



News
Release



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Mayor Emanuel Announces Citizenship Corners and Citizenship Hubs at Chicago Public Library

Most Comprehensive Naturalization Assistance Program in the Country

As part of Chicago's New Americans Initiative, Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced a partnership between the Mayor's Office and US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to host citizenship workshops and disseminate information on the naturalization process at select Chicago Public Library locations. Known as "Citizenship Corners" and "Citizenship Hubs," the program will be one of the first of its kind and most comprehensive in the nation and a crucial resource to help residents obtain resources and guidance on the citizenship process.

"We want to make sure our residents have the resources they need to become naturalized citizens," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "By providing free assistance to residents in their native language, we can point them in the right direction so that they can continue on their path to citizenship and protect them from any risk of consumer fraud. Chicago is a city that was built by immigrants and continues to thrive from the vibrancy of our immigrant population, and we will do everything we can to support immigrants in their quest for citizenship."

According to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), there are currently 370,000 legal permanent residents eligible to become citizens in the State of Illinois and nearly 200,000 of them live in the City of Chicago.

As a new citizenship resource for Chicago residents, "Citizenship Corners" will be available at 12 locations of the Chicago Library to disseminate USCIS publications in the languages most commonly spoken in Chicago as well as offer enhanced collections on immigration and US citizenship. In addition to offering information, 17 "Citizenship Hub" locations will partner with Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) recognized legal service groups and community organizations to host immigration, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and citizenship workshops.

"As trusted resources in every community, libraries are the perfect choice as a place to offer this important information," said Library Commissioner Brian Bannon. "We are proud to be a part of this historic partnership."

As part of the partnership, more than 50 librarians were recently trained on citizenship resources by USCIS staff and their community partners and all 79 library locations have one or multiple copies of the USCIS Civics and Citizenship Toolkit available for check-out to the public.

The following Chicago Public Library branches will provide Citizenship Corners and

Hubs.

Citizenship Corners

- Austin-Irving
- Budlong Woods
- Richard J. Daley
- Dunning
- Gage Park
- Garfield Ridge
- Mayfair
- McKinley Park
- Scottsdale
- South Chicago
- West Belmont
- West Town

Citizenship Hubs

- Back of the Yards (Fall 2013)
- Bezazian
- Brighton Park
- Chicago Lawn
- Chinatown
- Edgewater
- Humboldt Park
- Little Village
- Lozano
- Northtown
- Portage-Cragin
- Rogers Park
- Toman
- Sulzer Regional
- Vodak East Side
- West Lawn
- Harold Washington Library Center

The Chicago public library will look to continue to expand the Citizenship Hub and Corners to additional libraries. For more information on Citizenship resources, please visit www.chicagopubliclibrary.org

Mayor Emanuel launched the Chicago New Americans Initiative to offer assistance to thousands of eligible, law abiding, permanent residents in becoming naturalized, U.S. citizens. Over the next three years, the Chicago New Americans Initiative will directly assist 10,000 immigrants in Chicago to become U.S. citizens; encouraging immigrants to independently initiate their naturalization process; and helping new citizens become fully active participants in the civic life of the city and state.

Since taking office, Mayor Emanuel has expanded access to City Colleges of Chicago ESL classes by increasing the number of off-site locations city-wide, launched a citywide investigation of immigration service providers often called “notarios,” in efforts to protect Chicago consumers from predatory businesses, and has hosted citizenship swearing-in ceremonies at City Hall and other prominent city locations on a regular basis, as part of Chicago’s New American Initiative.