

The National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) is dedicated to ensuring human rights protections and access to justice for all immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

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

NIJC has represented asylum seekers from across the world who have sought protection for a variety of reasons. At present, some of the most common claims of NIJC asylum clients involve past harm or fears of future harm due to the asylum seeker's gender or family relationships, sexual orientation or gender identity, opposition to a gang or cartel, or actual or perceived anti-government activities. Immigrants do not have the right to counsel, but seek asylum in an adversarial process in which an attorney from the Department of Homeland Security represents the government and acts as the prosecutor in the case.

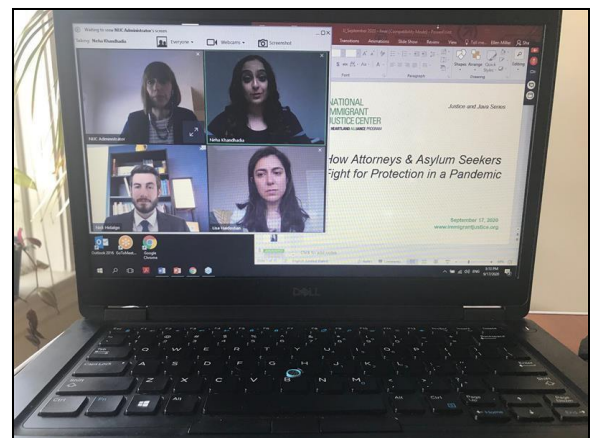
Asylum

Asylum is a form of immigration relief for non-citizens who are in the United States and fear returning to their home country because they have been persecuted or are afraid of future persecution on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

- NIJC pro bono attorneys represented **900+** asylum seekers in FY2020.
- NIJC maintains a **90%** approval rate on asylum cases.
- Asylum seekers come to NIJC from more than **100** different countries.

NIJC Provides

- Trainings conducted by asylum experts
- Policy and practice updates regarding any changes within the immigration system that may impact clients
- Detailed practice manuals, practice advisories, and samples produced
- Technical support through the life of the case



Our Pro Bono Partnership

- Pro bono attorneys representing asylum seekers will gain significant legal experience in various areas including:
 - Case management
 - Client counseling
 - Brief affidavit writing
 - Trial advocacy
- Pro bono attorneys are expected to:
 - Participate in an asylum training
 - Provide interpretation and/or translation services, as needed
 - Produce a comprehensive application that includes a detailed client affidavit, supporting documentation, country condition research, and a legal memorandum, or brief
 - Represent the client in a non-adversarial interview before the asylum office or an adversarial trial before the immigration court, depending on the procedural posture of the case



Project Contact Information

- **Detained** matters, please contact Dave Faherty at dfaherty@heartlandalliance.org
- **LGBT** matters, please contact Michelle Velazquez at mivelazquez@heartlandalliance.org
- All other **asylum** matters, please contact Anna Sears at ansears@heartlandalliance.org

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

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

For general information about NIJC Pro Bono Programs please contact Ellen Miller, Pro Bono Manager, at 312.660.1415 or emiller@heartlandalliance.org.



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