

A Question and Answer Page for Foreign-Born

Questions on Americanization, Naturalization, Citizenship, Civil Rights and all matters of importance in regard to the necessary adjustments for foreign-born who have come here for the purpose of remaining permanently, will be answered promptly and as fully as possible, By Judge J. A. Buchanan, President Astoria Americanization Council in Astoria, and by H. J. Langoe, Editor The United American. Anyone asking a question may request that it be published under such pseudonym as he desires but the questioner must in all instances sign his correct name and address to the letter that accompanies the question. Anonymous questions will not be published or answered in this forum. People who are living in Astoria and vicinity may address their questions directly to Judge Buchanan.

Q.—I notice that an alien has many rights in this country. What are the direct advantages of becoming naturalized?
—Jacob B.

A.—A naturalized citizen of the United States has the following advantages over an alien:

1. He may vote at all elections for officers of the local, state and national governments, and in this state he may vote directly on the making or the repeal of state laws and community ordinances.

2. He may hold any public office in the United States, the same as a native born citizen, except the offices of President and Vice-President of the United States. An alien can not hold public office.

3. He can obtain passports to travel abroad under the protection of the United States flag. No protection in traveling abroad is offered by the United States to non-declarant aliens.

4. He may obtain title to government lands under the public land laws, both as to homesteads and mining claims.

5. He is entitled to income tax exemptions.

6. He is entitled to hunting and fishing licenses the same as a native-born citizen. He should study and understand the game laws, and the fishing laws of this state.

7. He may hold any position, public or private.

8. He may serve on juries in all courts.

9. He is entitled to all the other guarantees, privileges, and immunities given by the Constitution of the United States.
—J.A.B.

Q.—Will you mention some of the principal duties of a good citizen?
—W.W.W.

A.—Make use of your vote, and vote honestly and intelligently; the vote is the greatest gift that citizenship confers upon you; it is the most sacred right of a free people. Accept jury duty. Be ready and willing to defend the country in time of war. Pay taxes without attempt at evasion. Save regularly and invest your savings. Do not throw papers or rubbish in the streets or public parks. If camping or picnicking, see that all fires are extinguished, and that the grounds are left clean. Keep neat and clean the premises and streets around your own home. Obey and respect the laws, the courts, and court officers. Obey and respect officers of the United States and State Governments.

Respect and guard the flag. Uphold the Government and the Constitution of the United States and of the state you live in. Be useful and loyal to your town, city or community, to your state and to the Nation.
—J.A.B.

Q.—A friend of mine made his declaration to become a citizen, but died before he was actually naturalized. What rights have his widow and minor children?
—Anton Z.

A.—The widow and minor children of an alien who has made a declaration of intention to become a citizen but dies before he is naturalized, may themselves be naturalized without making a declaration of intention, if they fulfill the other requirements of the law.—J.A.B.

Q.—How many different people and nationalities may become citizens of the United States?
—John S.

A.—That I can not answer accurately, but in the night schools of Astoria during the past winter thirty-four different nationalities were represented. The total number in those schools during the present term was 388. All but three or four nationalities could become citizens by naturalization.
—J.A.B.

Q.—When was the law made requiring women to be naturalized?
—Nels G.

A.—The amended naturalization law, placing women on an equal footing with men, went into effect September 22, 1922. It is a natural outgrowth of the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.
—J.A.B.

Q.—If a native-born woman lost her citizenship by marrying an alien is it necessary that she be naturalized?
—John W.

A.—Yes. A native-born woman who lost her citizenship by reason of her marriage to an alien before Sept. 22, 1922, may be naturalized in the same way provided for alien women who marry citizens, or whose husbands are naturalized after Sept. 22, 1922, except that no certificate of arrival is required, if, during her married life she has resided in the United States.
—J.A.B.

Q.—Can a boy or a girl under twenty-one years of age apply for citizenship?
—George V.

A.—A boy or girl over eighteen years of age may receive first papers, that is,

make a declaration of intention to become a citizen, but the petition for final citizenship papers can not be filed until the boy or girl is twenty-one years of age. There must in all cases be at least two years between the declaration of intention and the petition for citizenship.
—J.A.B.

Q.—I have lost my first papers. Is there any way I can get them renewed?
—Axel T.

A.—Yes. You can get a duplicate from the clerk of the court where the first papers were issued, upon compliance with certain formalities and proof that the papers were lost. Forms for this purpose are provided by the clerk.
—J.A.B.

Q.—What races and nationalities are admissible to American citizenship?
—Edward Ihlen.

A.—Only immigrants of white people and origin can become naturalized. The American-born children of colored races and people who have obtained legitimate residence rights in America, obtain citizenship through their birth-right though their parents who cannot become naturalized are barred from American citizenship.
—H.J.L.

Q.—Can Japanese and Chinese become citizens of the United States?
—Ella Tren

A.—Not unless they were born in this country. Those who have immigrated into America may reside here permanently, but they cannot become naturalized.
—H.J.L.

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