

Pro Bono Attorney Guidelines

The National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) is pleased to begin a collaborative relationship with you as you and your firm accept this *pro bono* assignment. To reflect our shared understanding and commitment, we ask that you review these *Pro Bono* Attorney Guidelines.

NIJC's Commitment to *Pro Bono* Attorneys

NIJC's *pro bono* partners report that cases representing immigrant children are among the most interesting, challenging, and rewarding cases of their careers. Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) is a form of immigration relief that is available to immigrant children who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned by one or both of their parents. SIJS is unique among immigration benefits in that it requires a child to access both the state courts as well as the federal immigration system in order to apply for the benefit. As NIJC's expertise is in the field of immigration law, it relies on its *pro bono* partners with expertise in the fields of child and family law in order to serve its child clients who are eligible for SIJS. While NIJC is unable to provide technical assistance regarding the state court process, NIJC is committed to providing attorneys who accept an NIJC case for *pro bono* representation in the state court portion of an SIJS case with the support and information they need regarding the federal requirements for SIJS and its intersection with the state court system.

NIJC agrees to provide its *pro bono* attorneys with:

- information and materials regarding Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
- consultations with experienced NIJC practitioners regarding any case-related questions, theories and trial strategies. NIJC's attorneys remain current on immigration law, policy, and practice, and frequently serve as faculty at local and national immigration law trainings.
- involvement in ground-breaking legal issues and an opportunity to interact with clients from different cultural, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- exceptional legal experience that will enhance a *pro bono* attorney's career development.

Pro Bono Attorney Commitment

NIJC expects that after accepting a case, the *pro bono* attorney will

- provide representation from commencement to completion of the case in the family or state court.
- transfer representation of the case to another attorney in the firm if the attorney is compelled to withdraw representation for any reason other than the emergence of a conflict of interest or a termination of representation due to client misconduct. NIJC is unable to absorb *pro bono* cases in-house, except in very limited circumstances.
- inform NIJC of any transfer of representation within the firm or addition of attorneys to the legal team assigned to the case.
- keep NIJC informed regarding the status of the case. NIJC is committed to representing every child whose parent or guardian is referred for *pro bono* representation in family or state court proceedings in the child's immigration court proceedings for the duration of the family or state court case.
- contact NIJC if the client seeks assistance regarding other legal matters. NIJC's involvement in the child's case is limited to the matter specified in the NIJC retainer. NIJC is unable to provide technical support on other legal matters beyond the scope of the NIJC retainer. If a client becomes concurrently eligible for another form of relief, NIJC may execute a supplementary retainer with the client to assist in seeking that benefit.
- contact NIJC before speaking with the media or any members of Congress about the case. NIJC is actively involved in immigration policy and advocacy efforts at the state and national levels, and with local and national media. Coordinating with NIJC will ensure that any advocacy efforts achieve the best possible result for the client.

Attorney Name (print and sign)

Date

Law Firm

Date of Admission to Bar

State of Admission

Have you had any legal malpractice or legal disciplinary complaints filed against you? If yes, please explain. _____

Please fill out the *Pro Bono* Attorney Guidelines and return it to Rebecca Cabezas by email (rcabezas@heartlandalliance.org) or fax (312.660.1506). Thank you for your support!