

Center for New Americans

Student Handbook

Important information for students enrolled in our program



Center for New Americans

A Community-Based Education and Resource Center for
Immigrants and Refugees in Western Massachusetts

***Students:** Please read this handbook carefully, ask questions, and sign the form to confirm that you understand.*

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Our Students and Our Schools

- Welcome to Center for New Americans!

- At Center for New Americans, we offer free English classes to adult immigrants and refugees.
- We do not offer classes to visitors or tourists.
- We have four schools:



42 Gothic St.
Northampton, MA
413-587-0084



150 Fearing St.
Amherst, MA
413-239-9550



278 Main St.
Greenfield, MA
413-772-0055



57 School St.
Springfield, MA
413-587-0084

For general information, call our main office in Northampton
413-587-0084

Or email: info@cnam.org

Classes

- We have four levels of English classes:
 - Beginning Literacy
 - Beginning
 - Intermediate
 - High Intermediate
- Classes are in the morning and evening.
- Morning classes are hybrid - in person and Zoom.
- Evening classes are Zoom only.



- The highest level class that we offer at Center for New Americans is High Intermediate. We refer more advanced students to other programs.

Class Placement



- We place students in a class level based on an English proficiency test and writing sample.
- If classes are full, we put students on a waiting list or refer you to a different program.
- Students advance to the next class level when they have the appropriate speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills based on test scores, teacher observation, classwork and participation.
- Students learn at their own pace and advance to the next level at different times.
- Students take at least two English proficiency tests each year.
- Students receive a certificate when they complete a class level.



- Students may be enrolled for a maximum of two years at each class level. We understand that our program may not be the best school for all students. After two years, if a student is not making progress, we meet to discuss other options outside of Center for New Americans.

Advisors

- In addition to a teacher, each student has an advisor.
- Advisors help with basic needs, employment, health care and training.
- If a student changes classes, the advisor may change.
- Students, teachers, and advisors meet at least once a year to discuss student progress.



Attendance Policy



At Center for New Americans, we believe that the best way to learn English is to attend class every day. When you attend class every day:

- you learn more
- you help other students learn more
- the class community is stronger
- our organization - Center for New Americans - is stronger

We would like students to attend 100% of the class hours, but we know that may not be possible. We require students to attend 80% of the class hours.

You are an important partner at Center for New Americans. We offer free classes. You attend every day and contact the teacher or advisor if you cannot attend.



Attendance Requirements

Students must:

- attend at least **80%** of the class hours.
(Example, if the class meets 8 hours per week, you must attend 6.4 hours; if the class meets 6 hours per week, you must attend 4.8 hours)
- communicate with the teacher or advisor if you cannot attend for any reason
- participate actively in class
- respect all teachers, students, and staff



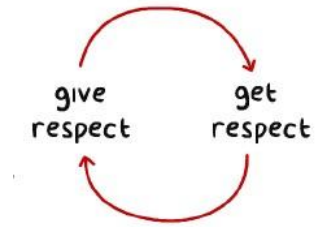
- come to school **on time**; students should NOT come to school if they will be more than 30 minutes late
- notify the teacher if the bus is late or you take your child to school



Failure to Meet Attendance Requirements

If a student cannot meet these attendance requirements, they may need to leave the class.

- Teachers record students' attendance every day.
- Teachers often share attendance information with each student.
- If a student's attendance is less than 80%, they receive a warning. They have two weeks to attend class more regularly. They can talk to their advisor for help.
- If their attendance does not improve after two weeks, they will need to leave class.
- They may reapply for class in the future.



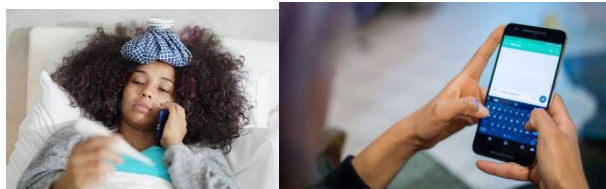
Code of Conduct

We require students to agree to our Code of Conduct:

- Respect all staff and students, no matter a person's home country, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, ability.
- Dress appropriately for school.



- Communicate with your teacher and advisor.
- Stay home if you are sick and communicate with the teacher. Help others stay healthy.



- Participate actively in class.
- Keep camera on for Zoom class.
- Mute microphone for Zoom class if necessary.



- If a student is more than 30 minutes late to class each day, they will be asked to leave school.
- No sexual harassment - verbal or physical
- If a student does not respect other students and/or the teacher, or is rude in class, they will be asked to leave the school.
- Help make a comfortable learning environment for everyone.



Communication



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We want to have an excellent working relationship with you. This relationship requires communication.

We use phone, email and *Reach My Teach*, a platform that sends text, whatsapp, and email messages in your home language and in English.

Please communicate with your teacher or advisor if you:

- need help
- cannot go to class
- have a problem with technology
- have a new phone number, address, email, or a new job

If you receive a message from your teacher or advisor, please respond.



Class Participation

We know that you and your classmates learn more when you participate actively in class. We expect students to:

- Keep your camera on for Zoom class. If you must turn the camera off for a class, get permission from the teacher.
- Find a quiet place for Zoom class and stay there. Do not move around. Do not attend Zoom class while working.



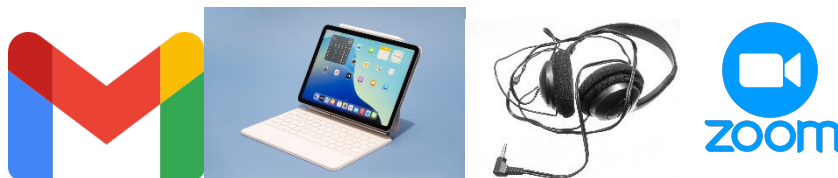
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- Do not drive during Zoom class; it is dangerous and illegal.



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- Tell your teacher or advisor if you need help with technology: iPad, wifi, headphones, email, Zoom



Staying in Touch

English classes at Center for New Americans are free for our students. Our classes are funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. (DESE)



DESE asks us to share your information with them so they can track student progress and evaluate our program. You can agree to share information or not - it is optional. Your advisor will discuss the Request for Information with you.

Link: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/laces/release-form/>

DESE requires Center for New Americans to contact you six months and one year after you leave our program to ask about your work. Please reply to our messages. When you reply, you help us show that our program is a good program.

Other Services - www.cnam.org

For more information about services we offer,
visit our website: www.cnam.org.

Learn about:

Citizenship and Immigration Services

We offer some citizenship and immigration services.

Call our main office: 413-587-0084 or email: info@cnam.org

Student Resources - Resource Directory

Our online Resource Directory provides information about
other valuable resources in the community: [Community
Resource Directory](#)



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Sign Off Form

Students must sign the form to confirm that you understand the information in the Student Handbook and will follow the policies at Center for New Americans.