**U.S. Citizen**

An individual may be a U.S. citizen based on where they were born, having a U.S. citizen parent, by marriage or by naturalization as described below:

- **Citizen by Birth**

A person is a U.S. citizen if the person was born in the United States (including those born in current states before statehood) or in a U.S. territory. Territories are:
  - Guam;
  - Puerto Rico based on date of birth;
  - The Virgin Islands based on date of birth;
  - The Northern Mariana Islands based on date of birth;
  - American Samoa;
  - Swain’s Island; and
  - Panama Canal Zone based on date of birth.

**EXCEPTION:** This does not include a person who was born to foreign diplomats residing on one of the preceding jurisdictions.

- **Citizenship Through U.S. Citizen Parent**

A person born to U.S. citizen parents can meet the criteria for U.S. citizenship. The regulation used to evaluate U.S. citizenship through a parent is based on the age of the person on February 27, 2001, when the Children’s Citizenship Act (CCA) became effective.

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<th>If the person was born...</th>
<th>THEN the person...</th>
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<td><strong>After</strong> February 27, 1983 (under age 18 on February 27, 2001)</td>
<td>Automatically acquires U.S. citizenship under the CCA when all of the following requirements are met:</td>
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<td>• At least one biological or adoptive parent is a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization.</td>
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<td>• The child is under age of 18.</td>
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<td>• The child is admitted to the U.S. as an immigrant. Immigrant means the child entered the U.S. on an immigrant visa and/or was admitted as a lawful permanent resident.</td>
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<td>• The child lives in the legal and physical custody of the U.S. citizen parent(s).</td>
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<td>• An adopted child acquires U.S. citizen status effective the date the child meets all the previously listed CCA requirements, and the full and final adoption is completed.</td>
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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documentation is not required to prove U.S. citizenship for a person who meets the above requirements and permanently lives in the U.S.
However, the person can obtain documentation by applying to the USCIS for a Certificate of Citizenship or to a passport acceptance facility for a U.S. passport.

| **On or before February 27, 1983 (18 years of age or older on February 27, 2001)** | Acquires citizenship if the person’s parents meet one of the following criteria:
| | • Both parents are U.S. citizens and at least one parent lived in the U.S or its territories before the person’s birth.
| | • One parent is a U.S. citizen and the other is a non-citizen. The parent who is a citizen must have lived in the U.S., its possessions, or its territories for a total of five years before the person’s birth. At least two of the five years must be after the parent reached age 14.

**NOTE:** Consider the parent to have had U.S. residence for any period of time that the parent lived outside of the U.S as one of the following:
• A U.S. government employee
• Serving in the U.S Armed Forces
• Working for an international organization.

- **Citizenship Through Marriage**

  A woman who married a U.S. citizen before September 22, 1922 established U.S. citizenship. This does not apply to a man who married a U.S. citizen.

- **Citizenship by Naturalization**

  Individuals who are not U.S. citizens by birth or adoption may apply for and go through the naturalization process to become U.S. citizens.

  A person born outside the U.S can derive U.S citizenship from parents who were naturalized as U.S. citizens if both parents (or sole custodial parent) were naturalized before:
  • The person’s 21st birthday if naturalization was before October 14, 1940; or
  • The person’s 18th birthday if naturalization was on or after October 14, 1940.

- **Dual citizenship**

  An individual may be a U.S. citizen and a citizen of another country. A person claiming dual citizenship can lose U.S. citizenship only if the person voluntarily abandons it. Dual citizenship status does not affect the individual's U.S. citizenship.