

## **CITIZEN HOPEFULS CAN BEAT FEE HIKE**

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### **Body**

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The Santa Clara County Citizenship Program will conduct a "citizenship blitz" of educational meetings over the next two weeks to help immigrants file documents before the citizenship application **fee** increases.

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service will raise the rate from \$95 to \$225 on Jan. 15. Applicants pay an additional \$25 for fingerprints.

Critics say the increase puts citizenship out of the reach of poor, legal immigrants. The INS says it needs to raise **fees** so that taxpayers are not subsidizing the naturalization process.

The blitz at the Center for Employment Training at 701 Vine St. in San Jose will be from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through next Saturday and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Jan. 10-11. Those interested **can** drop in during these hours.

Participants will receive free advice on how to apply and whether they qualify, as well as free photos, free referrals to English and citizenship classes, and a free copy of test questions.

To be eligible for citizenship, a person must be a lawful permanent resident for at least four years and nine months or, if married to a U.S. **citizen**, two years and nine months.

Those attending the blitz are asked to try to bring their residency card, Social Security card, dates of absences from the United States, home and employer addresses for the past five years, marital history, spouse's and children's dates of birth, court records for any crimes committed and a \$95 check payable to the INS (if they intend to apply).

### **Notes**

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IF YOU'RE INTERESTED

For more information call (408) 286-1698 (Spanish and English) or (408) 286-1448 (Vietnamese).

### **Classification**

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CITIZEN HOPEFULS CAN BEAT FEE HIKE

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