

**Have you been a legal permanent resident ("green card" holder) for five years (or three years if married to a U.S. citizen)?**

**Are you currently receiving public assistance (for example, AFDC, housing, food stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, SSI, or job training)?**

If you answered "yes" to both of these questions, you should seriously consider becoming a U.S. citizen.

### **REASONS YOU MAY WANT TO BECOME A U.S. CITIZEN**

1. The new welfare reform proposals may seriously restrict immigrant access to a broad range of public benefits. Citizens will be better protected from these cuts.
2. As a citizen, you can apply for more family members to immigrate than you can with a green card, and often those relatives can immigrate much more quickly.
3. Your children under 18 could become eligible for U.S. citizenship.
4. Citizenship can increase your voice in public processes. You will have the right to vote in elections, and the right to be elected to public office. You will also have the right to serve on juries.
5. You will be able to travel abroad without worrying about re-entry permits, or about losing your legal status.
6. As a citizen, you can **not** be deported or excluded. A permanent resident who commits a crime and leaves and re-enters the U.S. may be excludable for the crime. Even if not excluded, he/she is still deportable for having been excludable at entry.
7. You will never have to renew your lawful status as a citizen.
8. As a citizen, you will be eligible to work for the federal government, and to apply for certain state jobs.
9. In the U.S., it is illegal for most people who are not citizens to own guns.