

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE PASSING THE ENGLISH PART OF THE CITIZENSHIP EXAM

Most applicants for naturalization are required to demonstrate a basic knowledge of reading, writing, and speaking English. However, there are some exceptions to this requirement.

If one of the following is true for you, you don't have to take the English test and can have an interpreter at your interview:

- You are over 50 years old and have been a lawful permanent resident (or "green card" holder) for at least 20 years.
- You are over 55 years old and have been a lawful permanent resident (or "green card" holder) for at least 15 years.
- You have a disability and your doctor has completed a form (called an N-648 or "disability waiver") for you. This form is for people who have medical problems that prevent them from learning English. If your doctor has completed an N-648, it is a good idea to have someone trained to review N-648s look at it before it is sent to CIS (formerly called INS) with your naturalization application.

Remember:

- There are a lot of programs in Seattle to help people learn English. Also, there are some programs that provide one-on-one English instruction. You can get a list of these programs from your community organization.
- For naturalization, you don't have to show that you speak, read, and write English perfectly. You only need to show a basic knowledge.
- Please don't feel ashamed to ask your doctor to see whether you qualify for an N-648. Some people have medical problems that they don't know about. Some people also don't know whether their medical problems get in the way of learning. If you are having problems learning English, consider having your doctor look at the N-648 form to see if you qualify.

This material provides general information only and is current only as of the date it is written. To receive information on how this material may apply to a specific situation, you may wish to consult an immigration attorney or accredited representative. Northwest Immigrant Rights Project can provide naturalization information and legal assistance to persons of low income. For more information, call Kristen Kussmann at (206) 587 4009, or (800) 445 5771.