



Fact Sheet

SECURING U.S. CITIZENSHIP FOR YOUR CHILD

Information for Adoptive Parents of Children Issued IH-4 and IR-4 Visas

WHY SHOULD I SECURE U.S. CITIZENSHIP FOR MY CHILD?

U.S. citizenship offers many benefits and important responsibilities including being able to:

- Obtain and travel with a U.S. passport;
- Vote in federal elections and serve on a jury after they turn age 18;
- Become eligible for certain federal jobs, benefits, grants, and scholarships; and
- Keep residency in the United States.

HOW CAN MY CHILD ACQUIRE U.S. CITIZENSHIP?

Your child may acquire U.S. citizenship under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), Section 320, if they meet the following conditions **before their 18th birthday**:

- Qualify as a child and meet requirements applicable to adopted children under INA 101(b)(1)(E), (F), or (G);
- Are admitted to the United States as a lawful permanent resident;
- Reside in the United States in the legal and physical custody of a U.S. citizen parent; and
- Have an adoption that is considered final.

WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT TO SECURE U.S. CITIZENSHIP FOR MY CHILD?

1. You may wish to contact your adoption service provider or legal representative to discuss your specific next steps.
2. To obtain an adoption that is considered final, you (and your spouse, if married) must adopt or readopt your child in a U.S. state court, or your foreign adoption must be recognized by your state of residence. Evidence of this might include a certificate of recognition of adoption from the state court or a copy of the state statute providing that the state recognizes all foreign adoptions. For more information about state laws on intercountry adoption, visit the Child Welfare Information Gateway at [childwelfare.gov](https://www.childwelfare.gov).
3. Your child will automatically acquire U.S. citizenship when they meet the conditions of INA 320 described above, including having an adoption this is considered final.
4. If you would like proof of your child's U.S. citizenship, you may file Form N-600, Application for Certificate of Citizenship, (www.uscis.gov/n-600) after your child meets all the conditions to acquire U.S. citizenship. A Certificate of Citizenship does not expire. You may also apply for a U.S. passport for your child with the Department of State.