

## §§ 316.6-316.9 [Reserved]

## § 316.10 Good moral character.

(a) *Requirement of good moral character during the statutory period.* (1) An applicant for naturalization bears the burden of demonstrating that, during the statutorily prescribed period, he or she has been and continues to be a person of good moral character. This includes the period between the examination and the administration of the oath of allegiance.

(2) In accordance with section 101(f) of the Act, the Service shall evaluate claims of good moral character on a case-by-case basis taking into account the elements enumerated in this section and the standards of the average citizen in the community of residence. The Service is not limited to reviewing the applicant's conduct during the five years immediately preceding the filing of the application, but may take into consideration, as a basis for its determination, the applicant's conduct and acts at any time prior to that period, if the conduct of the applicant during the statutory period does not reflect that there has been reform of character from an earlier period or if the earlier conduct and acts appear relevant to a determination of the applicant's present moral character.

(b) *Finding of a lack of good moral character.* (1) An applicant shall be found to lack good moral character, if the applicant has been:

(i) Convicted of murder at any time; or

(ii) Convicted of an aggravated felony as defined in section 101(a)(43) of the Act on or after November 29, 1990.

(2) An applicant shall be found to lack good moral character if during the statutory period the applicant:

(i) Committed one or more crimes involving moral turpitude, other than a purely political offense, for which the applicant was convicted, except as specified in section 212(a)(2)(ii)(II) of the Act;

(ii) Committed two or more offenses for which the applicant was convicted and the aggregate sentence actually imposed was five years or more, provided that, if the offense was committed outside the United States, it was not a purely political offense;

(iii) Violated any law of the United States, any State, or any foreign country relating to a controlled substance, provided that the violation was not a single offense for simple possession of 30 grams or less of marijuana;

(iv) Admits committing any criminal act covered by paragraphs (b)(2) (i), (ii), or (iii) of this section for which there was never a formal charge, indictment, arrest, or conviction, whether committed in the United States or any other country;

(v) Is or was confined to a penal institution for an aggregate of 180 days pursuant to a conviction or convictions (provided that such confinement was not outside the United States due to a conviction outside the United States for a purely political offense);

(vi) Has given false testimony to obtain any benefit from the Act, if the testimony was made under oath or affirmation and with an intent to obtain an immigration benefit; this prohibition applies regardless of whether the information provided in the false testimony was material, in the sense that if given truthfully it would have rendered ineligible for benefits either the applicant or the person on whose behalf the applicant sought the benefit;

(vii) Is or was involved in prostitution or commercialized vice as described in section 212(a)(2)(D) of the Act;

(viii) Is or was involved in the smuggling of a person or persons into the United States as described in section 212(a)(6)(E) of the Act;

(ix) Has practiced or is practicing polygamy;

(x) Committed two or more gambling offenses for which the applicant was convicted;

(xi) Earns his or her income principally from illegal gambling activities; or

(xii) Is or was a habitual drunkard.

(3) Unless the applicant establishes extenuating circumstances, the applicant shall be found to lack good moral character if, during the statutory period, the applicant:

(i) Willfully failed or refused to support dependents;

(ii) Had an extramarital affair which tended to destroy an existing marriage; or

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(iii) Committed unlawful acts that adversely reflect upon the applicant's moral character, or was convicted or imprisoned for such acts, although the acts do not fall within the purview of §316.10(b) (1) or (2).

(c) *Proof of good moral character in certain cases*—(1) *Effect of probation or parole*. An applicant who has been on probation, parole, or suspended sentence during all or part of the statutory period is not thereby precluded from establishing good moral character, but such probation, parole, or suspended sentence may be considered by the Service in determining good moral character. An application will not be approved until after the probation, parole, or suspended sentence has been completed.

(2) *Full and unconditional executive pardon*—(i) *Before the statutory period*. An applicant who has received a full and unconditional executive pardon prior to the beginning of the statutory period is not precluded by §316.10(b)(1) from establishing good moral character provided the applicant demonstrates that reformation and rehabilitation occurred prior to the beginning of the statutory period.

(ii) *During the statutory period*. An applicant who receives a full and unconditional executive pardon during the statutory period is not precluded by §316.10(b)(2) (i) and (ii) from establishing good moral character, provided the applicant can demonstrate that extenuating and/or exonerating circumstances exist that would establish his or her good moral character.

(3) *Record expungement*—(i) *Drug offenses*. Where an applicant has had his or her record expunged relating to one of the narcotics offenses under section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(II) and section 241(a)(2)(B) of the Act, that applicant shall be considered as having been “convicted” within the meaning of §316.10(b)(2)(ii), or, if confined, as having been confined as a result of “conviction” for purposes of §316.10(b)(2)(iv).

(ii) *Moral turpitude*. An applicant who has committed or admits the commission of two or more crimes involving moral turpitude during the statutory period is precluded from establishing good moral character, even though the

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conviction record of one such offense has been expunged.

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### §316.11 Attachment to the Constitution; favorable disposition towards the good order and happiness.

(a) *General*. An applicant for naturalization must establish that during the statutorily prescribed period, he or she has been and continues to be attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States and favorably disposed toward the good order and happiness of the United States. Attachment implies a depth of conviction which would lead to active support of the Constitution. Attachment and favorable disposition relate to mental attitude, and contemplate the exclusion from citizenship of applicants who are hostile to the basic form of government of the United States, or who disbelieve in the principles of the Constitution.

(b) *Advocacy of peaceful change*. At a minimum, the applicant shall satisfy the general standard of paragraph (a) of this section by demonstrating an acceptance of the democratic, representational process established by the Constitution, a willingness to obey the laws which may result from that process, and an understanding of the means for change which are prescribed by the Constitution. The right to work for political change shall be consistent with the standards in paragraph (a) of this section only if the changes advocated would not abrogate the current Government and establish an entirely different form of government.

(c) *Membership in the Communist Party or any other totalitarian organization*. An applicant who is or has been a member of or affiliated with the Communist Party or any other totalitarian organization shall be ineligible for naturalization, unless the applicant's membership meets the exceptions in sections 313 and 335 of the Act and §313.4 of this chapter.

### §316.12 Applicant's legal incompetency during statutory period.

(a) *General*. An applicant who is legally competent at the time of the examination on the naturalization application and of the administration of the