
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
FNS 225 UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP

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Change #6-2021
July 12, 2021

225.01 CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENT

Each applicant/recipient of Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) must be a U.S. citizen or a non-citizen lawfully admitted into the U.S. under specific immigration status to participate in the FNS program.

A. United States Citizenship Requirement:

1. Any person (other than the child of a foreign diplomat) born in the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, or Swains Islands.
2. Any person who is a naturalized citizen of the U.S.
3. A child born outside the U.S. when either parent is a citizen of the U.S., provided one of the requirements in 225.03 are met.

B. Non-citizen Requirement:

See manual section FNS 227 Non-citizen Requirements.

225.02 CERTIFICATION OF CITIZENSHIP

- A. The applicant or FNS Unit member must certify, under penalty of perjury, the citizenship of themselves and all individuals included in the FNS unit.
- B. The head of household or an adult FNS unit member meets this requirement by:
 1. Signing the application or recertification; **and**
 2. Stating the citizenship of all new FNS unit members when a change in household composition is reported.

225.03 VERIFICATION OF UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP

- A. Unless questionable, accept the applicant's certification as verification of citizenship.
- B. The applicant's statement regarding citizenship is considered questionable when:

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1. The claim of citizenship is inconsistent with statements made by the applicant or with other information on the application or previous applications.
 2. The claim of citizenship is inconsistent with information received from another source.
 3. Lack of proficiency in speaking or writing English is not sufficient cause to question an individual's citizenship.
- C.** If the applicant's statement is questionable, verify citizenship using:
1. Birth certificates showing birth in the U. S. or areas indicated in **225.01 a**;
or
 2. Hospital/doctor records established at the time of birth. This includes a hospital-issued birth certificate; **or**
 3. Birth certificates or documents verifying the U.S. citizenship of at least one parent, and that the child is the biological child of that parent.

Example: A mother applying for benefits for herself and two children was born in Texas, but the children were born in Mexico, as the mother spent time in both countries. If the mother can prove that she is a U.S. citizen and that the children are her biological children, the children are U.S. citizens.
4. Certificates of Citizenship or Naturalization issued by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS); **or**
 5. U.S. Passport (except limited passports, issued for periods of less than five years); **or**
 6. Report of birth abroad of a U.S. citizen (FS-240) issued by the Department of State to a U.S. citizen; **or**
 7. Verification of receipt of Work First (if Work First verified citizenship); **or**
 8. Social Security Administration Records; **or**
 9. Certificate of Naturalization (N-550 or N-570). The N-570 is a replacement certificate issued when the N-550 has been lost or the individual's name has been changed; **or**
 10. Certificate of birth (FS-545) issued by a foreign service post or Certification of Report of Birth (DS-1350) issued by the Department of State; **or**
 11. Certificate of Citizenship (N-560 or N-561) issued by the USCIS to individuals who derive citizenship through a parent. The N-561 is a replacement certificate issued when the N-560 has been lost or the individual's name changed; **or**

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12. United States Citizen Identification Card (I-197) issued by the USCIS until April 7, 1983, to U.S. citizens living near the Canadian or Mexican border who needed it for frequent border crossings. The I-179 was issued prior to the I-197 until February 1974; **or**
13. Northern Mariana Identification Card (issued by the USCIS to a naturalized citizen of the U.S. born in the Northern Mariana Islands before November 3, 1986; **or**
14. Statement provided by a U.S. consular officer certifying that the individual is a U.S. citizen who does not have a FS-240, FS-545, or DS-1350; **or**
15. American Indian Card with a classification code of "KIC" and a statement on the back (identifying U.S. citizen members of the Texas Band of Kickapoos living near the U.S./Mexican border; **or**
16. **Two** of the following:
 - a. School records;
 - b. Bible records;
 - c. Hospital, physician, or health department records;
 - d. Court records;
 - e. U.S. census record showing name, U.S. citizenship or a U.S. place of birth, and a date of birth or age of applicant;
 - f. Evidence of civil service employment by the U.S. government before June 1, 1976;
 - g. A witnessed statement from an individual who has specific knowledge about the birth of the person whose citizenship is in question. The statement must include:
 - i. Name of the person whose citizenship is in question; and
 - ii. Date of birth; and
 - iii. Place of birth; and
 - iv. Relationship, if any, to the person whose citizenship is in question; and
 - v. Basis of the individual's knowledge.

D. Procedure When No Verification Is Provided

1. If the applicant cannot provide verification of citizenship, request documentation using regular request for information policy found in manual section FNS 170 Notices.

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2. If no documentation is available, refer the applicant to the local USCIS at:
www.uscis.gov by going to the “Services and Benefits” section to find the appropriate field office; or by calling USCIS customer service at 1-800-375-5283.
3. Treat this individual as an ineligible non-citizen until verification is provided.

225.03

DOCUMENTATION OF UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP

Document the verification source in North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST). Scan any supporting documents in NC FAST using the appropriate taxonomy as outlined in NC FAST help.