

# [ Commonwealth Act No. 473, June 17, 1939 ]

## **AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP BY NATURALIZATION, AND TO REPEAL ACTS NUMBERED TWENTY-NINE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN AND THIRTY-FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHT**

*Be it enacted by the National Assembly of the Philippines;*

Sec. 1. *Title of Act.* - This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Revised Naturalization-Law."

Sec. 2. *Qualifications.* - Subject to section four of this Act, any person having the following qualifications may become a citizen of the Philippines by naturalization;

First He must-be not less than twenty-one years of age on the day of the hearing of the petition;

Second he must have resided in tho Philippines for a continuous period of not less than ten years;

Third He must be of good moral character and believes in the principles underlying the Philippine Constitution, and must have conducted himself in a proper and irreproachable manner during the entire period of his residence in the Philippines in his relation with the constituted government as well as with the community in which he is living.

Fourth He must own real estate in the Philippines worth not less than five thousand pesos, Philippine currency, or must have some know lucrative trade, profession, or lawful occupation;

Fifth He must be able to speak and write English or Spanish and any one oi the principal Philippine languages;

Sixth He must have enrolled his minor children of school age, in any of the public schools or private schools recognized by the Office of Private Education of the Philippines, where Philippine history, government and civics are taught or prescribed as part of the school curriculum, during the entire period of the residence in the Philippines required of him prior to the hearing of his petition for.naturalization as Philippine citizen.

Sec. 3. *Special qualifications.* - The ten years of continuous residing required under the second condition of the last preceding section shall be understood as reduced to five years for any petitioner having any of the following qualifications:

1. Having honorably held office under the Government of the Philippines or under that of any of the provinces, cities, municipalities, or political subdivisions thereof;
2. Having established a new industry or introduced a useful invention in the Philippines;
3. Being married to a Filipino woman;

4. Having been engaged as a teacher in the Philippines in a public or recognized private school not established for the exclusive instruction of children of persons of a particular nationality or race, in any of the branches of education or industry for a period of not less than two years;
5. Having been born in the Philippines.

Sec. 4. *Who are disqualified.* - The following can not be naturalized as Philippine citizens:

- a. Persons opposed to organized government or affiliated with any association or group of persons who uphold and teach doctrines opposing all organized governments;
- b. Persons defending or teaching the necessity or propriety of violence, personal assault, or assassination for the success and predominance of their ideas;
- c. Polygamists or believers in the practice of polygamy;
- d. Persons convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude;
- e. Persons suffering from mental alienation or incurable contagious diseases;
- f. Persons who, during the period of their residence in the Philippines, have not mingled socially with the Filipinos, or who have not evinced a sincere desire to learn and embrace the customs, traditions, and ideals of the Filipinos;
- g. Citizens, or subjects of nations with whom the United States and the Philippines are at war, during the period of such war;
- h. Citizens or subjects of a foreign country other than the United States, whose laws do not grant Filipinos the right to become naturalized citizens or subjects thereof.

Sec. 5. *Declaration of intention.* - One year prior to the filing of his petition for admission to Philippine citizenship, the applicant for Philippine citizenship shall file with the Bureau of Justice a declaration under oath that is *bona fide* his intention to become a citizen of the Philippines. Such declaration shall set forth the name, age, occupation, personal description, place of birth, last foreign residence and allegiance, the date of arrival, the name of the vessel or aircraft, if any, in which he came to the Philippines, and the place of residence in the Philippines at the time of making the declaration. No declaration shall be valid until lawful entry for permanent residence has been established and a certificate showing the date, place, and manner of his arrival has been issued. The declarant must also state that he has enrolled his minor children, if any, in any of the public schools or private schools recognized by the Office of Private Education of the Philippines, where Philippine history, government, and civics are taught or prescribed as part of the school curriculum, during the entire period of the residence in the Philippines required of him prior to the hearing of his petition for naturalization as Philippine citizen. Each declarant must furnish two photographs of himself.

Sec. 6. *Widow and minor children of aliens dying after declaration of intention not required to file declaration of intention.* - When any alien who has declared his intention to become a citizen of the Philippines dies before he is actually naturalized the widow and minor children of such alien may, by complying with the other provisions of this Act, be naturalized without making any declaration of intention.

Sec. 7. *Petition for citizenship.* - Any person desiring to acquire Philippine citizenship shall file with the competent court, a petition in triplicate, accompanied by two photographs of the petitioner, setting forth his name and surname; his present and former places of residence; his occupation; the place and date of his birth; whether single or married and the father of children, the name, age, birthplace and residence of the wife and of each of the children; the approximate date of his or her arrival in the Philippines, the name of the port of debarkation, and, if he remembers it, the name of the ship on which he came; a declaration that he has the qualifications required by this Act, specifying the same, and that he is not disqualified for naturalization under the provisions of this Act; that he has complied with the requirements of section five of this Act; and that he will reside continuously in the Philippines from the date of the filing of the petition up to the time of his admission to Philippine citizenship. The petition must be signed by the applicant in his own handwriting and be supported by the affidavit of at least two credible persons, stating that they are citizens of the Philippines and personally know the petitioner to be a resident of the Philippines for the period of time required by this Act and a person of good repute and morally irreproachable, and that said petitioner has in their opinion all the qualifications necessary to become a citizen of the Philippines and, is not in anyway disqualified under the provisions of this Act. The petition shall also set forth the names and post-office addresses of such witnesses as the petitioner may desire to introduce at the hearing of the case. The certificate of arrival, and the declaration of intention must be made part of the petition.

SEC. 8. *Competent court.* - The Court of First Instance of the province in which the petitioner has resided at least one year immediately preceding the filing of the petition shall have exclusive original jurisdiction to hear the petition.

Sec. 9. *Notification and appearance.* - Immediately upon the filing of a petition, it shall be the duty of the clerk of the court to publish the same at petitioner's expense, once a week for three consecutive weeks, in the Official Gazette, and in one of the newspapers of general circulation in the province where the petitioner resides, and to have copies of said public and conspicuous place in his office or in the building where said office is located, setting forth in such notice the name, birthplace and residence of the petitioner, the date and place of his arrival in the Philippines, the names of the witnesses whom the petitioner proposes to introduce in support of his petition, and the date of the hearing of the petition, which hearing shall not be held within ninety days from the date of the last publication of the notice. The clerk shall, as soon as possible, forward copies of the petition, the sentence, the naturalization certificate, and other pertinent data to the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Justice, the provincial Inspector of the Philippine Constabulary of the province and the justice of the peace of the municipality wherein the petitioner resides.

Sec. 10. *Hearing of the petition.* - No petition shall be heard within the thirty days preceding any election. "The hearing shall be public, and the Solicitor-General, either himself or through his delegate or the provincial fiscal concerned, shall appear on behalf of the Commonwealth of the Philippines at all the proceedings and at the hearing. If, after the hearing, the court believes, in view of the evidence taken, that the petitioner has all the qualifications required by, and none of the disqualifications specified in this Act and has complied with all requisites herein established, it shall order the proper naturalization certificate to be issued and the registration of the said naturalization certificate in the proper civil registry as required in section ten of