

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:)
)
ESTABLISHING COURT POLICY)
GOVERNING NATURALIZATION) GENERAL ORDER NO. 03-05
CEREMONIES CONDUCTED AT) (Rescinds General Order No. 96-6)
LOCATIONS OTHER THAN A)
UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE)
_____)

General Order No. 96-6 is hereby rescinded and replaced by this General Order.

WHEREAS, the Court's objectives in conducting naturalization ceremonies at locations other than a United States Courthouse are:

- To administer the oath of citizenship to all eligible candidates, the large number of whom substantially exceeds the limited capacity of courthouse facilities,
- To maximize the number of eligible candidates who are administered the oath of citizenship within sixty (60) days of approval of their application for citizenship by Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), Department of Homeland Security, and

- To assure that citizenship ceremonies are conducted in a manner wholly consistent with the important purpose and dignity of the judicial administration of the oath of citizenship,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that General Order No. 03-05 be adopted as follows:

1. Due to the scope and complexity of the Central District, requests to conduct special ceremonies in particular political jurisdictions and at military installations will not be approved.

The Central District consists of 7 counties, 180 incorporated cities, 41 assembly districts, 20 senate districts, and 27 congressional districts. Additionally, there are a large number of military installations located throughout the District. It is not feasible to conduct naturalization ceremonies in each jurisdiction nor at each military installation, nor is it equitable to accommodate selected jurisdictions or military installations.

2. Due to the nationality and ethnic diversity of the Central District, requests to conduct special ceremonies for persons from a particular country of origin or for a particular ethnic group will not be approved.

At a typical large ceremony, which would include a group of 4,000 candidates, approximately 100 different countries of origin will be represented. It is not feasible

to conduct special ceremonies for each distinct country of origin nor is it equitable to accommodate a selected country of origin or ethnic group.

3. Due to the specific facility requirements which must be met for the appropriate conduct of naturalization ceremonies, requests to conduct special ceremonies at a particular location will not be approved. Subject to approval of the Chief Judge, special arrangements may be made for the swearing in of particular individuals with serious health problems, for those who are severely disabled, or those who have other special needs. Further, the Chief Judge may approve ceremonies for one or a few persons upon the request of a judge.

A number of criteria are considered in facility selection, including, but not limited to cost; availability; facility features, such as lighting, sound systems, staging and seating; parking access; participant safety; convenience to candidates; and efficient and effective use of staff. Each time a different facility is used, it is necessary to conduct a pre-ceremony site survey and prepare a site operations plan. This involves an extensive staff effort to assure a well organized ceremony and such staff time is more effectively utilized in tasks more directly related to promoting prompt service to candidates.

4. Due to the nature of naturalization proceedings, which are official court hearings and a matter of record, which are conducted jointly by the Court and

Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), Department of Homeland Security, it is appropriate that speakers invited to address naturalization ceremony participants be and hereby are, limited to employees of Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, at or above the level of GS-14, such employees' direct supervisors, and the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

5. Due to the nature of naturalization proceedings, which are official court hearings and a matter of record, when the Court is in session, the use of any forms, means or manner of radio or television broadcasting and the taking or making of photographs, motion pictures, video or sound recordings intended for public broadcast and which are focused upon the judge presiding are prohibited. With the approval of the judge presiding, media attention which is not disruptive of the proceedings may be focused upon the citizenship candidates prior to, during, and subsequent to the court session.