

# Immigrating to the United States

## Preparing to Facilitate

Introduction	<p><b>Materials and Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name tags</li> <li>• Flip chart paper</li> <li>• Markers in different colors,</li> <li>• Masking tape</li> <li>• DVD Player</li> <li>• Video</li> <li>• Discussion Questions</li> <li>• Voices for Community Success Program materials for long version</li> <li>• Participant Handouts</li> <li>• “Myth versus Fact” facilitator handout</li> </ul> <p><b>Participant Handouts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Immigration Acronyms” cheat sheet</li> <li>• “Legal Ways to Enter the U.S.” handout</li> <li>• “Protect Yourself from Immigration Assistance Fraud” handout</li> <li>• Immigration Contact List</li> <li>• Immigration-related Resources</li> </ul>
Ice-Breaker—Myths versus Facts	
Transition	
<b>Video Segment One</b>	
View Video Segment One—Coming to the U.S. to Live and Work	
Discussion	
<b>Video Segment Two</b>	
View Segment Two—Entering the U.S. Legally and Becoming a Legal Permanent Resident	
Discussion	
<b>Video Segment Three</b>	
View Segment Three—Becoming an U.S. Citizen	
Discussion	
Conclusion and Follow-up	
<p><b>Video Running Time = 19:58</b>  <b>Total Estimated Session Time = approximately 1 hour 30 minutes</b></p>	

**Facilitator’s Note:** If possible, this discussion may be greatly enhanced by the presence of an “expert” guest. For immigration, this could include an immigration attorney or BIA accredited immigration specialist. Participants will most likely have all kinds of questions surrounding the topic of immigration. Many of them will be very case-specific. The presence of an immigration specialist is HIGHLY ENCOURAGED, as facilitators SHOULD NOT give out specific legal advice.

## Introduction

### 4 Minutes

Begin the session by introducing yourself and your position. Explain that you will be facilitating today’s session.

We suggest that you may want to begin with a quick introduction that highlights discussion goals/objectives and what may be learned from the video and discussion.

This brief introduction could highlight areas of discussion to include:

- The major U.S. immigration-related agencies (long and short names)
- Entering the U.S. Legally
- The benefits of “Lawful Permanent Resident” (LPR) status
- U.S. citizenship requirements and real-life success stories
- Reliable legal assistance and how to spot “Fraud”

## Ice-breaker—Myth versus Fact

### 10 Minutes

Have participants form a circle. Position flip chart paper near one end of the circle for displaying the “Myth versus Fact” statements. Display only one statement at a time. Ask participant to shout out the word “myth” if they believe the statement is not true. Ask participants to shout out the word “fact” if they believe the statement is true. Next, display on the flip chart the correct information about the statement and read the statement out loud. Move to the next statement and continue with this process until all chosen statements have been displayed and participants have had the opportunity to respond.

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#### *Facilitator’s Tips:*

- The subject of immigration and immigration status is a sensitive one, and participants should be assured that they do not need to reveal their status, though they are welcome to if they wish.
  - Place chairs in a circle or u-shape, so all participants can see each other, the facilitator and the displayed visuals.
  - Keep the ice-breaker simple using a maximum of five statements.
  - See “Myth versus Fact” facilitator worksheet, which accompanies this guide.
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### Transition

#### 5 Minutes

After the “Myth versus Fact” session is complete, provide a general overview of why it is important that the information you obtain about immigration is accurate and not based on misconceptions, stereotypes or from unauthorized persons.

## Video

**6:18 Minutes** (from beginning of video to Sandra Sanchez saying "... eligible based on their family relationship with a documented U.S. relative")

### Segment One

Introduction to Immigration-related agencies, different types of available Visas.

## Discussion—suggested questions to ask participants

**12 Minutes**

1. What U.S. agency plays a major role in the immigration process? What is its purpose, and how may it affect individual or family life?
2. What petition must be filed for a family-based immigration visa?
3. What qualifications need to be met to become a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR)?

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### Facilitator's Tips:

- The estimated times given reflect each section discussing one or two questions at the most. Facilitators will choose the most appropriate questions based on participant's needs.
  - The "Immigration Acronyms" cheat sheet can be handed out here, as well as the "Legal Ways to Enter the U.S." handout.
  - For background information on question #3 (becoming an LPR), refer to Immigration-related Resources, Section 1.
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## Video

**6:19 – 10:56 Minutes** (Begin with Sandra saying: "Employment Visas can be issued through employers..." **Stop when parrot appears again saying:** "How do I become a U.S. Citizen?")

### Segment Two

Employment Visas and family-sponsored Visas. Benefits to becoming an LPR. Filing an application, and finding reliable sources of immigration assistance.

## Discussion—suggested questions to ask participants

**12 Minutes**

1. What are some of the positives of obtaining an Employment Visa? What are some of the challenges?
2. How are the requirements for obtaining a Family-sponsored Visa different than those for an Employment Visa?

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### Facilitator's Tips:

- Refer to the Immigration-related Resources, Section Two for the "Recognition and Accreditation Roster" of BIA accredited immigration organizations and specialists.
  - This same section in Immigration-related Resources features an American Bar Association project, "Protect Immigrants from Notario Fraud" Includes resources in both English and Spanish.
  - Distribute "Protect Yourself from Immigration Assistance Fraud" handout.
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3. Why do people enter the country without proper legal status (reasons could include expense, lack of access to services/proper legal advice, time and availability of Visas, etc.)?
4. What is the role of a Notary Public in your country? How does this differ from Notary Publics in the United States?
5. How can one know if the help they are getting with an immigration case is reliable and trustworthy?
6. What are some local sources for reliable assistance (including legal attorney, BIA accredited immigration specialist, etc.)? What would be a “red flag” that the assistance being offered may be a scam, or simply unreliable?

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## Video

**10:57 Minutes (Begin with parrot saying: “How can someone become a U.S. Citizen?” Go to the end of Luis Valdez’s concluding words: “... éxito en el norte.” If you choose to show all the credits at the end, the length of this segment will be 9:01 minutes.)**

### Segment Three

Basic requirements for becoming a U.S. citizen. “Success stories” for obtaining citizenship. Advantages to full citizenship. Basic legal rights, regardless of immigration status.

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### Facilitator’s Tips:

- Hand out “Immigration Contact List” and “Immigration-related Resources” during this section, or beginning of Conclusion and follow-up section.
- The “Local Immigration Contact List” should be expanded to include region and/or state contacts if necessary.

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## Discussion—suggested questions to ask participants

### 12 Minutes

1. Who can apply for citizenship and what are some of the basic requirements? What happens if the person applying for citizenship does not speak English?
2. What particular things can you do to help an immigration lawyer or specialist? What responsibilities are to be fulfilled to become a U.S. citizen?
3. What actions are considered crimes when living in the U.S. as an undocumented worker? What crimes are considered a misdemeanor to possible felony (examples could include remaining in country with an

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### Facilitator’s Note:

People attending appointments or interviews with immigration officials must provide their own interpreters. The only exception is when taking the US Citizenship test. In that case, the person must have knowledge of the English language and can’t take an interpreter unless the person qualifies to take the test in their own language.

The USCIS introduced a new set of history/government questions on October 2008.

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expired Visa, working with a false ID versus a “borrowed” but valid ID, etc.)? What kinds of crimes can affect the chances of obtaining immigration benefits in the future?

4. What are some basic legal rights for all persons living in the United States, regardless of immigration status?

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## **Conclusion & follow-up**

### **10 Minutes**

The last few minutes of the discussion can be used to thank members for their participation, reinforce important concepts, and ensure that participants know where and how to access information on immigration in the future. Wrap-up might include the following:

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#### **Facilitator’s Tips:**

- Allow participants to share questions that the video raised in their minds that need further discussion.
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1. Highlight benefits of this group time and information learned.
2. Invite feedback on local experiences as participants go through the immigration process, work towards a Visa or citizenship, or reside in the U.S. as undocumented workers. Reinforce the importance of obtaining a recognized immigration lawyer to avoid being a victim of fraud.
3. Determine if participants need additional information. A follow-up session with special service providers may be a possibility.