

CHECKLIST: What Is "Good Moral Character?"

An applicant for U.S. citizenship through naturalization must show that he or she is of "good moral character." Although just what constitutes "good" moral character is not clearly defined, the INS is much more definitive about what is *not* good moral character. The INS considers the following acts or attributes as conclusive proof of a person's lack of good moral character, such that that person will be barred from U.S. citizenship through naturalization.

- Being convicted of murder
- Being convicted of an aggravated felony, which includes:
 - Murder, rape, or sexual abuse of a minor
 - Illicit trafficking in controlled substances
 - Firearms, destructive devices, and explosive materials offenses
 - Money laundering
 - Crimes of violence for which the term of imprisonment is at least one year
 - Theft and burglary offenses for which the term of imprisonment is at least one year
 - Crimes involving the demand for or receipt of ransom
 - Crimes involving child pornography
 - Crimes involving a violation of the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act
 - A second or subsequent gambling offense for which a one-year or greater term of imprisonment may be imposed
 - Prostitution "managing" and transporting offenses

- ___ Crimes against the government
- ___ Offenses that jeopardize national security
- ___ Offenses that involve fraud or deceit in which the victims' aggregate losses exceed \$10,000
- ___ Tax evasion involving a government loss in excess of \$10,000
- ___ Alien smuggling, except for first offenses involving attempts to enable entry by a relative of the accused
- ___ Certain offenses committed by aliens who were previously deported for having committed a crime
- ___ Passport fraud offenses with a term of imprisonment of one year or greater, except for first offenses involving attempts to enable entry by a relative of the accused
- ___ Failure to appear to serve a sentence for which the underlying offense is punishable by imprisonment for five or more years
- ___ Offenses involving commercial bribery, counterfeiting, forgery, or trafficking in vehicles with altered identification numbers with a term of imprisonment of at least one year
- ___ Offenses involving obstruction of justice, perjury, subornation of perjury, and witness tampering with a term of imprisonment of at least one year
- ___ Failure to appear in court pursuant to court order to answer to a felony charge for which a sentence of two or more years' imprisonment may be imposed
- ___ **OR** any of the following during the five years preceding application:
 - ___ Committing and being convicted of one or more crimes involving "moral turpitude"
 - ___ Committing and being convicted of two or more offenses with a total sentence of five or more years
 - ___ Being confined to a penal institution during the statutory period (either the preceding three or five years, depending on the circumstances, or one year for Armed Forces expedited cases) for an aggregate of 180 days or more
 - ___ Committing and being convicted of two or more gambling offenses

- _____ Earning your principal income from gambling.
- _____ Being involved in prostitution or commercialized vice
- _____ Being involved in smuggling illegal aliens into the United States
- _____ Being a habitual drunkard
- _____ Practicing polygamy
- _____ Willfully failing or refusing to support dependents
- _____ Giving false testimony under oath in order to receive benefits under the Immigration and Nationality Act