

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.

Detention Facts

- NIJC and pro bono attorneys obtained release for 70+ individuals during the COVID pandemic in 2020.
- Immigration detention facilities are in remote locations, often hours from the nearest legal service provider.
- Immigrants do not have a right to counsel and the vast majority of detained, indigent immigrants are unable to find lawyers to represent them in immigration court.
- DHS's Inspector General reported that conditions in many ICE jails "undermine the protection of detainees' rights, their humane treatment and the provision of a safe and healthy environment."

NIJC pro bono attorneys provide assistance to detained immigrants and asylum seekers on:

- Asylum matters
- Habeas petitions
- Deportation/removal defense
- Tracking and challenging detention conditions across the country

NIJC's pro bono attorneys work to end excessive punishment, to challenge racial and economic injustice, and to protect the basic human rights of immigrants and asylum seekers.

Our Pro Bono Partnership

- Pro bono attorneys will gain significant legal experience in various areas including:
 - Case management
 - Client counseling
 - Brief affidavit writing
 - Trial advocacy





- **NIJC provides:**
 - Trainings conducted by topic experts
 - Policy and practice updates regarding any changes within the immigration system that may impact clients
 - Detailed practice manuals, practice advisories, and samples
 - Technical support through the life of the case
 - Protocols to facilitate communication with detained individuals in numerous facilities across the country

- **Pro bono attorneys are expected to:**

- Participate in an NIJC pro bono training
 - Provide interpretation and/or translation services, as needed
 - Produce a comprehensive application that involves preparing a detailed client affidavit, supporting documentation, country condition research, and a legal memorandum or brief
 - An attorney who files defensive applications for relief on behalf of a client will work to prepare the client for trial, locate experts and other witnesses, and develop comprehensive legal arguments for presentation before an immigration judge.
- Due to on-going challenges to immigration law and policy, the length of a case can vary depending on the relief sought. Defensive applications for relief presented before the Immigration Judge can take 75-200 hours over six weeks to a few months.

Project Contact Information

For more information please contact Dave Faherty at dfaherty@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.

