

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS regarding
IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDERS

*****The Office of Attorney General does NOT inquire into your immigration status*****

What is an IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDER?

- Immigration Services Providers assist consumers with immigration law matters.
- Immigration Services Providers are NOT attorneys, are NOT supervised by attorneys, are NOT accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals and CANNOT provide legal advice.

What is the difference between an IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDER and an ATTORNEY?

An IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDER can:

- Give you materials, law books and forms, so that you can prepare legal documents yourself.
- Give you a list of forms and legal documents.
- Type or fill out forms for you IF you tell the provider what to write.
- File forms in court for you IF you tell the provider what to file.
- Serve legal papers on other parties.
- Must be registered with the Office of Attorney General.

An IMMIGRATION SERVICE PROVIDER cannot:

- Tell you what forms you need for your case.
- Fill out forms for you if you do not tell the provider what to write.
- Tell you what kind of immigration category (such as asylum or labor certification) you should apply for or give you any other legal advice.
- Promise to get you a green card, work visa, or other benefits for ineligible immigrants.
- Tell you that they know someone on the “inside” or connections with USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) or INS (Immigration Naturalization Service), to expedite your application.
- Use terms in their advertisements, stationery, or business cards implying that the Provider is an attorney (such as “notario” or “poder notario”)

An ATTORNEY can:

- Give you legal advice as to the meaning and effect of forms and legal documents.
- Tell you which forms are needed for your case and fill them out.
- Tell you which immigration category you should apply for.
- File and serve legal papers.

Can a NOTARY or a NOTARIO handle my immigration case?

- NO. Unlike in Latin America, in the U.S., notaries or “notarios” are not licensed attorneys, and so they cannot provide legal advice on immigration matters.

How can I FIND a registered IMMIGRATION SERVICE PROVIDER?

- Call the Attorney General’s Office to see if they are registered.

Here are some questions you should ask any Immigration Service before using them:

- What is your educational background and work experience?
- How much do you charge?
- What are the terms of the contract?
- Where is the receipt for my payment?
- Do you have translations for all documents you want me to fill out and sign?

How can I FIND an ATTORNEY?

For a private attorney, you can contact:

- American Immigration Lawyers Association: 1-800-954-0254, <http://www.aila.org>
- Chicago Bar Association: 312-554-2001, <http://www.chicagobar.org>
- Once you find an attorney, check to make sure they are licensed at: <https://www.iardc.org>

For low-cost or free legal services:

- National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC): 312-660-130, <http://www.immigrantjustice.org>
- Centro Romero: 773-508-5300, <http://www.centroromero.org>
- Chicago Legal Clinic: 773-731-1762, <http://www.clclaw.org>
- Latinos Progresando: 312-850-0572, <http://www.latinospro.org>
- Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago: 312-341-1070, <http://www.lafchicago.org>

What do I do if my loved one is detained by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement)?

You should contact one of the low-cost legal referrals immediately. For additional resources, you can also go to:

<http://www.immigrantjustice.org/resources/immigrants/detaineesresources/>