



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IMMIGRATION SERVICES

*****The Office of the 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 (BIA) 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.

An IMMIGRATION SERVICES 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 have connections with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 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 for which immigration category you should apply.
- Prepare, file and serve legal papers, documents or pleadings.

Can a NOTARY or a NOTARIO handle my immigration case?

- NO. In the United States, notaries or “notarios” are not licensed attorneys and cannot provide legal advice on immigration matters.

How can I find a registered IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDER?

- Call the Attorney General’s Office to see if they are registered as required by law.

Before hiring an IMMIGRATION SERVICES PROVIDER, ask:

- 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 referrals to private attorneys:

- American Immigration Lawyers Association:
<http://www.aialawyer.com/>
- Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR):
https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/aec63a_e3294fecdc3547c2b2bffa87d45dc58c.pdf
- Illinois State Bar Association: <http://www.illinoislawyerfinder.com/find-a-lawyer>

You can check whether an attorney is licensed in Illinois with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission at <https://www.iardc.org/lawyersearch.asp>.

For referrals to low-cost or free legal services or BIA-accredited agencies:

- Department of Justice’s Executive Office for Immigration Review:
<http://www.justice.gov/eoir/ra/raroster.htm>
- Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR):
<http://icirr.org/content/immigration-legal-resource-referrals>

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

Contact one of the sources above for referrals to low-cost legal services immediately.

If you do not know where your loved one is being detained, you can use ICE’s detainee locator at <https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index>.

For additional resources, you can also go to:

<http://www.immigrantjustice.org/know-your-rights-manuals-detained-immigrants>.

Please visit
www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov

Chicago
(312) 814-3000
TTY: (800) 964-3013

Springfield
(217) 782-1090
TTY: (877) 844-5461

Carbondale
(618) 529-6400
TTY: (877) 675-9339