

Filing for Asylum in Removal Proceedings Without an Attorney

Today's Date: _____
I last entered the United States on _____
My next hearing is scheduled for _____

FILING AT YOUR NEXT HEARING BEFORE THE IMMIGRATION JUDGE

- At your next hearing, give the original I-589 application and certificate of service (see reverse side of this guide) and two complete copies of the I-589 application and certificate of service to the bailiff, who will pass them to the immigration judge. Ask the judge to please stamp all of the copies. The judge will keep the original and give the copies back to the bailiff to give to you. You should hand one of the copies to the government attorney from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), who will be sitting at the other table next to you.
- Keep the additional stamped copy for your own records.

FILING IN PERSON AT THE FILING WINDOW AT IMMIGRATION COURT

- Take the original I-589 application and certificate of service (see reverse side of this guide) and two complete copies to the Immigration Court at 525 W. Van Buren St., Suite 500, Chicago, IL 60607. The clerk at the window will stamp the original and keep it. The clerk will also stamp the copies, but will return both copies to you.
- Place one of the stamped copies in an envelope addressed to:
**U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Office of the Chief Counsel
525 W. Van Buren St., Suite 701
Chicago, IL 60607**
... AND EITHER ...
(a) Drop off the envelope at the security guard table on the first floor of the Immigration Court building (525 W. Van Buren St., Chicago, IL 60607)
... OR ...
(b) Mail the copy via certified mail, FedEx, DHL, or some other courier service on the same day. **NOTE: If you send it by mail, make sure you have a way to track the mailing to confirm that it was delivered. Save the proof of delivery.**
- Keep the other stamped copy for your own records and bring it to your next scheduled hearing with the immigration judge.

FILING BY CERTIFIED MAIL

- (a) Mail the original and one copy of the I-589 application and certificate of service (see reverse side of this guide) to:
**U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration Court
525 W. Van Buren St., Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60607**
 - Include a self-addressed return envelope with a stamp so that the court can mail you the stamped copy of the I-589.
 - Mail the package via certified mail, FedEx, DHL, or some other courier service. **NOTE: Make sure you have a way to track the mailing to confirm that it was delivered. Save the proof of delivery.**
 - When the clerk at the court opens the mail, he or she will stamp the applications, keep the original, and mail you back a copy in the envelope you included.
- (b) Mail a copy of the I-589 application and certificate of service to:
**U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Office of the Chief Counsel
525 W. Van Buren St., Suite 701
Chicago, IL 60607**
Mail it via certified mail, FedEx, DHL, or some other courier service on the same day. **NOTE: Make sure you have a way to track the mailing to confirm that it was delivered. Save the proof of delivery.**
- Keep the other stamped copy for your own records and bring it to your next scheduled hearing with the immigration judge.

Filing for Asylum in Removal Proceedings Without an Attorney

Requesting asylum is a very complicated process and we strongly encourage all asylum seekers to find a competent immigration attorney with experience representing asylum seekers. It is important that you only hire a licensed attorney or Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) accredited representative to represent you and that your attorney has immigration, and especially asylum, experience.

- Avoid immigration fraud and do not hire a “notario” to represent you.
- If you do not believe that your attorney is properly representing you, you always have the right to find a new attorney or obtain a second opinion.

But if you cannot find an attorney to represent you, you can request asylum on your own (also known as “pro se”).

- If you decide to file for asylum on your own, the document titled *“I’m Afraid to Go Back:” A Guide to Asylum, Withholding of Removal and the Convention Against Torture* may help you.

Additional Considerations for Asylum Applicants:

- **Obtaining an asylum application:** If the immigration judge did not give you a copy of the I-589 asylum application at your last hearing date, you can get a copy online at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-589>.
- **Asylum for unaccompanied minors:** If you came to the United States when you were under the age of 18 and you were in a shelter then you must file your application directly with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
- **Work Authorization:** You can file for a work permit 150 days after you have filed your application if you did not cause any other delays in your case. To file for a work permit, follow the instructions for Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization (available at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-765>). Be sure to submit a copy of the first page of the stamped Form I-589 application to show the date you filed the application. You do not have to pay a fee to USCIS the first time you file an application for a work permit.

How to create a “Certificate of Service” for cases before the Chicago Immigration Court:

If you will give the asylum application to the ICE attorney at your next hearing, or if you will drop it off at the security desk on the ground floor of the Immigration Court building (525 W. Van Buren St., Chicago, IL 60607), then on a blank sheet of paper, you can write the following:

I, _____ (your name here), hereby certify that I hand delivered a copy of this document to a representative of ICE Office of the Chief Counsel, 525 W. VanBuren St., Chicago, Illinois 60607, on the date below.

Signed:

Date:

If you will mail the asylum application to the ICE attorney before the hearing, then on a blank sheet of paper, you can write the following:

I, _____ (your name here), hereby certify that I placed a copy of this document in the mail to the ICE Office of Chief Counsel at 525 W. Van Buren Street, Suite 701, Chicago, IL 60607 on the date below.

Signed:

Date:

This document is not intended as legal advice. It is always advisable to consult with a licensed attorney or BIA accredited representative to determine whether you are eligible for asylum or any other benefit under immigration law or policy.