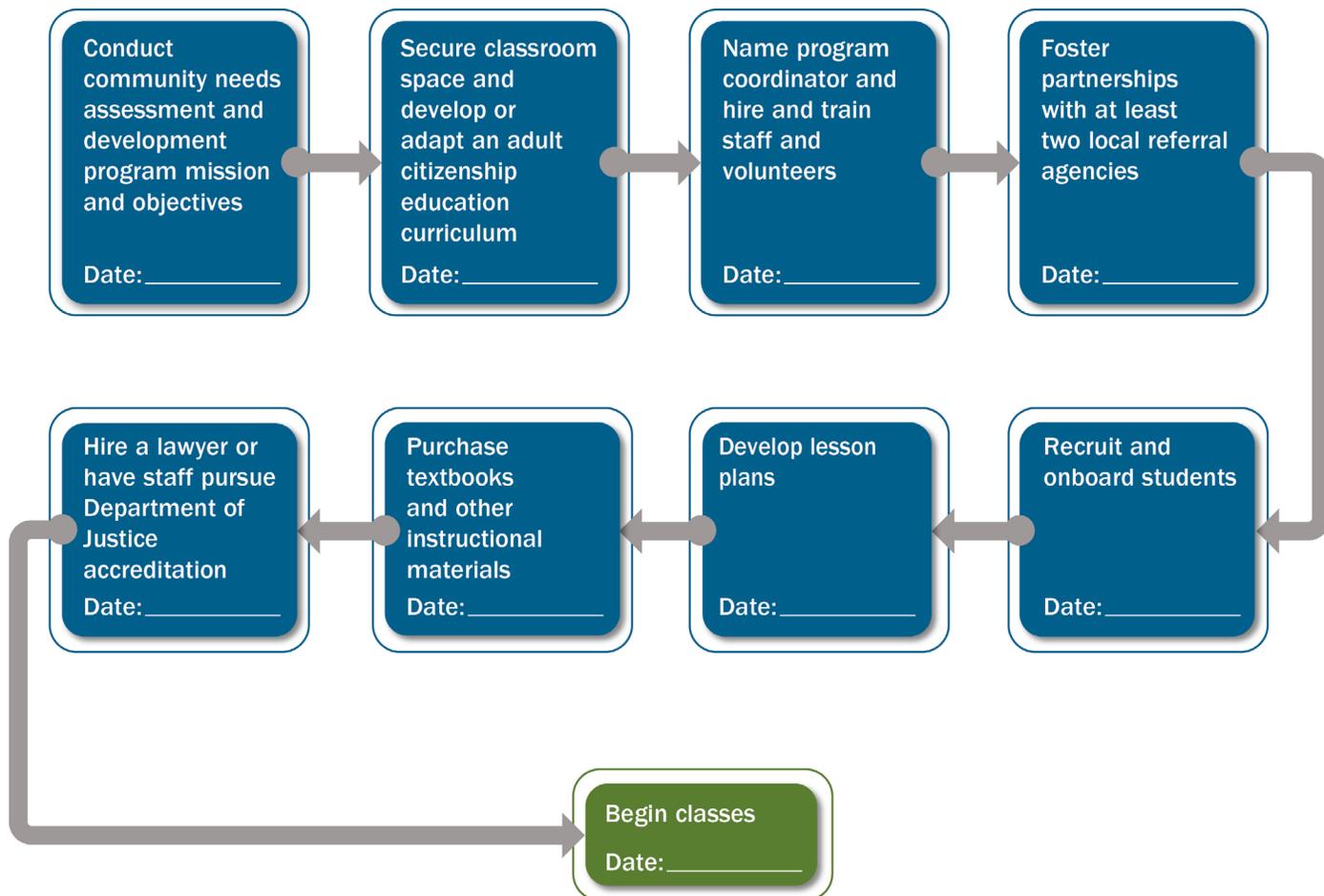
Agency name	
Street address	
Phone number	
Website	
Target population	
ESL classes offered: Level/s, Schedule	
Citizenship classes offered, Level/s, Schedule	
Legal services offered	
Counseling services offered	
Childcare offered	
Has a waitlist	
Referral services offered	
Other services offered	

## SAMPLE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Directions: Use the timeline below to create deadlines to follow as you create a plan for developing your program.

Adapt the items listed in the timeline to suit your particular programmatic needs.

### Adult Citizenship Program Development Timeline



## SAMPLE BUDGET TEMPLATE

Directions: Use this sample budget template to make a financial plan for your program. Adapt the template to reflect your program's actual revenue streams and operational costs.

Having an idea of how much you currently take in versus how much the program will cost helps determine how much money you will have to raise to make your program a success.

<b>Revenue Streams:</b>	<b>Estimated:</b>	<b>Actual:</b>	<b>Difference:</b>
Grants:			
Service fees:			
Other revenue streams:			
<b>Total Revenue:</b>			
<b>Operational Costs:</b>			
Rent and utilities:			
Staff salaries:			
Legal services:			
Textbooks:			
Classroom materials:			
Computers and tablets:			
Printing:			
Childcare:			
Transport cards:			
Advertising:			
Other:			
<b>Total Operation Cost:</b>			
<b>Total Revenue – Total Operation Cost =</b>			

## SAMPLE NETWORKING AND REFERRAL TOOL

Directions: Use the tool below to highlight the services your program can offer and identify outside agencies where you can refer your clients. Using the information you gathered during your initial community needs assessment, identify agencies to refer clients to for those services your program

does not offer. Networking and building connections with those referral agencies helps ensure that your clients are eligible to receive services from each and that those agencies will refer clients to you in return.

**Literacy Development**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**ESL**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Employment**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Legal**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Financial Literacy**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Childcare**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Adult Citizenship Education  
Networking and  
Referral Tool**

**Volunteer**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Digital Literacy**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Social Services**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Transportation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Other**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## SAMPLE ADULT CITIZENSHIP VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Directions: Adapt this sample volunteer position description to meet your volunteer needs. Create a new job description for each type of volunteer position you need. Include what is expected, so you get prospective volunteers with the skills and desire necessary to work in various roles. This description can be adapted for classroom, outreach, assessment, or services volunteers.

### **Position Title: Adult Citizenship Education Tutor (Unpaid)**

**Qualifications:** Ability to speak, read, and write English with a high level of proficiency; respectful of cultural differences; flexible; desire to develop and improve tutoring skills.

**Training:** Participate in an eight-hour training workshop and minimum of four hours of additional training yearly.

**Time Commitment:** Minimum of four months; expect to spend at least one hour of preparation and two hours of tutoring per week.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Assist assigned student(s) with setting goals.
- Provide one-on-one instruction using prepared lessons for each tutoring session.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before each tutoring session.
- Implement techniques provided in tutor training and tutor manual.
- Participate in performance evaluations, including lesson reviews and observations by coordinator.
- Provide attendance roster and progress reports to coordinator each month.
- Notify volunteer coordinator or program director in advance (at least 24 hours, if possible) if you are unable to tutor a session.
- Be willing to consider participating in additional program activities and fundraisers.

#### **Benefits:**

- Opportunity to make an important contribution to your community, and your country.
- Opportunity to learn new skills while helping others.
- Opportunity to meet people in your community and from around the world.

## SAMPLE ADULT CITIZENSHIP VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Directions: Adapt this sample volunteer agreement to meet your volunteer needs. Create a new agreement for each volunteer position. Include what is expected in order to get prospective volunteers with the skills and desire necessary to work in whatever roles your program needs. This agreement can be adapted for classroom, outreach, assessment, or services volunteers. Each volunteer agreement should match its corresponding position description.

### **Duties of Volunteer Adult Citizenship Tutor:**

- I agree to tutor for a minimum of four continuous months.
- I will attend eight hours of training before I begin tutoring.
- I will participate in four hours of additional training during the school year.
- I will tutor for a minimum of four to six hours per week, depending upon the class schedule.
- I will spend at least one hour preparing for each two-hour class session.
- I will notify the volunteer coordinator or program director if I must miss a tutoring session, so that a substitute can be arranged.
- I will adhere to the program's standards and curriculum.
- I will participate in performance evaluations, including observations by coordinator as outlined in the position description.
- I understand that I may be asked to perform additional duties such as participating in fundraising efforts; assisting with student recruitment, orientation, registration, and placement; and representing the organization at community events.

Volunteer Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Coordinator or Program Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE ADULT CITIZENSHIP STUDENT LIFE CYCLE



## SAMPLE STUDENT INTAKE FORM

### Adult Citizenship Education Program

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Details:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  Male  Female

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: mm \_\_\_\_\_ / dd \_\_\_\_\_ / yyyy \_\_\_\_\_

Alien number: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies or medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Details:**

Marital status:  Married  Single  Divorced  Widowed  Declined to state

Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_ Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Day care:  has children in day care  needs day care for children  N/A

Number of family members living in the home: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years living in the United States: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_

**Education and Employment Details:**

Has student taken citizenship classes before?  yes  no

If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLE STUDENT INTAKE FORM (cont.)**

When? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

What level did the student reach? \_\_\_\_\_

Has student taken English as a Second Language classes before? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

When? \_\_\_\_\_

For how long? \_\_\_\_\_

What level did the student reach? \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) student speaks: \_\_\_\_\_

Language spoken most at home: \_\_\_\_\_

Does student read and write in that language? \_\_\_\_ read \_\_\_\_ write

Highest level of school or grade completed outside the United States: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest level of school or grade completed in the United States: \_\_\_\_\_

Currently employed? \_\_\_\_\_

Place of employment and type of work: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Student's availability for class:</b>						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning						
Afternoon						
Evening						

## SAMPLE STUDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Directions: Use this sample student needs assessment tool to gauge which educational and supplemental services your students will require. For each box, ask your student to identify a goal or goals they have for each topic. Then identify

what progress they have already made towards each goal. This information will help you tailor educational and other services to your students.

<b>Further Education</b> _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Learning English</b> _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Employment</b> _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Citizenship</b> _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Holistic Student Needs Assessment</b> 	<b>Financial Literacy</b> _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Children</b> _____ _____ _____ _____		<b>Housing</b> _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Digital Literacy</b> _____ _____ _____ _____		<b>Health Care</b> _____ _____ _____ _____
<b>Transportation</b> _____ _____ _____ _____	<b>Other</b> _____ _____ _____ _____	

## SAMPLE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN

Directions: Adapt and use this template to develop an individualized education plan with each of your students. Write a student's name in the center of the tool. At the top of each section, write a goal your student has for that item. Then,

at the bottom, write what progress they have already made towards that goal. In the middle, write what interventions are needed to help your student achieve that goal, as well as a timeline for achieving the goal.

The form is a large circle divided into five colored segments by lines radiating from the center. The segments are labeled as follows:

- CITIZENSHIP** (Red segment, top-left)
- CAREER** (Dark Blue segment, top-right)
- FAMILY** (Green segment, right)
- OTHER** (Dark Grey segment, bottom)
- ENGLISH** (Blue segment, left)

In the center of the circle is a rounded rectangular box containing the text "Name: \_\_\_\_\_".

Each of the five segments contains several horizontal lines for writing. The "OTHER" segment at the bottom has the most lines, while the "CITIZENSHIP" and "CAREER" segments have fewer.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

## SAMPLE STUDENT LEARNING CONTRACT

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

**I will:**

- attend all classes.
- arrive on-time for class.
- text or call my teacher if I have to miss class.
- participate in class.
- practice English outside of class.
- bring textbook and notebook to class.
- be respectful to classmates and teachers.
- not use my cell phone for personal calls or social media in class.
- take the English and Civics pre- and post-test.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



**The program will:**

- conduct an orientation for all new students.
- provide free citizenship preparation classes using a curriculum.
- employ qualified teachers and use educational resources at students' learning level.
- provide a free textbook for class and home use.
- provide free accredited legal help for filling out and submitting Form N-400, Application for Naturalization online.
- ensure that student records are confidential.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Signature

## SAMPLE STUDENT PLACEMENT FORM

### Adult Citizenship Education Program

Program address: \_\_\_\_\_

Program phone number and email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of registration: \_\_\_\_\_

Class level: \_\_\_\_\_

Class starts: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Class location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Class schedule:**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Class time:						

Intake date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement testing date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

## SAMPLE LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE

**Theme of Lesson:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ESL Level:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Content Focus:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ESL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Civics:** \_\_\_\_\_ **N-400:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials Needed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Content Standards/Foundation Skills Covered:** \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER GUIDE				
OBJECTIVES/ Students will be able to...		ESL	CIVICS	N-400
<b>WARM-UP/ REVIEW</b> (10-15 min)				
<b>MAIN LESSON PLAN</b>  <b>FORMAT:</b> Present Content-> Activity-> Comprehension Check-> REPEAT (90-100 min)  <b>Option 1:</b> ESL (30 min) Civics (30 min) N-400 (30 min)  <b>Option 2:</b> Thematic instruction blending all three content areas (90 min)				
<b>SUMMARY/ REVIEW</b> (10-15 min)				



## SAMPLE VOLUNTEER EVALUATION FORM

Directions: Adapt this volunteer evaluation form to suit your roles you asked your volunteers to fill. Create a separate program's needs. Change the evaluation items to match the form for every volunteer position you have.

Please answer the following questions regarding your volunteer experience. We will use your feedback to improve our adult citizenship education program.

1 = strongly disagree      2 = disagree      3 = neutral      4 = agree      5 = strongly agree

1. The training and information I received was relevant and useful in preparing me to volunteer in this program.      1   2   3   4   5

2. I have/had access to the materials and equipment needed to perform my volunteer service effectively.      1   2   3   4   5

3. The roles and responsibilities of my volunteer position are/were clearly defined.      1   2   3   4   5

4. Staff members or other volunteers support(ed) me in my efforts.      1   2   3   4   5

5. The program recognizes/recognized my volunteer efforts.      1   2   3   4   5

6. The space is/was conducive to the activities.      1   2   3   4   5

7. I enjoy(ed) volunteering with this program.      1   2   3   4   5

8. I would recommend this program to others seeking a volunteer experience.      1   2   3   4   5

9. What do you like about this program?

10. What recommendations do you have to improve the experience for volunteers?

## RESOURCE SECTION

### USCIS

Citizenship Resource Center: [uscis.gov/citizenship](https://uscis.gov/citizenship)

### Additional Resources

Preparing for the Oath: [americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship](https://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship)

U.S. Department of Justice: [justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation](https://justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation)

U.S. Federal Digital Literacy: [digitalliteracy.gov](https://digitalliteracy.gov)

U.S. Federal Grant Opportunities: [grants.gov](https://grants.gov)

USA Learns Citizenship Course: [usalearns.org](https://usalearns.org)

Volunteer Opportunities: [nationalservice.gov](https://nationalservice.gov)









**U.S. Citizenship  
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**[uscis.gov/citizenship](https://uscis.gov/citizenship)**

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