



## *District of Columbia Naturalization Records, 1802–1926*

Naturalization records contain the application papers of resident aliens seeking U.S. citizenship. Originally, naturalization was a two-step process usually requiring a five-year minimum residency in the United States. After two years of residency, an alien was eligible to submit a declaration of intention to become a citizen. After three more years, an alien could submit a petition for naturalization.

Between 1802 and 1863, the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia issued naturalizations for the District of Columbia. From March 3, 1863, to June 25, 1936, the U.S. Supreme Court for the District of Columbia issued DC naturalizations.

The National Archives has naturalization records for the District of Columbia from August 4, 1802, to January 4, 1926. These records are in Records of the District Courts of the United States (Record Group 21). After January 4, 1926, the records are in the custody of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia or can be requested through the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Service (USCIS) (see Post-1926 Naturalization Records below).

### **Civilian Naturalization Records, 1802–1926**

Civilian naturalization records consist of two parts: a declaration of intention and a petition for naturalization. Both typically provide information on an applicant's address, date and place of birth, nationality, country of emigration, date and port of arrival, name of vessel, marital status, name and age of spouse, and names and ages of children. These records may also contain an applicant's signature and a personal description. Petitions for naturalization indicate the date of naturalization and, after 1906, contain the names, addresses, and occupations of two citizens who filed supporting affidavits. For indexes to these records see:

     M1827, *Index to Naturalization Records of the U.S. Supreme Court for the District of Columbia, 1802–1909*. 1 roll. This index is arranged alphabetically by surname. It provides the date of naturalization for each applicant. The abbreviations next to the name refer to:

- 1) **N.P.**: RG 21, Entry 105, Declarations of Intention, with Supporting Papers, 1802–1903
- 2) **R.B.**: RG 21, Entry 105, Declarations of Intention, with Supporting Papers, 1802–1903
- 3) **O.N.R.**: RG 21, Entry 100, Naturalization Record, Old Circuit Court, Volume 1, 1823–1840; Volume 2, 1836–1868
- 4) **O.M.**: RG 21, Entry 2, Circuit Court Minutes [Law, Appellate, and Criminal] Books, Volumes 1–17. Available in *Minutes of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia, 1801–1863* (National Archives Microfilm Publication M1021), **rolls 1–4**.
- 5) **C.C.M.**: RG 21, Entry 2, Circuit Court Minutes [Law, Appellate, and Criminal] Books, Volumes 18–29. Available on *Minutes of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia, 1801–1863* (National Archives Microfilm Publication M1021), **rolls 4–6**.

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- 6) **J.A.S.:** RG 21, Entry 2, Circuit Court Minutes [Law, Appellate, and Criminal] Books, Volumes 18–29. Available on *Minutes of the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Columbia, 1801–1863* (National Archives Microfilm Publication M1021), **rolls 5–6.**
- 7) **D.C.M.:** RG 21, Entry 36, Minutes, 1801–63. 1 volume
- 8) **G.T.M.:** RG 21, Entry 49, General Term Minutes, 1863–1903
- 9) **L.M.:** RG 21, Entry 53, Law Minutes, 1863–1934
- 10) **N.R.:** Entry 101, Naturalization Record, Supreme Court, 1866–1906
- 11) **Dec. of Int.:** Entry 99, Declaration of Intention to Become Citizens, 1866–1926

\_\_\_**Naturalization Index Stubs, 1906–1926** (NC-2, Entry 98). Arranged alphabetically by name. These records are not on microfilm. See the section “How to Order Records” below for information on how to request copies of the records.

### **Military Naturalization Records, 1918–1924**

Congress passed an act on May 9, 1918, allowing aliens in the U.S. military to apply for citizenship without proof of the five-year minimum residency in the United States. The National Archives has two sets of military naturalization records relating to the District of Columbia. For the index, see the following series:

\_\_\_**Military Naturalization Index Stubs, 1918–1924** (NC-2, Entry 103). These records contain thousands of alphabetically arranged index cards that provide the name, age, signature, and date of naturalization of each applicant. They occasionally provide the names, ages, and place of residence for an applicant’s wife and minor children. If you find an individual in these stubs, follow the instructions in the “How to Order Records” section below. These records are not on microfilm.

### **How to Order Records**

The original DC naturalization records and related indexes are at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC. To request copies of the records write to [inquire@nara.gov](mailto:inquire@nara.gov), or write to Civilian Reference, National Archives and Records Administration, 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20408.

### **Post-1926 D.C. Naturalization Records**

To obtain copies of DC naturalization records issued after January 4, 1926, submit a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request form to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at the following address:

Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act Program  
111 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., 2nd Floor  
ULLICO Building  
Washington, DC 20529

You can download and print a FOIA request form (G-639) in PDF format directly from the USCIS website by visiting <http://uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/g-639.htm>. For additional information on requesting naturalization records, visit the agency’s website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

It is also possible to obtain copies of DC naturalization records issued after January 4, 1926, by contacting the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia (USDCDC). For additional information, visit the USDCDC website at [www.dcd.uscourts.gov](http://www.dcd.uscourts.gov).

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