

The National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) is dedicated to establishing and defending the legal rights of immigrants, regardless of background, and to transforming the immigration system to one that affords equal opportunity for all.

Based in Chicago and with five offices across the country, NIJC provides direct legal services to and advocates for all immigrants through policy reform, impact litigation, and public education. Since its founding more than four decades ago--and thanks to the support of thousands of pro bono attorneys from the nation's leading law firms--NIJC has been unique in blending individual client advocacy with broad-based systemic change.

Non-citizens do not have the right to appointed counsel, so most immigrants are unrepresented in their cases. Without an attorney, immigrants may be separated from their families or returned to dangerous situations. Cases with pro bono representation are much more likely to be approved, and NIJC maintains an approval rate of over 90 percent for the clients we represent.

NIJC's Pro Bono Program (FY2024)

65,000+

Pro bono hours
contributed

2,091

Cases supported by
pro bono attorneys

2,394

Attorneys active on
pro bono matters

87

Countries of origin
represented

Pro Bono Case Opportunities with NIJC

Asylum

Represent an asylum seeker before the asylum office or in immigration court. Defend human rights protections and access to justice for all children, families, and individuals seeking asylum by representing survivors of domestic and gender violence, repressed political and religious beliefs, anti-LGBTQ discrimination, and other forms of persecution.

Estimated time commitment: 100-200 hours, but varies based on the complexity of the case

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)

Represent the guardian of an immigrant minor to obtain a predicate order in state court. The predicate order is a critical first step in accessing SIJS, a form of relief available to immigrant children who have suffered abuse, neglect, or abandonment by a parent.

Estimated time commitment: 40-60 hours, typically over the course of 3-6 months

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

Represent an immigrant survivor of a crime committed in the United States or an immigrant survivor of family or domestic violence.

Estimated time commitment: 20-40 hours

Pro Bono Clinic Opportunities with NIJC

NIJC coordinates single-day pro bono clinics with law firms, often in partnership with corporations. These clinics typically have little to no follow-up work.

- Pro Se Asylum for Recent Arrivals
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status Predicate Orders
- Asylee/Refugee Family Petitions and Petitions for Permanent Residency
- DACA Renewals

How NIJC Finds our Pro Bono Clients

1. An immigrant contacts NIJC and needs an attorney.
2. NIJC staff conduct an in-depth case assessment.
3. If accepted, NIJC signs a retainer with the client and looks for pro bono placement.
4. A pro bono team accepts the case. NIJC remains of counsel and provides technical assistance.



Each case placed with a pro bono team allows NIJC to accept one new case for representation.

Our Pro Bono Partnership

- **NIJC** remains of counsel and provides in-depth training, attorney support, document review, and technical assistance throughout the life of the case.
- **Pro bono attorneys** prepare the case with the client, provide any necessary interpreter services, and represent the client before federal agencies.



We invite you to review NIJC's extensive pro bono resources available on our website at <https://immigrantjustice.org/for-attorneys>.

To connect with individuals and families who need legal representation, please see the [current case list](#) available on our web page.

For general information about NIJC Pro Bono Programs, please contact Charlotte Sall, Pro Bono Manager, at csall@immigrantjustice.org.



Immigrantjustice.org/action



National Immigrant
Justice Center