



May 4, 2023

PA-2023-16

## Policy Alert

SUBJECT: Removing Guidance Related to the 2020 Civics Test

### Purpose

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is updating policy guidance in the [USCIS Policy Manual](#) to remove references to the 2020 version of the civics test.

### Background

In general, applicants for naturalization must demonstrate a basic understanding of the English language and a knowledge and understanding of civics.<sup>1</sup> On December 1, 2020, USCIS implemented a revised naturalization civics test (“2020 civics test”). However, USCIS reverted to using the 2008 test on March 1, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

For a brief period of time, USCIS offered both the 2020 and 2008 versions of the test to accommodate certain applicants who may have already been studying for the 2020 test. However, USCIS no longer administers the 2020 civics test, therefore guidance related to this version of the test is no longer necessary. To reduce confusion and ensure that applicants prepare for the appropriate version of the test, USCIS is removing references in the Policy Manual to the 2020 civics test.

This guidance, contained in Volume 12 of the Policy Manual, is effective immediately. The guidance contained in the Policy Manual is controlling and supersedes any related prior guidance.

### Policy Highlights

- Removes guidance related to the 2020 civics test, affirming USCIS administers only the 2008 version of the civics test.
- Affirms that USCIS administers 10 questions from the general bank of 100 civics test questions, and accordingly, applicants need six correct answers to pass the civics test.

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<sup>1</sup> See [INA 312\(a\)](#). An applicant may be eligible for an exception to the educational requirements based on age and time as a lawful permanent resident. See [INA 312\(b\)](#). An applicant who has a physical or developmental disability or mental impairment may be eligible for a medical exception. See [INA 312\(b\)\(1\)](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [Revising Guidance on Naturalization Civics Educational Requirement](#), PA-2021-02, issued February 22, 2021.

- Affirms that USCIS asks questions from a list of 20 specially designated civics questions when administering the civics test to applicants who qualify for special consideration because they are age 65 or older and have been lawful permanent residents for at least 20 years.

### **Summary of Changes**

Affected Section: Volume 12 > Part E > Chapter 2 > Section E, Civics Portion of the Test

- Revises Subsection 1 (Civics Test) throughout.
- Revises second paragraph in Subsection 2 (Special Consideration) and removes all content following second paragraph within Subsection 2.

USCIS may also make other minor technical, stylistic, and conforming changes consistent with this update.

### **Citation**

Volume 12: Citizenship and Naturalization, Part E, English and Civics Testing and Exceptions, Chapter 2, English and Civics Testing [[12 USCIS-PM E.2](#)].