

June 21, 2024

## **NIJC Pro Bono Case List: 73 cases need pro bono representation.**

Immigrants do not have the right to appointed counsel and without pro bono representation, many of NIJC's clients would be forced to seek immigration relief on their own. NIJC pro bono attorneys defend the legal rights of immigrants, prevent permanent family separation and deportation to persecution and torture, and help ensure access to justice for all.

This case list is divided into sections based on the type of case. All cases that require priority placement are listed at the top of the list and organized by case type. When you select a case type, the headline will provide basic information about the case. Additional information is available in the drop-down options below the headline.

- **Asylum - Affirmative:** Represent an individual or family who is affirmatively applying for asylum and will present their case before the Asylum Office.
- **Asylum – Defensive:** Represent an individual or family who is applying for asylum as a defense to removal and will present their case before the Immigration Court.
- **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS):** Represent the guardian of an immigrant minor in state court proceedings to obtain a predicate order.
- **U Visa:** Represent an immigrant survivor of a crime committed in the United States.
- **VAWA:** Represent an immigrant survivor of family or domestic violence.

NIJC staff provide [extensive training, resources and technical assistance](#) to pro bono teams through the life of the pro bono matter.

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[Defensive Asylum Matters](#)  
[Affirmative Asylum Matters](#)  
[SIJS – Predicate Order Matters](#)  
[VAWA Matters](#)

## Priority Matters

### Priority Matters - Defensive Asylum

1. F. is a gay cisgender man from Nicaragua. He is also a member of the Miskitu indigenous nation. F. speaks Spanish and Miskito. His merits hearing is November 4, 2024.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 11/4/2024

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Languages:** Other, Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Nicaragua

#### Client's Story

F. experienced violence and abuse his entire life for being gay. His adoptive father physically abused him so severely and F. felt so ostracized that he tried to kill himself. F. also faced regular abuse and homophobia by neighbors and strangers alike because he is gay. F. started an organization doing sex education and HIV prevention, and became well-known as an LGBTQ activist in his community. One evening, F. was violently attacked and called homophobic slurs by a group of men. F. reported the attack to the police, but his attackers threatened him throughout the process and did not believe the police would further protect him from his attackers.

Unable to live safely in Nicaragua, F. fled to Panama, where he received a temporary residence permit. However, F. was subject to homophobic attacks and was frequently called slurs for his ethnicity and nationality. When F. received death threats over text message, he feared for his life and returned to Nicaragua. Upon return, government officials interrogated F. about his LGBTQ+ activism and time in Panama. F. feared he would be arrested and tortured if he remained in Nicaragua as a gay, indigenous, LGBTQ+ activist, so he fled to the United States.

#### Important Client Context

F.'s asylum application was timely filed pro se with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for F. are due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing on November 4, 2024.

#### NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Number: 24-0167565

2. K. is a gay cisgender man from Colombia and Venezuela. He speaks Spanish and lives in the western suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. His merits hearing is on February 10, 2025.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 2/10/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

#### Client's Story

K. attempted to hide his sexual orientation his entire life due to pervasive homophobia in Colombia and Venezuela. Around 2022, K. participated in an LGBTQ march in Colombia. He wore feminine clothing, and a group of men attacked him. The assailants placed a chemical soaked rag over K.'s mouth that made him unconscious. When K. regained consciousness, he noticed wounds all over his body and experienced extreme rectum pain. K. attempted to file a police report, but the officials mocked him for his sexual orientation. A few months later, while K. was staying with his cousin in another part of Colombia, he received a death threat letter

containing homophobic slurs and returned to Chile for a few months. After K. left Chile, he briefly returned to Colombia before fleeing to the United States.

**Important Client Context**

K. is dual national of Colombia and Venezuela. He is also a legal permanent resident of Chile. Pro bono counsel will need to argue that Colombia is K.'s primary country of citizenship and also that K. should not be returned to Venezuela nor Chile, as he would face harm in either country because of his sexual orientation. K.'s asylum application was timely filed with the Chicago Immigration Court on January 9, 2024. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to K.'s merits hearing, which is set for February 10, 2025.

If K. is granted asylum, he would like to petition for his child, who currently resides in Colombia.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164282

3. L. is a bisexual cisgender man from Togo. He speaks French and lives in Chicago. L. timely filed his asylum application, and his merits hearing is set for February 20, 2025.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 2/10/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Languages:** French, Other

**Country of Origin:** Togo

**Client's Story**

L. realized that he is bisexual as a teenager. In 2020, L.'s relationship with his male partner was discovered when he took his phone to be repaired, and the technician found photos of L. and his partner together. Not long after, L.'s brother and some neighbors surprised L. and his partner while they were being intimate. The brother and neighbors had the photos from L.'s phone and beat L. and his partner. L.'s mother intervened to help him escape, and L. fled Togo soon after.

**Important Client Context**

All affidavits and supporting documents for L.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing. His hearing is scheduled to be held remotely, over WebEx.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0152805

4. M. is a man from Ecuador. His merits hearing is on February 24, 2025. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 2/24/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

**Client's Story**

M. owned a small business in Ecuador where people could pay to use computers and printers. His shop was located near the local market where corrupt police officers frequently extorted vendors. Around August 2018, two officers left behind a flash drive after using computers in M.'s store. After they left, M. opened the flash drive and discovered evidence that they were overcharging market vendors. When the officers came back to retrieve the flash drive, they warned M. that he would have problems if he had looked at the contents of the flash drive and spoke out against

them. Afterwards, M. began to receive threats from the police and a gang affiliated with the police. Around January 2019, gang members kidnapped M. and took him to a remote location where they beat and robbed him. After this incident, M. fled the country. People continued to look for him at his shop and threatened to harm his girlfriend and daughter, which led them to flee as well.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC filed M.'s asylum application with the immigration court in April 2021. Because his application was filed more than one year after he entered the United States, M.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that he merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to M.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing on February 24, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 20-0145604

5. R. is a man from Nicaragua. His individual merits hearing is on March 27, 2025. R. speaks Spanish and lives in northeastern Wisconsin.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 3/27/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** WI

**Country of Origin:** Nicaragua

**Client's Story**

During 2018, R. helped protestors that were part of an anti-government march by providing them with food and water. Law enforcement noticed R. and concluded he was anti-government. Consequently, pro-government Sandinista forces attacked, detained, and threatened R. The Sandinistas also threatened R.'s parents. R.'s cousin encouraged R. to flee the country for his safety; shortly after R. fled, the Sandinistas murdered R.'s cousin. R. entered the United States in July 2021.

**Important Client Context**

Because his application was filed more than one year after he entered the United States, R. may only be eligible for withholding of removal. All affidavits and supporting materials to R.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for March 27, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0165563

6. M. is a gay cisgender man living with HIV from Venezuela. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. His merits hearing is scheduled for April 17, 2025.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 4/17/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence, LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

**Client's Story**

As a child, neighbors called M. homophobic slurs, and peers beat M. because of his sexual orientation. M.'s ex-boyfriend abused him and threatened him with a knife. M. did not feel safe reporting his ex-boyfriend to the Venezuelan police because police are homophobic and do not protect gay men. Fearing for his life, M. fled to Peru in 2018. However, M.'s ex-boyfriend followed him to Peru, stalked him, threatened him,

and attempted to poison him. In Peru, M. also tested positive for HIV. M. fears he will be denied access to healthcare and will be targeted for his HIV status if he is forced to return to Venezuela. M. also fears the Venezuelan government will label him as an enemy of the State for leaving the country without permission.

**Important Client Context**

M.'s asylum application was timely filed with the immigration court on August 4, 2023. His individual hearing is scheduled for April 17, 2025 at the Chicago Immigration Court. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to his merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0162590

7. G. is a young woman from Honduras. Her son, P., is a derivative on her asylum application. Their merits hearing is on April 25, 2025. G. and P. speak Spanish and live in Northcentral Indiana.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 4/25/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

G. met, T., around 2018 and moved in with him. T. controlled G.'s actions throughout their relationship, dictating what she wore and locking her in the house. He abused her physically and emotionally. Around 2019, G. gave birth to T.'s son, P. G. and P. escaped from T. in 2020, but T. broke into the house where G. was living and forcibly took P. from her, demanding that G. return to his house. With help from family members, G. recovered P. and they moved to a different town in Honduras to hide from T. G. began a relationship with another man, but feared that T. would never allow her to be free of him. She feared that T. would take P. from her again. In the winter of 2021, G. and P. fled Honduras and arrived in the United States.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed their applications for asylum. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for April 25, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0152262

8. J. is a woman from Ecuador. Her daughter, S. is a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible. Their merits hearing is on May 12, 2025. J. and S. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 5/12/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence, LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** English

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

**Client's Story**

When J. was a young woman, she met her first partner and the father of her first two children. He abused her for several years until they separated. She made multiple reports against him. A few years later, J. met the father of her third child, S. He also severely abused J. throughout their relationship. She finally separated from him after several years, but he continued to threaten her. J. then entered a relationship with a

woman. She and her partner faced discrimination, harassment and threats for being together. J.'s second partner often called to threaten her, insult her, and even found her and beat her up again. J. and her partner received a letter at their home calling them lesbians and telling them they were going to be killed. They fled to the United States with J.'s daughter, S., as soon as they had the money to do so. J. and S. arrived in the United States in July of 2021.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed J. and S.'s asylum applications with USCIS. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for May 12, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0150688

9. K. is a gay cisgender man from Cuba.. He speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. K. is scheduled for a merits hearing on May 22, 2025. (23-0161988).

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 5/22/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Cuba

**Client's Story**

K. fears returning to Cuba because of his past advocacy for LGBTQ rights and HIV prevention work. He was detained with other gay men and HIV prevention activists and was surveilled in his neighborhood. K. entered the United States in May 2022, and timely applied for asylum.

**Important Client Context**

K. entered the United States on May 30, 2022, and timely applied for asylum pro se on January 9, 2023. All affidavits and supporting documents for K.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing on May 22, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0161988

10. P. is a man from Angola. His wife Q., and children, R., S., T., U., and V. are all derivatives on his application for asylum. P., Q., R., S., U., and V.'s merits hearing is on June 24, 2025. USCIS has jurisdiction over T.'s case; she is awaiting her asylum interview date. P. and his family speak Portuguese and live on the Southside of Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 6/24/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Portuguese

**Country of Origin:** Angola

**Client's Story**

P. was a teacher. As a government worker, he was expected to support the government in power, "the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola" (the MPLA). P. refused to participate in pro government marches and offer his support to the MPLA. P.'s wife, Q., occasionally showed support for the government's opposition and participated in anti-government marches. During one of these marches, security guards saw Q. and identified her as part of the opposition party. Soon after, P. and his family began to receive threatening phone calls in which they were accused of being traitors. P. believes that the MPLA was targeting them as anti-government. Over the next few months, P. was kidnapped, beaten, threatened

with death, and persecuted. His wife and children were also victims of attempted harm including threats and attempted kidnapping. The family reported multiple instances of harm to the police, but they never received any protection. In September 2022, men on motorcycles followed and shot at P. and the children. Soon after, they obtained tourist visas to Brazil and fled Angola. From Brazil, they made their way north and entered the United States in February 2023.

#### **Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed P., Q., R., S., U., and V.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court, and P.'s children are listed as derivatives on his application. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing on June 24, 2025. NIJC timely filed T.'s application for asylum with USCIS. All supporting materials for T.'s case will be due one week prior to her asylum interview. If P. is granted asylum before his daughter receives an interview, he will be able to file an asylee relative petition for her.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0163395

## **Asylum - Defensive**

*Expected Tasks:* Legal research, Litigating in immigration court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients, Writing legal memos

11. S. is a man from Colombia. His Master Calendar hearing is on July 17, 2024. S. speaks Spanish and lives in a suburb of Indianapolis.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 7/17/2024

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

#### **Client's Story**

S. was known as a community leader because of his work helping young men in his neighborhood stay away from drugs and violence. He collected money and used it to share food with local youth. Members of La Cordillera armed group targeted and sent death threats to S. for his community work. They attacked S. while on his motorcycle and later kidnapped and physically assaulted him. S. fled to the United States in 2023.

#### **Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed S.'s asylum application with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for S.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Pro bono counsel may request a merits date at the scheduled master calendar hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 24-0167176

12. M. is a man from Guatemala. His Master Calendar hearing is on July 25, 2024. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 7/25/2024

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court  
**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish  
**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

**Client's Story**

M. lived in Guatemala with his wife, who has HIV. M.'s former employer knew that M. was receiving medical treatment to prevent the transmission of HIV from his wife to him. His employer assumed that M. was living with AIDs, publicized this to his co-workers, and stated that M. would transmit HIV to his colleagues. M.'s employer terminated his employment and listed information on a public database stating that M. has a medical condition that prevents him from being able to work so that others will not hire him. M. initiated a civil rights lawsuit against his former employer, after which he began receiving death threats. Separately, M. and his family have been attacked because of his wife's HIV status and because of an assumption that M. is gay.

**Important Client Context**

M. timely filed his I-589 pro se. All affidavits and supporting materials for M's case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Pro bono counsel may request a merits date at the scheduled master hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0162812

13. C. and K. are lesbian cisgender women from Mexico. They speak Spanish and live in the Chicago suburbs. K.'s first master calendar hearing is August 8, 2024 and C.'s first master calendar hearing is November 14, 2025, but their cases can be consolidated.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 8/8/2024

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

**Client's Story**

Growing up, C.'s brothers beat her and her partner K. for being lesbians. The couple attempted to relocate to another part of Mexico, but C.'s colleague threatened, drugged, and sexually assaulted her. He said he wanted to teach C. to like men. He threatened to kill both C. and K. They tried to report the colleague to the police, but the police refused to help them because they are lesbians. C. and K. tried to move again but continue receiving threatening messages. They fled to the United States in 2022.

**Important Client Context**

C. and K. timely filed for asylum. C. has prior removal order, but it does not impact her asylum eligibility. K.'s first master calendar hearing is August 8, 2024. C.'s first master calendar hearing is November 14, 2025. Pro bono counsel may discuss consolidating the cases with clients. When a merits hearing is set, all affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior. Pro bono counsel may request a merits date at the scheduled master calendar hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Numbers: 22-0160453, 22-0160531

14. C. and K. are lesbian cisgender women from Mexico. They speak Spanish and live in the Chicago suburbs. K.'s first master calendar hearing is August 8, 2024 and C.'s first master



calendar hearing is November 15, 2025, but their cases can be consolidated.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 8/8/2024

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

#### **Client's Story**

Growing up, C.'s brothers beat her and her partner K. for being lesbians. The couple attempted to relocate to another part of Mexico, but C.'s colleague threatened, drugged, and sexually assaulted her. He said he wanted to teach C. to like men. He threatened to kill both C. and K. They tried to report the colleague to the police, but the police refused to help them because they are lesbians. C. and K. tried to move again but continue receiving threatening messages. They fled to the United States in 2022.

#### **Important Client Context**

C. and K. timely filed for asylum. C. has prior removal order, but it does not impact her asylum eligibility. K.'s first master calendar hearing is August 8, 2024. C.'s first master calendar hearing is November 15, 2025. Pro bono counsel may discuss consolidating the cases with clients. When a merits hearing is set, all affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior. Pro bono counsel may request a merits date at the scheduled master calendar hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Numbers: 22-0160531, 22-0160453

15. S. is a man from Togo. His next Master Calendar hearing is on September 4, 2024. He speaks French and lives in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 9/4/2024

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Languages:** French, English

**Country of Origin:** Togo

#### **Client's Story**

S. joined the PNP political party in 2017 to protest the lack of democracy in Togo. He became party secretary and mobilized individuals to join PNP protests. In 2018, the police beat S. during a protest and threatened to kill him. The police attempted to drag S. to their vehicle, but other protesters saw this and threw things at the officers. The police let go of S. and he was able to escape. With help from his father, S. fled to another village. He remained in hiding there for two weeks, but continued to receive threats daily via phone. During this time, the police gave S.'s father a summons for S. to go to the police station. S. fled to Brazil and lived there without status for almost two years until he received more threats. He then went to Mexico before entering the United States in 2021.

#### **Important Client Context**

S. timely filed his asylum application with the Chicago Immigration Court. All filings will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, [lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Number: 23-0161245

16. R. is a man from Venezuela. His wife, S. is a derivative on his application and is also

independently eligible for asylum. R.'s Master Calendar hearing is on May 22, 2024. S.'s Master Calendar hearing is on December 18, 2024. R. and S. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Application filed by 10/1/2024

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:**

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

### **Client's Story**

R. and his brother worked together in construction. The colectivos, pro-government paramilitary groups, oversaw their work and took a portion of all the construction workers' paychecks. They killed R.'s brother when he complained about this policy. R. quit his job, but the colectivos demanded that he return to work, attacked him, and threatened to kill him if he did not obey. R. joined a political opposition group and participated in protests against government corruption. The colectivos' attacks and threats intensified, so R. and S. fled to Chile. They later returned to Venezuela after they were harmed by the Tren de Aragua gang. R. and S. tried to relocate within Venezuela, but the colectivos found them again. The attacks and the threats continued to escalate, and R. and S. fled to the United States. S. also experienced persecution for her political opinion prior to R.'s problems with the colectivos. Police threatened her and her family while holding her in detention for her participation in a university student protest.

### **Important Client Context**

R. and S.'s asylum applications must be filed by October 1, 2024. Pro bono attorneys should request to consolidate their cases in immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for R. and S.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Pro bono counsel may request a merits date at the scheduled master hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 24-0168308

17. H. is a gay cisgender man from Venezuela. He speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. His first master calendar hearing is November 19, 2024.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 11/19/2024

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

### **Client's Story**

From a young age, H. faced abuse, harassment and bullying for being more effeminate. His father told H. he "would rather have a dead son than a gay son." H. learned to hide his sexual orientation out of fear. As an adult, H. was fired from his government job after his boss found out H. is gay. H. also believes he was fired because he refused to support President Maduro. H. relocated to another part of Venezuela out of fear of political retaliation and other government sponsored violence. However, outside of the capital, he felt even more fear of being outed, attacked, and even killed because of his sexual orientation and political opinion.

### **Important Client Context**

H.'s asylum application was timely filed with the Chicago Immigration Court. H.'s first master calendar hearing is November 19, 2024. When his merits hearing is set, all affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior. Pro bono counsel may

request a merits date at the scheduled master hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0157128

18. E. is a HIV positive gay cisgender man from Venezuela. He speaks Spanish, and he lives in Chicago, Illinois. His first master calendar hearing is January 6, 2025.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 1/6/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

**Client's Story**

E. has hidden his sexual orientation from a young age out of fear of homophobic violence. He was fired from his government job after he refused to participate in marches supporting President Maduro. He ultimately fled Venezuela after he was denied medical treatment in August 2022 because of his HIV status. E. felt he had no recourse because if he sought legal action, more people would know his HIV status, which he feared would lead to losing his job and facing further discrimination and violence.

**Important Client Context**

E.'s asylum application was timely filed on August 11, 2023. All affidavits and supporting materials for E. will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing. If client and pro bono counsel agree, counsel can file a motion to set the case for merits.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0161398

19. L. is a lesbian cisgender woman from Colombia. She speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. Her first master calendar hearing is on January 16, 2025.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 1/16/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

L. faced violence and discrimination for dressing and acting in ways considered masculine. She was sent to the school psychologist to cure her "gay tendencies." When she came out to her mother, her mother rejected L. and beat her. A group of men then drugged, kidnapped, and raped L. because she dressed like a lesbian. Years later, a different group of men tried to grab and attack L. and a friend to "teach them how to be women." L. and her friend ran to the police, but the police refused to help them.

**Important Client Context**

Since 2017, L. mostly lived outside of Colombia because she could not tolerate the homophobia. She spent several years in Brazil and briefly lived in Chile and Ecuador, but she did not request or have legal status or a work permit in any of these countries. Pro bono counsel will need to argue, with NIJC's support, that L. was not firmly resettled in any of these countries. L.'s asylum application was timely filed with the Chicago Immigration Court on July 10, 2023. When her merits hearing is set, all affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior. Pro bono counsel may

request a merits date at the scheduled master calendar hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0161948

20. R. is a man from Colombia. His wife, M., and children, J., G., and S., are derivatives on his application and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is on February 24, 2025. R. and his family speak Spanish and live in a southwestern suburb of Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 2/24/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

R. owned a computer repair business in Colombia. While doing a job in 2022, he accidentally discovered an organization that stole motorcycles and overheard an official's name. After finishing the job, he and his family received numerous threats. A police officer stopped R., placed him in the police car, and threatened him to stay silent about what he saw on the computer. Later, men kidnapped and beat R., threatening the life of his pregnant wife and disabled son. R. and his family fled Colombia and arrived in the US July 2022.

**Important Client Context**

Their next Master Calendar hearing is on February 24, 2025. All affidavits and supporting materials for their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0161686

21. R. is a woman from Angola. Her sons, S. and T., are derivatives on her asylum application and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their Master Calendar hearing is on April 7, 2025. R., S., and T. speak Portuguese and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 4/7/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Languages:** Portuguese, Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Angola

**Client's Story**

R. was a doctor in Angola during the COVID-19 pandemic. She refused to falsify documents and participate in the corruption in which her employer and the Angolan government were involved. R. participated in public protests against this corruption, and police detained her as a result. Unknown individuals attacked and sexually assaulted R. because of her opposition. R.'s son, S., was kidnapped by individuals who told R. that this had happened because of her political opinions. S. was later returned to R., and she fled with her children to the United States in March 2023. R. is also a domestic abuse survivor. Beginning in 2019 and lasting until she left Angola, R.'s former husband, from whom she is now separated, physically and emotionally abused her.

**Important Client Context**

R. has one U.S. citizen child, U. R. timely filed her asylum application with the immigration court in December 2023. NIJC timely filed independent asylum

applications for S. and T. in February 2024. All affidavits and supporting materials for R., S., and T.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Pro bono counsel may request a merits date at the scheduled master hearing or file a motion to set for merits at an earlier date.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0166536

22. R. is a woman from Honduras. Her two children, S. and E., are derivatives on her application for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is May 07, 2025. The family speaks Spanish and lives in Northern Indiana.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 5/7/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

When R. was a child, the director of her school molested her several times. As a teenager, a much older man forced her into a relationship in which he verbally and sexually abused her. R. left him after several years of abuse. Later, R. became involved in politics. The local gang told R. to help their gang leader get into her political party and threatened kill her otherwise. R. refused and fled the country with her children.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed their asylum applications. R.'s next Master Calendar Hearing is on May 07, 2025. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0153250

23. L. is a man from Cuba. His Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for June 16, 2025. L. speaks Spanish and lives in the Western suburbs of Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 6/16/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Cuba

**Client's Story**

L. attended anti-government protests in July 2021. A few days later, police arrived to his house and began threatening him. They told him that unless he paid 200 pesos, he was going to be jailed. Eventually, L was put in jail and was detained for several days. Afraid to be jailed again, L. fled for the United States.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed his asylum application USCIS. L.'s first Master Calendar hearing is on June 16, 2023. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to his merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0155448

24. K. is a gay cisgender man from Colombia. He speaks Spanish and lives in the western suburbs of Chicago. K. is currently set for a merits hearing on July 21, 2025.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 7/21/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

Throughout K.'s childhood, he was frequently perceived as LGBTQ. He was sexually assaulted on numerous occasions. He was called anti-LGBTQ slurs and ostracized at school. Around 2022, members of a local gang saw K. with his boyfriend and shouted anti-LGBTQ slurs at them. From then on, gang members harassed K. and his boyfriend nearly every time they left house by shouting slurs and threats and by throwing stones and bottles at them. Later that year, gang members sent death threats to K. and his family. When the death threats began, K. and his siblings reported the threats to the neighborhood and city police but did not feel protected. A few weeks after the death threats began, K. and his family members left Colombia.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed K.'s asylum application with the Chicago Immigration Court on July 10, 2023. All affidavits and supporting documents for K.'s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Number: 23-0161283

25. J. is a gay cisgender man from Colombia. He speaks Spanish and lives in the western suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. His defensive asylum application is pending with the immigration court. His merits hearing is on July 29, 2025.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 7/29/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

As a child, J.'s peers frequently called him anti-LGBTQ slurs because they perceived him as feminine. In 2018, men attacked and sexually abused J. while calling him slurs. J. contracted HIV from the assault. Later that year, another group of men beat J. while calling him anti-LGBTQ slurs and threatening to kill his family if he went to the police. J. fears living openly as a gay man in Colombia and fears that sharing his HIV status and abuse with anyone would put him at risk for further harm. J. believes the Colombian police are corrupt and anti-LGBTQ and would not protect him from future harm. J. fled to the United State after meeting his partner online who told J. about the possibility of living freely as a gay person in the United States.

**Important Client Context**

J. timely filed his asylum application pro se on March 13, 2023. J. is currently set for a merits hearing on July 29, 2025. All affidavits and supporting documents for J.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Number: 23-0161824

26. E. is a young man from Guatemala. He has a Master Calendar hearing is on August 6, 2025, but because he was a designated unaccompanied child, the asylum office has jurisdiction over his pending asylum claim. E. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 8/6/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court, USCIS

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

**Client's Story**

When E. was in high school, local gang members began to demand that E. help them with their illegal activities. E. refused, and the gang members pushed him to the ground. The gang members continued demanding that E. assist them. Each time, E. refused, and the gang members beat him. The gang then killed E.'s cousin for defying their demands. The gang's threats escalated to the point that the gang members threatened him with a gun in late 2020 or early 2021. E. fled Guatemala soon afterwards. Immigration officers apprehended E. and placed him in ORR custody.

**Important Client Context**

As a previously designated unaccompanied child, the asylum office has initial jurisdiction over E.'s case even though he is scheduled for a Master Calendar Hearing in immigration court on August 6, 2025. NIJC timely filed E.'s skeletal asylum application with USCIS. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office, which could be scheduled at any time.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 21-0150685

27. N. is a woman from Ecuador. Both N. and her partner, S., have individual asylum applications. Their merits hearing is scheduled for August 20, 2025. N. and S. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 8/20/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

**Client's Story**

W., the father of N.'s son, abused N. both during and after their relationship. After W. verbally abused her and destroyed items in their shared home, N. filed a police report, went to court for domestic violence and moved out, taking their son with her. The police did nothing to help her. W. stalked and threatened N. When N. began a relationship with S., W. threatened S. W. also followed N. to her job, where he physically assaulted her and threatened her with a knife. W. also assaulted S. at his job, resulting in an injury to S.'s arm. When N. became pregnant with S.'s child, W. continued to threaten them, saying he would make sure that N. lost the child. N. and S. fled Ecuador to escape W., who has continued to send N. threatening messages.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed N. and S.'s asylum application with the immigration court. R. has traveled to the United States and is currently waiting to be reunited with N. while in ORR custody. N. and S.'s child is a United States Citizen. All affidavits and supporting materials for their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for on August 20, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 23-0162173

28. B. is a man from Mexico. His wife, S., and their child, R., are derivatives on B.'s asylum

application and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their merits hearing is on August 25, 2025. The family speaks Spanish and lives in a western suburb of Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 8/25/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

#### **Client's Story**

A married couple from Mexico, B. and S. operated a store. In December 2020, members of Los Oaxacos cartel began demanding extortion money from them in order to keep their store open. Cartel members then surrounded and monitored their store daily and called B. to threaten him if he did not pay the extortion money. The cartel members threatened that they would harm the couple's son and disappear the family if they defied the cartel. The cartel also indicated that they were specifically targeting him because he is Afro-Mexican. After a few months, the family fled to a different part of Mexico, but the cartel continued to contact and threaten B. The family fled to the United States and was placed in removal proceedings.

#### **Important Client Context**

NIJC timely the family's I-589 asylum applications. All supporting materials and affidavits will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for August 25, 2025.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, [lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Number: 22-0153688

29. R. is a woman from Ecuador. R. and four of her children have a merits hearing on August 28, 2025. R.'s husband, H., and their eldest child, C. have asylum applications pending with USCIS. R. and her family speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 8/28/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court, USCIS

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

#### **Client's Story**

H. witnessed a gang engaging in suspicious activity at a neighbor's house. Law enforcement arrived shortly after, leading the gang to assume that H. reported them to the police. Following this incident, the gang terrorized the family on numerous occasions by extorting them, attacking them, and assaulting the two eldest children. The family also suspects that the gang murdered R.'s nephew by staging a fatal car accident in which he was killed. C. suffered domestic abuse at the hands of her former partner who had ties to the same gang that targeted the rest of the family. The second eldest child has an additional claim based on a sexual assault that the gang committed against her.

#### **Important Client Context**

NIJC filed asylum applications on the family's behalf. The four youngest children are listed as derivatives on R.'s and H.'s applications, and R. and H. are also listed as each other's derivatives. All family members also filed individual asylum applications. Because their applications were filed more than one year after they entered the United States, pro bono attorneys will need to argue that the family merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to R. and the four youngest children's case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is



scheduled for August 28, 2025. All supporting materials to H. and C.'s case will be due one week prior to the asylum interview. If R. is granted asylum at her hearing before H. and C. are called for asylum interviews, she can file an I-730 petition for them to be granted asylum as her derivatives.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0165269

30. Q. is a transgender woman from Venezuela. Q. speaks Spanish and lives in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. Her merits hearing is on September 3, 2025.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 9/3/2025

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

**Client's Story**

As a child, Q's family members physically and verbally abused her for her effeminacy and because they perceived her to be gay. Q.'s classmates bullied her throughout school and called her anti-LGTBQ slurs. As an adult, Q. joined a political party in opposition to the government and was threatened by pro-government allies for her sexual orientation and political activism. Pro-government agents followed Q. home from work and physically and sexually assaulted her in her home. When Q. reported the threats and attack to the police, she was not taken seriously and was mocked for her gender identity.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed Q.'s asylum application. All affidavits and supporting documents for Q.'s case will be due 15 days prior to her merits hearing on September 3, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0161994

31. K. is a woman from Ecuador. Her husband, L., and son, C., are derivatives on her asylum application. L. also independently filed for asylum. Their individual merits hearing is scheduled for September 18, 2025. K. and her family speak Kichwa and very limited Spanish. They live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 9/18/2025

**Asylum Categories:**

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Languages:** Kichwa, Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

**Client's Story**

K. and her husband, L., operated a general store in Ecuador. One day, two men vandalized K. and L.'s vehicle, demanded money from them, and threatened to kill them because of their indigenous identities. The same men later physically assaulted K. and L. at their business, and they had to seek treatment at the hospital for their injuries. After this attack, K., L., and C. went to live in hiding with L.'s family. The men found them and physically assaulted L.'s mother. K., L., and C. fled Ecuador and arrived in the United States around July 2023.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed K., L., and C.'s asylum applications. All affidavits and supporting materials for K., L., and C.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their merits hearing, which is scheduled for September 18, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164427

32. P. is a man from Venezuela. His wife, Q., and daughter, R., are derivatives on his application and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their merits hearing is on September 26, 2025. P. and his family speak Spanish and live in a northwestern suburb of Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 9/25/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

**Client's Story**

P., Q., and P.'s brother worked for the opposition party in Venezuela. In 2020, the Venezuelan government special action forces murdered P.'s brother for his political activity. Police searched, threatened, and interrogated P. several times because of his work to mobilize voters. Venezuelan police and government agents entered their home and stole valuables on three occasions. P., Q. and R. fled Venezuela and arrived in the U.S. in June 2022.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed their I-589s in March 2023. All affidavits and supporting materials for their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing on September 25, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0155558

33. K. is a man from Ecuador. His wife, L., and daughter, M., are derivatives on his asylum application, and L. is also independently eligible for asylum. K., L., and M.'s merits hearing is on October 9, 2025. K. and his family speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 10/9/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Languages:** Kichwa, Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

**Client's Story**

K. and his wife, L., operated a fruit stand in Ecuador. K. and L. were approached by gang members who threatened their lives if they did not give them the money they demanded. K. was physically beaten and robbed by the gang members while trying to protect L. K. and L. paid the gang members for a month up until they ran out of money. K. and L. fled Ecuador with their daughter, M., and arrived in the United States around June 2023.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed their asylum applications with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for K., L. and M.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for October 9, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164144

34. P. is a woman from Guatemala. Her daughters, Q., R., and S. are derivatives on her application. S. is also independently eligible for asylum. Their merits hearing is on October 10, 2025. P., Q., R., and S. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 10/10/2025

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

**Client's Story**

Members of an organized criminal group in Guatemala tried to force P.'s daughter, S., into prostitution. When S. and P. refused, the criminal group threatened to kidnap S. Fearing for her life, S. fled to the United States. After S. fled, the same people who had targeted S. threatened to force P. into prostitution and to kidnap her other daughters. P., Q., and R. fled to the United States to seek safety.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed P.'s asylum application, which includes S., Q., and R. as derivatives. NIJC also filed an independent asylum application for S. All supporting documents to P., Q., R., and S.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for October 10, 2025.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 20-0141426

35. D. is a gay cisgender man from Honduras. D. speaks Spanish and lives in Indianapolis. His merits hearing is on January 9, 2026. (22-0160116)

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 1/9/2026

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

While in Honduras, a group of five people on the street approached D., beat him with a bat, cut him with glass and attempted to rape him while calling him anti-LGBTQ slurs. When D. went to the police, they mocked him with homophobic slurs and extorted him. D. fled Honduras after finding a note near his home threatening to kill him if he did not leave the country within 24 hours.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed D.'s asylum application. All affidavits and support documents for D.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his merits hearing, which is on January 9, 2026.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 22-0160116

36. W. is a man from Colombia. His wife, X., and daughters, Y. and Z., are derivatives on his application and are also independently eligible for asylum. W., X., Y., and Z.'s master calendar hearing is on April 29, 2026. W. and his family speak Spanish and live in a northwest suburb of Chicago.

**Deadline:** Master calendar hearing on 4/29/2026

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

W. and X. protested at public demonstrations and participated in political meetings to organize support for leftist candidates in Colombia. In spring of 2023, they experienced threats from a paramilitary group opposed to their activities. They were

targeted because they had relationships with liberal politicians through their construction company. The paramilitary group attempted to extort them for money, but they refused to provide it. Although the family reported their experience to the police, the police refused to provide them with any protection. Fearing for their safety, they fled to the United States.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed asylum applications for W., X., Y., and Z. Their Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for April 29, 2026. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164381

37. H. is a bisexual cisgender man from Benin. His merits hearing is scheduled for June 24, 2026. H. speaks French and lives in Chicago, IL.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 6/24/2026

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Languages:** French, Other

**Country of Origin:** Benin

**Client's Story**

H. fled Benin after he suffered several attacks related to his sexual orientation. The attacks began when neighbors walked in on him and a same-sex partner and beat them both. Soon after this first attack, several men approached and beat H. while threatening to kill him because of his sexual orientation. H. then began receiving threatening messages and left the city where he was living in order to be safe. When H. was chased and threatened because of his sexual orientation in this second town, he fled the country because he did not believe he could be safe anywhere in Benin. H. fled Benin in May 2021 and entered the United States in September 2021.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed H.'s I-589 on September 2, 2022. All affidavits and supporting materials for H.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing. H. married a woman in 2019, feeling obliged to hide his sexual orientation. He and his wife have one child; his wife and child reside in Benin.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0154068

38. O. is a bisexual cisgender man from Colombia. He speaks Spanish and lives in a suburb of Chicago, Illinois. His merits hearing is November 19, 2026.

**Deadline:** Merits hearing on 11/19/2026

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

Around 2020, guerrilla militants barged into U.'s family's home and sexually assaulted him, forcing him to perform oral sex and anally penetrating him while making homophobic comments to him. U. attempted to hide his sexual orientation out of fear of violence. However, in March 2023, three men drugged and kidnapped U., called him homophobic slurs, and took turns raping him. U. tried to report this to the police after the men released him, but the police laughed in his face and refused

to take down the report. When U. started receiving death threats from his kidnappers, where they said they knew U. attempted to report them to the police, U. fled to the United States.

**Important Client Context**

U.'s asylum application was timely filed with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for U. are due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing on November 19, 2026.

If U. is granted asylum, U. would like to petition for his son, who remains in Colombia.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164200

39. A. is a man from Cuba. A.'s wife L. will be a derivative on his asylum application and is also independently eligible for asylum. A. and L. speak Spanish and live in a southern suburb of Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Cuba

**Client's Story**

A. was drafted for military service. When he refused, he was detained, tortured, and subjected to beatings and threats to disappear him because he was deemed counterrevolutionary. Afterwards, A. continued to refuse to participate in the military and began protesting on the streets against the government. Later, A. began a small business, but his supplies were confiscated by government officials at the airport and later government inspectors came to his home to confiscate all of his work tools, equipment, and supplies. The inspectors threatened to disappear A. and extorted him for money. A. fled Cuba in early 2018. L. was forced to participate in pro-government school and community events when she was young which solidified her anti-government beliefs. Later, L. became an attorney and worked for a state-owned company where she was singled out by her employer as someone who did not participate in pro-government events. L. was asked to testify falsely on behalf of her employer and when she refused, she was threatened, suspended from her job, and interrogated and sexually assaulted by the police. L. fled Cuba in July 2018. L. and A. met while still in Cuba, and later married en route to the United States.

**Important Client Context**

Although A. and L. were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs), the Department of Homeland Security has not filed the NTAs with the immigration court, so their asylum applications were timely filed with USCIS. Once their NTAs are filed with the court, they will be placed into court proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, [lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org)  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0150113

40. A. is a man from Ecuador. His wife, B., and daughter, C., are derivatives on his application and are also independently eligible for asylum. A. and his family speak Kichwa and live in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Languages:** Kichwa, Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Ecuador

**Client's Story**

A. and his family are from a historically disenfranchised indigenous group in Ecuador. A. and B. participated in indigenous-led protests against the Ecuadorian government in 2022 and were injured by tear gas when the government attacked the protestors. After the protests, government actors followed and intimidated A. and B. A few months later, masked men robbed them, stealing many of the animals from their farm. The masked men may have been associated with a high-security prison for gang members that the government recently placed in the family's community. When the A. tried to report the robbery to the police, the police refused to act. The family fled to the United States and were again robbed during their journey.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed the asylum applications for A., B., and C. They are awaiting the rescheduling of their Master Calendar hearing. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164443

41. A. is a woman from Honduras. Her daughter, B., is a derivative on her application and is also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently waiting for their Master Calendar hearing to be rescheduled. They speak Spanish and live in Northern Illinois.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

As a child, an older cousin raped A. As a young woman, A.'s partner physically and verbally abused her over the course of several years. Once separated from her abusive partner, an armed MS-13 gang member demanded she become his girlfriend since she no longer had a husband. The MS-13 gang member threatened he would take A's young daughter, B., if she refused. A. and B. fled Honduras in 2019.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC filed their asylum applications with the immigration court, but because they filed more than one year after their arrival, A.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All documentation to their cases will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0146245

42. A. is a woman from Mexico. Her daughter, B., is a derivative on her application and is also independently eligible for asylum. A. and B. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

**Client's Story**

A. has experienced domestic violence since she was a child. Her father forced her to marry a man when she was a young teen because she became pregnant with his

child. This man was physically, sexually, and psychologically abusive to her throughout their relationship. When A. tried to separate from him, he took their two children and disappeared. She has only seen her eldest children once since then. A. later began a relationship with another man, B.'s father, who was also abusive. She left the relationship and was living alone with B. when she was robbed and assaulted by people she thinks may have been in the local cartel. A few months after the initial assault, someone shot into her house and she began to receive menacing phone calls. She decided to leave her area because she no longer felt safe, and while she was waiting to cross the border to the United States, she saw a boy get stabbed. Because of these experiences, A. does not feel safe anywhere in Mexico.

**Important Client Context**

A. has an NTA, but it has not yet been filed with the immigration court. Until this occurs, USCIS maintains jurisdiction over her case . NIJC timely filed asylum applications for A. and B. with USCIS. All affidavits and supporting materials to her case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0165078

43. B. is a woman from Guatemala. Her daughters, C. and D., are derivatives on her application and are also independently eligible for asylum. B. and her family speak Mam and live in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Languages:** Mam, Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

**Client's Story**

B. is an indigenous woman from a rural area of Guatemala. Police refused to act when her father was killed a year ago and her uncle was assaulted. In order to build her house, B. had to borrow money from a local lender who later threatened to harm her if she did not pay him back on time. She has been unable to pay the interest on her loan, but many in her community still think she is wealthy because her partner works in the United States. Young girls have been kidnapped and raped in B.'s village, and she feared this could happen to her or her daughters.

**Important Client Context**

B. lives with her partner in Chicago, but NIJC does not represent him as a client. NIJC timely filed the asylum applications for B., C., and D. They are awaiting the rescheduling of their Master Calendar hearing. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164176

44. C. is a woman from Venezuela. C. speaks Spanish and lives in a western suburb of Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

**Client's Story**

C. was part of Venezuela's national criminal investigations unit. She witnessed how

the government represses pro-democracy protestors when her unit became involved in arresting protestors. C. refused orders to work at a demonstration, and her supervisors punished her and prohibited her from resigning as a result of her opposition. Out of fear, C. fled the country. She believes that if she were to return to Venezuela, she would be detained and mistreated by the government.

**Important Client Context**

When C. entered the United States, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued her a Notice to Appear (NTA), but the NTA has not yet been filed with the immigration court. Unless and until her NTA is filed with the court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over her asylum application. For this reason, NIJC attorneys filed C.'s asylum application with USCIS in October 2021. Once her NTA is filed with the court, C. will be placed into court proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0151462

45. G. is a woman from Honduras. Her son, E., and her partner, R., will be derivatives on her asylum application. G. speaks Spanish and lives in western suburb of Indianapolis.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

G. began receiving threats from her aunt's ex-partner because G. and her family refused to tell him where her aunt was after she fled Honduras. Another one of G.'s aunts was kidnapped by a local gang leader related to her aunt's ex-partner. Gang members tortured this aunt and left her for dead. G. and her partner, R., fled with her family to Mexico, but while in Mexico, G. began to receive threatening messages from gang members stating that they knew the family's whereabouts and would make them pay for disobeying.

**Important Client Context**

G., R., and E. were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) by the Department of Homeland Security when they entered the United States, but their NTAs have not yet been filed with the immigration court, so USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum. NIJC timely filed G., E., and R.'s asylum applications with USCIS. Once their NTAs are filed with the court, they will be placed into removal proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0152573

46. K. is a man from Honduras. His next Master Calendar hearing was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and has not yet been rescheduled. K. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

K. was part of an opposition political party in Honduras and was very active in the



protest movement. In 2015, armed men from the Honduran military kidnapped and beat him. They threatened that he had to leave the country or end his participation in the political party. After K. escaped, he reported the kidnapping and torture to the police. After filing the police report, Honduran military and government officials constantly threatened K. that he had to leave the country. Fearing further attacks, he fled to the United States July 2018.

#### **Important Client Context**

K. filed his application for asylum pro se with the immigration court. Because he filed more than one year after his arrival, K.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that he merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to K.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 20-0143330

47. L. is a man from Honduras. L.'s Master Calendar hearing was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and has not been rescheduled. L. speaks Spanish and lives in a southwestern suburb of Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

#### **Client's Story**

In 2018, L. was living with his former partner, D., when she began to receive threatening text messages from her ex-husband. Within a few days, D.'s ex-husband murdered her. Soon after, L. began to receive threatening messages from men associated with D.'s ex-husband. These men also started to intimidate L.'s family while they were looking for him. L. assisted D.'s family in making a police report about the murder, but nothing significant came of it and police even tried to blame L. for D.'s death. L. fled Honduras about a month after D.'s death, fearing that the same people who killed her would come for him next.

#### **Important Client Context**

L. filed a pro se application for asylum with the immigration court in 2020. Because this application was filed more than one year after he entered the United States, L.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that he merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to L.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 20-0142467

48. L. is a woman from Cameroon. She, her partner O., and their daughter, B. The family speaks French and lives in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** French

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Cameroon

#### **Client's Story**

L. was forced into marriage as a child. Her husband routinely raped and abused her. He threw their newborn baby against the wall, killing the infant. After several years of

horrific abuse, L. escaped and relocated to another city but was left homeless. While on the streets, she suffered multiple rapes. A woman found L. and offered her a place to stay, but the woman's husband also raped L. The woman and her husband then trafficked L. to Brazil, promising L. work as a maid in a family member's home, but instead forcing her into a life of prostitution. While in Brazil, L. met O., who had fled Cameroon several years prior to escape political persecution. O. helped L. escape the forced prostitution, and the two relocated to another city in Brazil. After giving birth to their daughter, B., L. learned that her traffickers, who are members of the Nigerian mafia, continued to search for L., O., and B. and intended to kill them. Fearing for their lives, L., O., and B. fled to the United States.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed their applications for asylum with the Chicago Immigration Court. Their pro bono attorneys should be prepared to argue, with NIJC support, that the firm resettlement bar does not apply to their cases. All filings will be due 15 days prior to their merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Numbers: 22-0155648, 22-0155670

49. L. is a woman from Guatemala. Her children, G. and J., are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. The family speaks Spanish and lives in the Indianapolis area.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

**Client's Story**

L. endured sexual, physical, and emotional abuse from X., the father of her children. X. raped her regularly and threatened to kill her or her parents when she disagreed with him or tried to end the relationship. X. began selling drugs and was implicated in a triple femicide. When he was arrested, the victims' families surrounded L.'s house and threatened to kill her and her children as punishment for X.'s crimes. L. and her children fled Guatemala to escape the threats and X. Since arriving to the United States, X. has contacted L. and threatened to kill her for abandoning him.

**Important Client Context**

L. filed her asylum application pro se with the immigration court. Because L.'s application was filed more than one year after L. entered the United States, her pro bono attorneys will need to argue that she merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. The family is awaiting assignment of a future hearing date. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to L.'s individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0159967

50. L. is a woman from Venezuela. She is awaiting a new Master Calendar hearing date. L. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Venezuela

**Client's Story**

L. owned and operated a textile factory in Venezuela. She was also an active member of the opposition party, Primero Justicia. L. participated in many marches and protests with the party. Starting in around 2016, L. received several threats at her factory. Members of a “colectivo,” an armed pro-government group, came to her factory and told her that she had to pay them in order to support the revolution. She paid what they requested so that they would leave and reported this to the police afterwards. Not long after, the colectivo requested even more money. L. eventually had to close her business completely, but even after closing the business, she continued to receive threats from the colectivo. On several occasions, colectivo members came by her house on motorcycle shouting her name and firing guns into the air. L. came to the United States in 2018 on a tourist visa, hoping she could return to Venezuela, but soon realized it was best to stay and seek asylum after her daughter reported that colectivo members continued to come to her home looking for her.

**Important Client Context**

L. timely filed for asylum with USCIS in 2019 but her case was referred to the immigration court after her interview with the asylum office. All affidavits and supporting materials to L.’s case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0147034

51. M. is a woman from Honduras. She speaks Spanish and lives in Indianapolis with her husband, T., and their children, who are derivatives on her asylum application. M., T., and three of their children each individually eligible for asylum.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client’s Story**

M.’s nephew, who is an imprisoned gang member, demanded that M. help him leave prison by lying to the police. M. refused to cooperate. After her refusal, her cousin threatened to harm M. and her family. M. noticed gang members surveilling her family and her home. Additionally, gang members threatened T. for his refusal to pay extortion fees. The family fled Honduras after they made a police report against M.’s nephew and the police did nothing.

**Important Client Context**

They entered the United States in 2018, were placed in removal proceedings, and applied for asylum. They filed for asylum after their one-year deadline, but are Mendez Rojas class members and timely filed class membership notices. They were set for an individual merits hearing in January 2023, but the immigration court cancelled the hearing. They are now awaiting their new merits hearing date. All supplementary filings will be due to court at least 15 days before the hearing date.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0151700

52. M. is a woman from Mexico. Her daughter, Y., is a derivative on her application and is also independently eligible for asylum. M. and Y. speak Spanish and live in West Central Illinois.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

**Client's Story**

M. endured many years of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse by her husband in Mexico. Over time, he became more violent towards her. He threatened her with a machete and once, broke a number of items in their home including her cell phone, leaving her without a way to communicate. M.'s husband verbally and emotionally abused their daughter Y. as well. M. and Y. escaped Mexico in 2022. After they fled, M.'s husband threatened to kill her.

**Important Client Context**

Although M. and Y. were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs), the Department of Homeland Security has not filed the NTAs with the immigration court, so their asylum applications were timely filed with USCIS. Once their NTAs are filed with the court, they will be placed into court proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0155215

53. M. is a woman from Mexico. Her first Master Calendar Hearing is on September 9, 2026. NIJC will file her application for asylum. M. speaks Spanish and lives in the Indianapolis area.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

**Client's Story**

M.'s daughter was killed by cartel members. Local government promised to investigate the incident and M. went to the city hall several times a week to check on the status of the investigation. M. began receiving phone calls from cartel members threatening to kill her if she did not stop going to the city hall to inquire. M.'s son also started receiving threats that M. would be killed if she did not stop inquiring about the investigation. M. was forced to close her small business after armed men drove past her shop with guns to threaten her. M. fled Mexico in September 2023.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC will file M.'s initial asylum application with the Immigration Court before September 1, 2024. All affidavits and supporting materials to M.'s case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0165552

54. N. is a woman from Honduras. N. speaks Spanish and lives in a northwestern suburb of Indianapolis.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

N.'s partner, and the father of her third child, was abusive and controlling. He raped N. and told her that he would not let her end the relationship. When N. became pregnant and refused to get an abortion, he threatened to kill her and the child. Out of fear, N. fled to the United States in late 2020, but at the border, N. was placed in the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP or "Remain in Mexico") program and was

prevented from entering the United States to seek asylum. N. subsequently entered the United States and gave birth to her third child.

**Important Client Context**

Although N. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA) at the border, it has not yet been filed with the immigration court. Unless and until her NTA is filed with the court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over her application for asylum. NIJC filed N.'s asylum application with USCIS in November 2021. Once her NTA is filed with the court, she will be placed into court proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0147272

55. R is a woman from Cameroon. She speaks Cameroonian Pidgin English and lives in a northeast suburb of Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court, USCIS

**Language:** Other

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Cameroon

**Client's Story**

R is a single mother who sold food to support her family in an Anglophone region of Cameroon. In early 2022, she was arrested by the Cameroonian military and accused of selling food to separatists. Policed officers tortured R. during interrogation and raped her multiple times while she was in prison. After R. was released from prison, the military began looking for her again. She was declared wanted for conspiring with separatist fighters. After the military came looking for her, R.'s family, including her children, went into hiding. She does not currently know their whereabouts. R. fled to Brazil. From there, she travelled to the United States and entered in late 2022.

**Important Client Context**

R has a Notice To Appear, but it has not yet been filed with the immigration court. Until this occurs, USCIS maintains jurisdiction over her case. R. timely filed a pro se asylum application with USCIS. All affidavits and supporting materials to her case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164997

56. R. is a woman from El Salvador. Her son, A., is a derivative on her application, and is also independently eligible for asylum. R. and A.'s next Master Calendar hearing has not been scheduled. R. speaks Spanish and lives in a northern suburb of Chicago

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** El Salvador

**Client's Story**

During much of their relationship, R.'s ex-partner H., was verbally, physically, and sexually abusive. H. was a police officer in El Salvador. For some time, H. was able to hide his status as a police officer from the community and 18th Street gang members. Eventually, gang members took notice of his role. They began calling the family and sending pictures of R.'s daughter, threatening to kill the family if R. and H. did not pay the extortion fees. Although R. and her family repeatedly tried to relocate

to other towns in El Salvador, the gang members continued to find them and targeted R.'s son A. for being the son of a police officer. H. fled to the United States and was granted asylum, but the gang continued targeting the family, particularly A., making it impossible for them to leave their home. Finally, R. fled to the United States with A. in late 2019.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC filed R. and A.'s asylum applications with the immigration court in November 2021. Since their applications were filed more than one year after entering the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they meet an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials for R. and A.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0147562

57. R. is a woman from Honduras. Her son F. and daughter L. are derivatives on her asylum application. R. and her children speak Spanish and live in southern Indiana.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

R. met her ex-partner, S., and he moved in with R. and her two children. S. was very controlling. He physically abused R. daily and tried to hit her children. Several months into their relationship, R. learned that her S. was a member of the MS-13 gang. Knowing that there is nowhere in Honduras that R. and her children could be safe from S., R. fled to Mexico with L. S. threatened to kill R., her mother, and her children if she did not return to Honduras. He told R. that he would find her in Mexico. R. returned to Honduras for F. and together she and her children fled for the United States.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed R.'s application for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to R., F., and L.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 20-0140788

58. R. is a woman from Honduras. She is waiting for her next Master Calendar hearing date. R. speaks Spanish and lives in Indianapolis.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

R.'s partner was a member of the MS-18 gang. Soon after R. and her partner started living together, her partner became controlling and abusive. He would not allow her to leave the house to see her family. He beat and raped her often. He told her that she had to stay with him and threatened to hurt and kill her if she tried to leave the relationship. R. reported him to the police once, but nothing came from it. She was also involved in the Libre political party and attended protests regularly over the course of several years. Police shot at, beat, and tear-gassed her and fellow party

members at many protests. She fled the country and traveled to the United States in 2019 to escape the dangerous political climate and free herself from her abusive partner.

**Important Client Context**

R. timely filed her asylum application with the immigration court in 2019. All affidavits and supporting materials to R.'s case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0146095

59. R. is a woman from Mexico. Her son, A. will be a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. R. and A. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

**Client's Story**

R. lived in Mexico with her ex-partner and three children. Throughout their relationship, R.'s ex-partner severely abused her, including threats, verbal abuse, and physical abuse that resulted in R. needing to go to the hospital during her second pregnancy. R.'s ex-partner also physically and emotionally abused R.'s son A. About one week before R. and A. left Mexico for the United States, R.'s ex-partner attacked her with a machete. R. has two children who remain in Mexico with their paternal grandparents.

**Important Client Context**

Although R. and A. were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) by the Department of Homeland Security when they entered the United States, their NTAs have not yet been filed with the immigration court. For this reason, NIJC filed skeletal asylum applications for R. and A. with USCIS. Because their applications were filed more than one year after they entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. Once their NTAs are filed with the court, they will be placed into court proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to R. and A.'s merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0150662

60. S. is a woman from El Salvador. She and her son, J. are awaiting a new Master Calendar hearing date. S. and J. speak Spanish and live in a northwestern suburb of Chicago, Illinois.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** El Salvador

**Client's Story**

S.'s step-father abused her throughout her childhood. The father of S.'s first child also beat and raped her. He prohibited her from studying or working outside the home. The abuse worsened when S. found a radio job. S. developed severe anxiety and depression. The father of her child admitted her to a psychiatric hospital and told staff she was crazy. While at the hospital, a nurse raped S. multiple times, leading to the birth of her second child, J. Later, S. worked as a television reporter. Her boss routinely sexually harassed her, forced her to report on violent, gang-related stories,

and used his connections to highly ranked gang members to intimidate her against reporting him. After S. reported his treatment, members of the Mara 18 gang threatened her outside of her home, saying there would be consequences if she spoke out. In early 2019, gang members attacked and beat her brother. Soon afterwards, S. fled to the United States with her son.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC filed S.'s asylum application with the immigration court. Because this application was filed more than one year after S. entered the United States, her pro bono attorneys will need to argue that she merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to S.'s case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 21-0146760

61. V. is a transgender woman from Honduras seeking protection under the Convention Against Torture (CAT). Her case is on remand from the Board of Immigrant Appeals and is venued in Chicago. V. speaks Spanish.

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Location:** LA

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

V. suffered severe physical and emotional abuse in Honduras because of her gender identity from both family members and strangers. V. first fled Honduras in 1994 and entered the United States as an unaccompanied minor. As there were no protections for unaccompanied minors at that time, V. was ordered removed without an opportunity to speak to an attorney. Alone and vulnerable, V. then ended up in a trafficking situation, which led to a drug-related conviction and eventually V.'s deportation in 2019. Fearing for her life, V. fled Honduras again as soon as she could. When V. re-entered the United States in 2019, she was detained in federal custody and charged with illegal re-entry. After serving her sentence in federal custody, she was transferred to ICE custody in rural Louisiana in March 2022. Unable to secure representation, V. proceeded pro se before the Immigration Judge, who denied all relief.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC represented her on appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The Board reversed and remanded V.'s case, however, the same IJ denied all relief a second time. NIJC again represented V. on appeal to the BIA. The BIA reversed and remanded V.'s case a second time. In May, V. was granted bond; she was released from DHS custody.

Although V. currently lives in supportive housing in New Orleans, Louisiana, her case is venued with the Chicago Immigration Court to allow NIJC and its pro bono partners to continue representing her in her proceedings. V. currently has no future hearing date. V. is willing to travel to Chicago for her merits hearing.

**NIJC Contact**

Morgan Drake, modrake@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 22-0155449

62. V. is a woman from Guatemala. Her son X. is listed as a derivative on her application and is also independently eligible for asylum. The family speaks Spanish and lives in a western



suburb of Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

### **Client's Story**

When V. was young, her father was killed and her mom moved to the United States, leaving V. and her younger sisters with an aunt who physically abused them. When V. and her sisters moved to a different aunt's home, another family member who was involved with a gang threatened the girls with violence and made sexual advances towards them. V.'s two sisters fled to the United States and were granted asylum, but V. stayed in Guatemala. When she was 17 years old, V. was in a relationship with a man and became pregnant. Once he learned of her pregnancy, V.'s partner began to verbally and physically abuse her. He tried to force V. to have an abortion. During this time, V. was living in her partner's home, where his family members also abused her and eventually caused her to be hospitalized for several days. About a year later, V. began a relationship with another man. When she confronted this man about being in a relationship with another woman, he punched her in the face and stomach, causing her to be hospitalized for about two weeks. Soon after, V. fled to the United States with her son, X., and later gave birth to her second child in the United States.

### **Important Client Context**

Although V. and X. were issued a Notice to Appear (NTA) at the border, their NTAs have not yet been filed with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their asylum applications. NIJC filed their asylum applications with USCIS on November 12, 2021. Once their NTAs are filed with the court, V. and X. will be placed into court proceedings. All affidavits and supporting materials will then be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 21-0148257

63. V. is a woman from Honduras. Her children C. and T. are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. They are waiting for their Master Calendar hearing to be rescheduled. The family speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** Immigration Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

### **Client's Story**

V.'s former partner, K., is a gang member in Honduras. During their relationship, K. physically and sexually abused V., tried to force her to have an abortion, and threatened to kill her if she ever left him. He also abused V.'s children and tried to force her son to join his gang by threatening to kill V. and her children if he refused. Gang members also attempted to extort V. by threatening to kill her and her children if she refused. V. and her daughters fled to the United States in late 2018.

### **Important Client Context**

NIJC filed V., C., and T.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court, but because their applications were filed more than one year after they entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that V., C., and T. merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. V.'s son L.

entered the United States as an unaccompanied child and as a result, his case was in a different procedural posture. NIJC filed his asylum application with USCIS and USCIS granted him asylum in May 2021, which should be helpful when presenting the case of his mother and sisters.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 20-0143706

**Asylum - Affirmative**

*Expected Tasks:* Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

64. D. is a gay cisgender man from Nigeria. He speaks English and lives in Northeast Indiana. His asylum application was timely filed, and he is now awaiting an asylum interview.

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:** USCIS

**Location:** IN

**Language:** English

**Country of Origin:** Nigeria

**Client's Story**

Shortly after D. was forced into an arranged marriage, his wife caught him being intimate with a man. D. feared for his life, as LGBTQ relationships are criminalized in all of Nigeria. While D.'s wife did not tell others of his sexual orientation, he was later outed by an ex-partner. Since then, he has received numerous threats and had a police report filed against him for being LGBTQ.

**Important Client Context**

D. entered the United States in July 2023 on an F1 student visa and is currently taking courses at a community college. NIJC timely filed his asylum application on December 21, 2023, and he is awaiting an interview with the Chicago Asylum Office. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due approximately one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. Because interview timing can vary, NIJC recommends pro bono counsel plan to work up this case within 12 weeks of case acceptance.

**NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0165369

65. D. is a man from Colombia. His wife W., son P., and daughter F. are derivatives on his asylum application. Individual asylum applications have also been filed for W., P., and F. and for D.'s stepdaughter, B. The family speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** USCIS

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

**Client's Story**

D. was a high-ranking police officer in Colombia. In 2015, the state transferred D. to a different district. He began to work with the Local Branch of the Judicial and Investigative Police (SIJIN) to help identify and capture individuals who were involved in micro trafficking. In 2018, the court called D. to testify as a witness in a hearing against accused micro traffickers. About a month after the hearing, D. noticed individuals on motorcycles watching and following him after work. In early 2020, D. stopped doing operational fieldwork and transferred to an administrative

position after a serious car accident left him with physical impairments. Although D. was in a new position, W. and B. noticed men on motorcycles frequently watching their house. Unknown, suspicious individuals began to approach D. in public and ask him personal questions including about his past employment. Later that year, D. learned that a number of police officer's home addresses, including his own, had been shared in a group chat that included numerous micro trafficking affiliates. Around late 2021 or early 2022, D. and his family received a threatening note at their house. D. reported the harassment and threats to the police, but nothing came of it. D. and his family stopped leaving their house unless necessary. In spring 2023, they fled to the United States on tourist visas.

#### **Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed D., W., P., F., and B. 's individual asylum applications with USCIS. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to the family's interview(s) at the asylum office. Because interview timing can vary, pro bono counsel should plan to work up this case within 12-16 weeks of case acceptance.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0166261

66. J. is a woman from Honduras. Her son, R., and two daughters, A. and W., are derivatives on her application for asylum. J., R., A., and W. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Domestic and Gender Violence

**Venue:** USCIS

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

#### **Client's Story**

J. lived with her partner, Z., and their son, R. Z. physically and verbally abused J. after he heard that another man touched her. J. was hospitalized as a result of the abuse. After this happened, J. told her parents of the harm. J. and R. left to live with J.'s parents, but Z. found her and threatened to harm J. and her parents if they went to the police. Fearing for their safety, J. began living with Z. again, and he continued to abuse her. Sometime after this, J. gave birth to A. Several years later, J. left Z. He retaliated by taking R. and A. He kept them for months and did not allow J. to see or contact her children during this time. R. and A. eventually escaped and returned to J. In 2019, J. fled the country, but Mexican immigration officials deported her back to Honduras. She had become pregnant on her journey and gave birth to her youngest daughter, W., in Honduras. J. and her children lived with J.'s parents because she received death threats from Z. In 2021, J. fled Honduras with W. to escape Z. About six months later, R. and A. traveled to the United States separately in order to join them.

#### **Important Client Context**

NIJC filed J.'s asylum application with her children as derivatives with USCIS in November 2023. Because the application was filed more than one year after the J.'s arrival, the family's case may be referred to the immigration court. Pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they meet an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All supporting materials will be due one week prior to the asylum interview. Because interview timing can vary, pro bono counsel should plan to work up this case within 12-16 weeks of placement.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0162595

67. M. is a woman from Nicaragua awaiting an asylum interview. She speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** USCIS

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Nicaragua

**Client's Story**

M. began attending anti-government protests frequently in 2018. Police often followed and harassed her for her political activism. In late 2019, police arrested M. for her connections with a prominent activist and held her in prison for about a week. During this time, police subjected her to routine interrogations in which they beat and sexually assaulted and her. M. still suffers from the permanent injuries that she sustained during this time. The government released M. on the condition that she provide a false testimony in trial against another activist. She refused to comply, and in early 2021, the government falsified drugs and arms trafficking charges against M. in order to arrest her again. Police kept M. jailed and drugged for nearly two weeks before transferring her to a penitentiary. M.'s mother contacted a civil rights attorney to defend her, but though the accusations were false and the government never produced hard evidence, a judge sentenced M. to 18 years in prison. Prison officials denied M. medical treatment and prescription medication. They forced her to spend one year in solitary confinement. After two years as a political prisoner, the Nicaraguan government exiled M. in February 2023 and sent her to the United States.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed M.'s affirmative asylum application. All supporting materials will be due one week prior to the asylum interview. Because interview timing can vary, pro bono counsel should plan to work up this case within 12-16 weeks of placement.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 23-0163953

68. S. is a man from Nicaragua awaiting an asylum interview. S. speaks Spanish and lives in the Indianapolis area.

**Asylum Categories:** Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

**Venue:** USCIS

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IN

**Country of Origin:** Nicaragua

**Client's Story**

In 2016, S. began attending community meetings regarding the police's ongoing poor treatment of civilians. Community leaders, including S.'s uncle, organized these meetings. Police learned of the meetings by having some of their associates attend. In February 2020, S. was working at home when the police arrived asking for his uncle. When S. told them that he did not know where his uncle was, they beat him. They then took S. and three other relatives to prison on accusations of being against the police. Prison officials deprived S. of medical attention and food. At times, the police did not allow his family to visit him. S. spent approximately three years as a political prisoner before the Nicaraguan government exiled him.

**Important Client Context**

NIJC timely filed S.'s asylum application. All supporting materials will be due one week prior to the asylum interview. Because interview timing can vary, pro bono counsel should plan to work up this case within 12-16 weeks of placement.

**NIJC Contact**

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@immigrantjustice.org

NIJC Case Number: 23-0163522

69. V. is a gay cisgender man from Senegal. He speaks French and lives in Chicago. He timely filed his affirmative asylum application and is waiting for an interview.

**Asylum Categories:** LGBTQ+

**Venue:**

**Language:** French

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Senegal

#### **Client's Story**

V. is a member of the minority ethnicity Soninke and grew up in a very religious and traditional family. After having a short relationship with another boy as a teenager, he tried to convince himself to not be gay because he had been told same sex relationships are wrong, and he was afraid of being harmed if people discovered his attraction to men. When he was in his 20s, he dated a man, but V.'s father caught them together and beat and stabbed V. He stopped only when V.'s mother intervened. She took V. to the emergency room. About a year or so later, V.'s father forced him to marry a woman. When they did not have a child together after several years, V.'s father tortured him. V. eventually moved into an apartment with a gay friend. One night, they came home and found the apartment had been broken into. Someone chased them down the street shouting that they are gay. V.'s mother warned him that his father was looking for him and instigated the attack. V. fled to the United States.

#### **Important Client Context**

V. timely filed his asylum application in April 2023. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. Because interview timing can vary, NIJC recommends pro bono counsel plan to work up this case within about 12 weeks of case acceptance.

#### **NIJC Contact**

Moises Lopez Soltero, [mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:mlopezsoltero@immigrantjustice.org)

NIJC Case Number: 23-0164519

## **SIJS - Predicate Order**

*Expected Tasks:* Litigating in state court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

70. S. is a 6-year-old girl from Colombia who lives with her mother, who speaks Spanish, in a northwest suburb of Chicago (Cook County).

**Deadline:** Predicate Order filed by 9/1/2024

**Venue:** Family Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Colombia

#### **Client's Story**

S. was a year old when her parents separated. After their separation, S.'s father only provided her with money for 3 months. Since then, S. has not seen her father, and he has not attempted to contact her or provide any financial or emotional support. S.'s mother fled Colombia in October 2022 after receiving threats from guerrillas. S. was left behind with an aunt who is part of the LGBTQ+ community, and because of that, both S. and her aunt received

threats. S. fled shortly afterward and joined her mother in the United States in July 2023.

**Important Client Context**

A pro bono attorney will need to file a petition for sole allocation of parental responsibilities on behalf of S.'s mother and obtain an order finding that S.'s reunification with her father is not viable due to his abandonment and that it is not in S.'s best interest to return to Colombia.

**NIJC Contact**

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0164380

71. A. is a 18-year-old boy from Honduras. He lives with his uncle, who speaks Spanish, in western Illinois (Rock Island)

**Deadline:** Predicate Order filed by 10/1/2024

**Venue:** Probate Court

**Language:** Spanish

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Honduras

**Client's Story**

A.'s parents separated when he was five years old. Subsequently, he was raised by his paternal grandparents. He maintained daily contact with his father, while his mother visited him only twice a year and communicated with him sporadically via text. A.'s mother did not provide him with financial or emotional support.

**Important Client Context**

A pro bono attorney will need to file a petition for guardianship on behalf of A.'s uncle. They will need an order finding that A.'s reunification with his mother is not viable due to her neglect and that it is not in A.'s best interest to return to Honduras.

**NIJC Contact**

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 24-0167052

72. J., C., and A. are young siblings from Guatemala. They live with their mother, who speaks Spanish, in a northwest suburb of Chicago (Kane County).

**Deadline:** Predicate Order filed by 11/1/2024

**Venue:** Family Court, Probate Court  
Canjobal, Spanish

**Languages:**

**Location:** IL

**Country of Origin:** Guatemala

**Client's Story**

The children's mother separated from their father when J. was 9, and while she was pregnant with twins C. and A. Their father stopped emotional and financial support after the separation, and the younger siblings have never had any contact with their father. The children were raised by their mother until she came to the U.S. in 2021 to find work, leaving her children in the care of their grandparents. In their mother's absence, J. was attacked and threatened by his father and father's family, so he fled to the U.S. in October of 2022 to reunify with his mother. C. & A. also arrived in the U.S. as unaccompanied children in July of 2023, and were able to reunite with their mother.

**Important Client Context**

A pro bono attorney will need to file a petition for sole allocation of parental responsibilities on behalf of J., C. & A.'s mother and obtain an order finding that the children's reunification with their father is not viable due to his abandonment, and that it is not in their best interest to return to Guatemala.

**NIJC Contact**

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 23-0166102

**VAWA**

*Expected Tasks:* Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Working with vulnerable clients

73. A. is a woman from Mexico. A. is eligible to file a VAWA self-petition concurrently with an application for adjustment of status and employment authorization. A. speaks Spanish and resides in Chicago. There is no set deadline.

**Venue:** USCIS

**Location:** IL

**Language:** Spanish

**Country of Origin:** Mexico

**Client's Story**

A. has been the victim of emotional, financial, and physical abuse by her U.S. citizen son. On one occasion, A.'s son tried hitting her and threw objects at her. A. fled to another room to escape, and her son fled the home. As A. went outside, she witnessed her son damaging the windows of her other son's car. A. called the police and filed a report.

**NIJC Contact**

Jackie Mares, jmares@immigrantjustice.org  
NIJC Case Number: 24-0167679