

ATTENTION:

Protect Yourself Against Deportation!

- Deportation is a serious consequence for failing to comply with the laws of the United States.
- Legal Permanent Residents (green card holders) and those with valid visas can be deported.
- Children born abroad may derive citizenship from U.S. citizen parents, but each case is unique and it is strongly recommended that an immigration attorney be consulted.
- Individuals who are not Legal Permanent Residents (green card) or valid visa holders are highly encouraged to consult with an immigration attorney regarding potential legalization options.
- **Be aware!** Counsel or advice about one's immigration status should come from a reputable immigration lawyer. Consult one of the partner organizations listed in this brochure.
- Naturalization is key in preventing the possibility of being deported.

For information contact:

Portugal Embassy, Washington D.C (202) 350 5400

General Consulates of Portugal: **New Bedford**, MA (508) 997-6151; **Providence**, RI, (401) 272-2003; **Boston**, MA ((617) 536-8740; **Newark** (973) 643-4200; **New York**, NY (212) 221-3165; **S. Francisco**, CA (415) 346-3401

Casa dos Açores da Nova Inglaterra, East Providence, RI (401) 435-6949 Fall River, MA (508) 5674268

Immigrant's Assistance Center, New Bedford, MA (508) 996-8113

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, Boston, MA (617) 350-5480

MA Alliance of Portuguese Speakers, Cambridge, MA (617) 864-7600

Catholic Social Services, Immigration Law and Advocacy Project (ILEAP)

Fall River, MA (508) 674-4681

Ser-Jobs For Progress, Inc., Fall River, MA (508)-676-1916

Volunteer to save many from deportation.

For more information about volunteer opportunities with the LEGAL Project contact:

Direcção Regional das Comunidades

(351) 296 204 700

legalprogram@azores.gov.pt

The LEGAL Project is promoted by the
Government of the Azores in partnership with
the International Network of Social Services Organization



Governo dos Açores
DIRECÇÃO REGIONAL DAS COMUNIDADES



LEGAL is a project promoted by the Government of the Azores which aims to raise awareness and educate immigrant communities residing in the United States about the importance of becoming citizens.



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT U.S.
IMMIGRATION LAW AND DEPORTATION**

www.azores.gov.pt



DEPORTATION

Who Can Be Deported?

- Persons born abroad who have violated immigration laws regardless of their length of residency.
- Persons who overstayed the permitted time as date stamped on their I-94 upon entry.
- Persons who entered the U.S. unlawfully, without inspection.
- Legal Permanent Residents, "green card" holders, who have been convicted of certain crimes, even if the crime occurred many years ago and the person did not receive a prison sentence.
- Persons born abroad even if their parents have naturalized.

LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENCY

Who is a Legal Permanent Resident?

A legal permanent resident is someone who has been granted authorization to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis. Such individuals are given a permanent resident card, "green card", as proof of their permanent status. Legal permanent residency can be obtained several different ways. Most individuals are sponsored by a family member or an employer in the United States.

How can one become a Legal Permanent Resident?

- Green Card through family petition, including marriage.
- Green Card through a job offer.
- Other ways to get a Green Card: To learn about other ways that you may qualify for Permanent Residency, consult an immigration attorney.

Who CANNOT become a Legal Permanent Resident?

- Persons that have been convicted of certain crimes.
- Persons who entered the U.S. unlawfully without inspection.
- Persons who have misrepresented themselves as U.S. citizens.

Even if you fall into one of these categories, you may still be eligible to apply for legal permanent residency through special waivers. Consult an immigration attorney.

NATURALIZATION

What is Naturalization?

Naturalization is the process by which foreign born individuals become U.S. citizens.

Will I lose my Portuguese Citizenship?

No. The Portuguese government will continue to recognize you as a Portuguese citizen.

Why Naturalize?

- Protection against deportation.
- Right to vote, federal employment and run for public office.
- Ability to file family petition.
- Acquire or derive Citizenship for your foreign born children.

Who Can Naturalize?

- Green card holders with 5 years of residency.
- Green card holders with 3 years of residency, if LPR status was gained through USC spousal petition and are still married to that spouse - if not consult immigration attorney.

DO NOT APPLY FOR NATURALIZATION without first consulting an attorney if:

- You have committed a crime.
- You have been away from the U.S. without permission from the U.S. government.

If you have been convicted of a crime, it is imperative that a specialized immigration attorney be consulted before applying for naturalization or renewing your permanent residence, "green card". This could lead to deportation.