

October 23, 2023

NIJC Pro Bono Case List: 74 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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[Priority Matters – Defensive Asylum](#)

[Priority Matters – SIJS](#)

[Defensive Asylum Matters](#)

[Affirmative Asylum Matters](#)

[SIJS – Predicate Order Matters](#)

[U Visa Matters](#)

Priority Matters

Priority – Defensive Asylum

1. R. is a man from Togo. His upcoming merits hearing is on January 13, 2026. He speaks French and lives in Chicago.

Relief Seeking: Asylum - Defensive

Deadline: Merits hearing on 01/13/26

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): French

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Togo

Client's Story

R. was a member of the PNP political party in Togo. He participated in meetings and protests with the aim of ousting the current president and instituting democracy in Togo. He became a PNP member in 2017. In 2018, R. participated in protests during which police teargassed protesters. The police detained R., hit and kicked him, and took him to a military camp where he was detained for several days. A soldier helped R. escape. R. resumed activities with the PNP while trying to hide his identity and moving to different locations to evade government detection. R. decided to escape Togo after the government arrested his friend from the PNP. After R. left, the government detained his girlfriend and called R. to threaten him.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

R. entered the United States in November 2021, was placed in removal proceedings, and timely filed for asylum. All affidavits and supporting materials for R.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for January 13, 2026.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0155322

2. D. is a woman from El Salvador. Her son W. and daughter K. are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible. D., W. and K.'s merits hearing is on April 17, 2024. D. and her children speak Spanish and live in Northcentral Indiana

Relief Seeking: Asylum - Defensive

Deadline: Merits hearing on 04/17/24

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IN

Country of Origin: El Salvador

Client's Story

D. and her son W. are from El Salvador. D.'s daughter, K., was born in Mexico. In about 2009, D. fled to the United States to escape W.'s father who abused D. and threatened to kill her. D. left her son, W., under the care of her mother, a devout Jehovah's Witness. In the United States, D. met Y., the father of her daughter, who convinced her to go to Mexico with him. In Mexico, Y. severely sexually and physically abused D. With Y.'s consent, doctors sterilized D. while she was unconscious during K.'s birth. Y. physically abused K. as well. Meanwhile, D.'s mother and family refused to let her communicate with her son, W., because D. had left the Jehovah's Witness church. D.'s mother forced W. to practice her religion against his will. After multiple attempts to escape Y., D. fled to

a women's shelter and reported the abuse to the authorities in Mexico. Y. was in jail for a short period of time but D. believes he was released in February 2022. In 2021, D. reconnected with W. and learned a gang in El Salvador threatened W. when he refused to join their gang. W. fled El Salvador and reunited with D. in Mexico. Fearing Y.'s release from jail in Mexico and W.'s father in El Salvador, D. and her children fled to the United States in December 2021.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed D., W., and K.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court in November of 2022. D., W., and K. affidavits and supporting documents will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for April 17, 2024.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0153805, 22-0154693, 22-0154694

- 3. H. is a man from Afghanistan. His upcoming merits hearing is on May 14, 2024. H. speaks English and lives in a southwestern suburb of Chicago, IL.

Relief Seeking: Asylum - Defensive **Deadline:** Merits hearing on 05/14/24
Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs
Venue: Immigration Court **Language(s):** English, English
Location: IL **Country of Origin:** Afghanistan

Client's Story

H. was a prominent journalist, newsroom director, and mayoral secretary for the government of Kabul. The Taliban threatened H. through messages and phone calls prior to the governmental collapse. After the fall of the Republic of Afghanistan in August 2021, the Taliban issued a decree demanding that H. be arrested on sight and brought to the Taliban. H. frequently reported against the Taliban's atrocities and was an active member in various human rights groups. H. fled Afghanistan in 2021 and lived in Brazil for some time before coming to the United States in 2023.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed H.'s asylum application with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for H.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for May 14, 2024.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161459

- 4. W. is a transgender woman from Mexico. She speaks Spanish and lives in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her merits hearing is on May 20, 2024.

Relief Seeking: Asylum - Defensive **Deadline:** Merits hearing on 05/20/24
Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+
Venue: Immigration Court **Language(s):** Spanish
Location: IN **Country of Origin:** Mexico

Client's Story

W. recently came out as transgender. As a child, she was mistreated because people saw her as an effeminate gay boy. She was physically and verbally harmed in school. W. became increasingly afraid of living in Mexico after LGBTQ friends were murdered. She fears that now, as a transgender woman, she would be targeted.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

W. missed her one year filing deadline, as she entered in September 2018 and applied for asylum in November 2020. W.'s pro bono attorneys can argue that W.'s coming out as transgender is a changed circumstance that excuses her one year filing deadline. W.'s merits hearing is on May 20, 2024. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to V.'s merits hearing, which is set for May 20, 2024.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0144743

5. L. is a man from Guinea. His upcoming merits hearing is on October 31, 2024. L. speaks Fulani and French and lives in Chicago, Illinois.

Relief Seeking: Asylum - Defensive

Deadline: Merits hearing on 10/31/24

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): Fulani, French

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Guinea

Client's Story

L. supported the FNDC political party in Guinea. In 2020, he participated in protests against the government. The police beat protestors and sprayed hot water at them. One day, people in uniform kidnapped L. and his cousin at their home while they slept. They were held in prison for several days. Police physically harmed and interrogated for attending protests and because of their Fulani ethnic identity. After a relative paid for their release, L. and his cousin escaped with L.'s brother to a different city in Guinea. The police eventually found L. and his cousin a few months later in the new city. L. escaped, but the police captured his cousin and severely beat him. L. later learned that his cousin had died after this encounter with the police. He decided to flee Guinea. L. entered the United States in November 2021, was placed in removal proceedings, and timely filed for asylum.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

All affidavits and supporting materials to L.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which is scheduled for October 31, 2024.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161062

6. N. is a cisgender gay man from Peru. He speaks English and Spanish and lives in

Wisconsin. N. is scheduled for a merits hearing on November 19, 2024.

Relief Seeking: Asylum - Defensive

Deadline: Merits hearing on 11/19/24

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): English

Location: WI

Country of Origin: Peru

Client's Story

While growing up in Peru, N.'s family routinely beat him and called him anti-LGBTQ slurs because they perceived him as feminine. His mom tried to kill him on more than one occasion by pushing him into traffic or drowning him. His uncle and cousin sexually abused him.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

Because N. did not timely file his asylum application, counsel will need to screen for exceptions to the one-year deadline and, if there are none, argue that N. is eligible for withholding of removal. N. was placed in removal proceedings after receiving multiple DUIs. N's asylum application was denied by an immigration judge in 2020, and NIJC took the case on appeal, arguing N. had received ineffective assistance of counsel. The case went up to the Seventh Circuit and was remanded back to immigration court in May 2023. N. is scheduled for a merits hearing on November 19, 2024. All affidavits and supporting materials to N.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0163784

Priority – SIJS

7. A. and H. are brothers, 11 and 17 years old, from Guatemala. They live with their mother who speaks Spanish, in a southwest suburb of Chicago (Cook County). The predicate order must be obtained before H. turns 18 in June of 2024.

Relief Seeking: Predicate Order - SIJS

Deadline: Obtain Predicate Order by 06/17/24

Venue: Family Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Guatemala

Client's Story

When H. was 1.5 years old, his parents separated because his father began drinking a lot. Since then, H.'s father has not tried to contact him nor has he helped H. emotionally or financially. H.'s brother A. has a different father, and A.'s father abandoned him before he was born. A.'s father only saw him three times when he was a baby, but since then he has not had contact with his father. A.'s father has not provided him with any type of emotional or financial support.

Expected Tasks

Litigating in state court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

A pro bono attorney will need to file a petition for sole allocation of parental responsibilities on behalf of H. and A.'s mother and obtain an order finding that H. and

A.'s reunification with their respective fathers is not viable due to their abandonment and neglect and that it is not in H.'s and A.'s best interests to return to Guatemala.

NIJC Contact

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0164729, 23-0164408

Asylum – Defensive

8. J. is a woman from Honduras. Her son, N., is a derivative on her application and is also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is January 5, 2024. They speak Spanish and live in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 01/05/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Honduras

Client's Story

As a child, J. lived with an aunt and uncle. The uncle molested her and her aunt verbally abused her and forced her to work. One night in 2019, an armed man stopped J. while she was walking home and he raped her in a cemetery. J. believes her attacker was affiliated with a gang. J. became pregnant from the rape and fled because she feared that the man who raped her would come after her if he found out about the pregnancy.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

J. filed her asylum application in December 2020. Since this application was filed more than one year after J. 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 in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to J.'s case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0145602

9. 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.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 01/06/25

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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 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 and further discrimination and violence.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161398

10. E. is a woman from Venezuela. Her next Master Calendar hearing is January 8, 2024. E. speaks Spanish and lives in a western suburb of Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 01/08/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Venezuela

Client's Story

E. was politically active in an anti-government movement in Venezuela. In 2015, E. survived a violent government tear gas attack when attempting to vote. E. ran for her life and escaped, but several others were injured and died. E. continued her political involvement and was known to the government as a dissident. In October 2021, military members appeared at E.'s house and demanded she turn herself in for her anti-government activity. She subsequently fled Venezuela and arrived in the U.S. in November of 2021.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

E. timely filed her asylum application. E.'s upcoming Master Calendar hearing is set for January 8, 2024. All affidavits and supporting materials for E.'s case will be due 15 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0160646

11. K. is a woman from Mexico. K.'s son, E., is a derivative on her application. K.'s mother, F., father, A., and grandmother, L., are independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is January 17, 2024. K., F., A., L., and E. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 01/17/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Mexico

Client's Story

Members of a cartel murdered K.'s uncle while he was with K.'s brother. During the wake for K.'s uncle, cartel members stormed into the family home and opened fire on the crowd gathered to pay their respects. The cartel members killed K.'s brother and L.'s

partner, along with several others. K. recognized three of the shooters and collaborated with local law enforcement officers to identify them. While K. reported the crime, cartel members stormed into K.'s house and opened fire. Fearing for their lives, F., L, K., and E. fled to a nearby state in Mexico. After they fled, cartel members stalked K. and threatened to kill K. and her entire family if she did not stop the investigation. K. continued to cooperate with local law enforcement officials in the investigation of her brother's murder, but officials advised F., K., L., and A. to flee the country to avoid being killed by the cartel members.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed asylum applications for K., F., L., and A. with the immigration court. K.'s son, E., is a derivative on K.'s application. Their next Master Calendar hearing is on January 17, 2024. All supporting documents will be due 15 days before their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 19-0132005, 19-0132536, 19-0132566, 19-0132576

12. K. is a gay cisgender man from Cuba in removal proceedings. He speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois. K.'s asylum application is pending with the immigration court, and he is scheduled for a master calendar hearing on January 23, 2024.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 01/23/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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, which has not yet been scheduled. If client and pro bono counsel agree, counsel can file a motion to set the case for merits.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161988

13. G. is a young woman from Honduras. Her son, P., is a derivative on her asylum application. Their next Master Calendar hearing is on January 31, 2024. G. and P. speak Spanish and live in Northcentral Indiana.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 01/31/24

Venue: Immigration Court
Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish
Country of Origin: Honduras

Client's Story

G. met P.'s father in about 2018 and moved in with him. Throughout their relationship, P.'s father T. controlled G.'s actions, dictating what she wore and locking her in the house. T. abused G. physically and emotionally. G. escaped T.'s house, 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, and that T. would again take P. from her. Afraid of what T. would do next, G. and P. fled Honduras and arrived in the United States in the winter of 2021.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed their applications for asylum. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to their merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0152262

14. S. is a woman from El Salvador. Her daughter, A., is a derivative on her asylum application and is also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is on February 14, 2024. S. and A. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 02/14/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: El Salvador

Client's Story

S.'s ex-partner and the father of her daughter, A., was physically, financially, and emotionally abusive to S. throughout their relationship. He refused to allow S. to leave his family home and attempted to force her to have sex with the patrons of his family's liquor store and small restaurant. Many of the patrons were Salvadoran gang members. S.'s ex-partner threatened that they would find and harm S. if she disobeyed him. S. escaped with A. and came to the United States in July 2018.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC filed S. and A.'s applications for asylum in July 2021. Because their applications were filed more than one year after S. and A. 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. 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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0147903

15. J. is a gay cisgender man from Colombia. He speaks Spanish and lives in a suburb of Chicago, Illinois. His defensive asylum application is pending with the immigration court. J. is scheduled for a master calendar hearing on February 15, 2024.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 02/15/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

J. filed his asylum application pro se on March 13, 2023. J. is currently set for a master calendar hearing on February 15, 2024 with a visiting judge, which is likely to be rescheduled. All affidavits and supporting documents for J.'s case 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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161824

16. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 02/24/25

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161686

17. 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., S., U., and V.'s Master Calendar Hearing is scheduled for March 14, 2024. T. has no hearings currently scheduled. P. and his family speak Portuguese and live on the Southside of Chicago.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 02/25/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed P.'s application for asylum with the immigration court. 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0163395

18. L. is a woman from Cameroon. She, her partner O., and their daughter, B., have a Master Calendar hearing scheduled for February 27, 2024. The family speaks French and lives in

Chicago.

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 02/27/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): French

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0155648, 22-0155670

19. K. is a gay cisgender man from Colombia. He speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois. K. is scheduled for a master calendar hearing on March 20, 2024.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 03/20/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): 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. 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.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Litigating in immigration court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients, Writing legal

memos

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed K.'s asylum application with the Chicago Immigration Court on July 10, 2023. K. is currently set for a master calendar hearing on March 20, 2024. All affidavits and supporting documents for K.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161283

20. P. is a man from Venezuela. His wife, Q., and daughter, R., are derivatives on his application and are also independently eligible for asylum. They are scheduled for a Master Calendar hearing before the Chicago Immigration Court on April 17, 2024. P. and his family speak Spanish and live in a northwestern suburb of Chicago, Illinois

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 04/17/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed their I-589s in March 2023. Their next Master Calendar hearing is April 17, 2024. 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0155558

21. J. is a woman from Ecuador. Her daughter, S. is a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible. Their Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for April 22, 2024. J. and S. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 04/22/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): English

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 several reports against him. J. met her next partner, the father of her third child, S., a few years later. He also severely abused J. throughout their relationship, beating and threatening her often. 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 a lot of 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. Several months before coming to the United States, J. and her partner received a letter at their home calling them lesbians and telling them they were going to be killed. They began preparing to come to the United States and fled together 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.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed their asylum applications with USCIS. J's first Master Calendar hearing is on April 22, 2024. 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0150688

22. 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.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 04/29/26

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0164381

23. E. is a woman from Guatemala. Her daughters, C., A., and N. are derivatives on her application. N. is also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing

is on April 30, 2024. E., C., A., and N. speak Spanish and live in Chicago.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 04/30/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Guatemala

Client's Story

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

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed E.'s asylum application, which includes N., C., and A. as derivatives. NIJC also filed an independent asylum application for N. E.'s next Master Calendar hearing is on April 30, 2024. N. is in separate proceedings and does not have a scheduled future hearing date. E.'s and N.'s pro bono attorneys should be prepared to request that their cases be consolidated. All supporting documents will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0141426

24. 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.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 05/07/25

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish

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 to kill her otherwise. R. refused and fled the country with her children.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0153250

25. 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.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 06/16/25

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0155448

26. G. is a transgender man from Nicaragua. G. has a one-year filing deadline of July 22, 2023. He speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, IL.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Application filed by 07/22/23

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Nicaragua

Client's Story

G. was an active member of an opposition political party in Nicaragua. While protesting peacefully with friends in May 2018, snipers suddenly started shooting into the crowd and police became violent. A police officer beat G. with a baton while he was running away and pushed him into a barbed wire fence. One of G.'s friends who attended the protest is presumed dead while the other two are still in police custody. After discovering that G. does not support the government, G.'s politically connected neighbor sent police patrols to his house. Separately, G.'s mom also verbally and physically abused him for his gender identity and sexuality. G. fled Nicaragua in 2019 and lived in Mexico until coming to the United States in 2022.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

G is in removal proceedings before the Chicago Immigration Court; there are no future hearing dates scheduled in his case. Pro bono counsel must file G.'s I-589 with the Chicago Immigration Court prior to July 22, 2023. His pro bono attorneys should be prepared to argue, with NIJC support, that the firm resettlement bar does not apply to his case. All affidavits and supporting materials for G.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0160912

27. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 08/06/25

Venue: Immigration Court, USCIS

Location: IL

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0150685

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

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 09/04/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161245

29. L. is a woman from Venezuela. Her next Master Calendar hearing is on September 10, 2024. L speaks Spanish and lives in a northwestern suburb of Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 09/10/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Venezuela

Client's Story

L. was an active member in an opposition political party in Venezuela. During a protest in June 2021, Venezuelan police gassed, beat, pushed, and arrested L. While detained, police threatened L. using her name and party affiliation, and beat her, causing L. cervical injury in her neck. L. fled Venezuela and arrived in the US in October 2021.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

L. timely filed her asylum application. All affidavits and supporting materials for 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0162043

30. C. is a woman from Cameroon. Her next Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for September 18, 2024. C. speaks French and lives in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 09/18/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): French

Country of Origin: Cameroon

Client's Story

C. was physically and emotionally abused by the father of her children for over 20 years. C. is Catholic. Her children's father abused her because she refused to convert to Islam and to change her name to an Islamic name. C. experienced abuse weekly and tried to escape several times, but her abuser found her every time and forced her to return to him. C. eventually fled to the United States.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed C.'s asylum application with the Chicago Immigration Court. 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0153318

31. E. is a bisexual cisgender man from Benin. He speaks Gun and French and lives in Chicago. E.'s merits hearing is on October 2, 2024.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Merits hearing on 10/02/24

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): English, French

Country of Origin: Benin

Client's Story

In his hometown, E.'s family members imprisoned and beat E. and his same-sex partner because E.'s uncle saw them being intimate together. E.'s mother helped him escape the beating and was killed while trying to protect E. E. fled his home and hid in another part of Benin, where his uncle and other family members found him and beat him again. E. then fled Benin to Brazil and eventually travelled to the United States.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

E.'s prior attorney timely filed E.'s asylum application. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 30 days prior to their merits hearing, which is on October 2, 2024. E.'s preferred language for court proceedings is Gun.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161685

32. P. is a woman from Haiti. Her daughter, O., is a derivative on her application for asylum. They are currently scheduled for a Master Calendar hearing before the Chicago Immigration Court on October 18, 2023. P. and O. speak Spanish and live in a suburb of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 10/18/23

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish, Creole

Country of Origin: Haiti

Client's Story

Growing up, P.'s father was a leader in a political party, and P. helped to support the party's campaigns when possible. P.'s family received many threats due to their involvement, and one day a group of armed men came into their home, beat up P.'s father, put a gun to his head, and threatened to kill him and his family if he continued his political involvement. When he did not quit his political party, his family continued to receive threats. Later, a previously incarcerated gang member forced P. into relationship with him. For several years, he regularly raped and tortured her. Eventually, P. escaped and moved to Chile, where she lived for a few years with the father of her children. However, Haitian migrants were regularly attacked in Chile. After P.'s children's father

began to abuse her, P. decided to flee to the United States with her daughter, O.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

In addition to pursuing an asylum claim, P. currently has Temporary Protected Status, which is valid until 2024. P. filed for asylum after her one-year deadline, but is a Mendez Rojas class member and timely filed a class membership notice. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to her merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0153744

33. N. is a man from Colombia. N.'s Master Calendar Hearing is scheduled for November 11, 2023. N. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 11/21/23

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Colombia

Client's Story

N. was a well-respected engineer in his community. H., a candidate in an upcoming election, asked N. to support his campaign by encouraging young people to vote for him. When H. lost the election, he claimed that it had been rigged and began disseminating misinformation about the winning candidate, W., in an attempt to discredit the election. Associates of W. believed that N. knew H.'s whereabouts and tried to intimidate N. into leading them to him. N. was harmed, robbed, threatened, and persecuted. When N. could not provide information, W.'s associates threatened to harm his family. N. fled Colombia and entered the United States in October 2022.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

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

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0163298

34. F. is a man from Mexico. His wife, C., and their children, T. and R., will be derivatives on his application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. The family's next Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for November 29, 2023. F. and his family speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Master calendar hearing on 11/29/23

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Mexico

Client's Story

F. and his eldest son, T., were working together at their wood mill in Mexico when members of a cartel approached them and demanded that T. start working for them. F. refused to let the cartel take his son and told the cartel members that T. wanted to remain with his family and earn an honest living. Soon after, the cartel members threatened to kill the entire family and kidnap T. if he did not work with them. The cartel gave the family two days to decide, and F. chose to flee with his wife and children. F., C., T., and R. entered the United States in December 2019.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed their applications for asylum. All documentation to F., C., T., and R.'s cases will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0143334

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

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0151462

36. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0150113

37. I. and S. are a married couple from Afghanistan. Both are independently eligible for asylum and listed as derivatives on each other's applications. Their children, H. and Y., are also derivatives on their applications. I., S., H., and Y. speak Pashto and live in a northern suburb of Chicago

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Pashto, English

Country of Origin: Afghanistan

Client's Story

I. worked at the UNODC as a poppy field surveyor. His work involved destroying poppy fields to limit opium production, which was a source of Taliban funding. The Taliban killed several of I.'s coworkers and sent him death threats for his work. Fearing for his safety, I. left his UNODC job after one year, but continued to receive death threats. I.'s wife, S., was a graduate from a midwifery program in Kabul. S. worked as a civil society

activist, promoting education for girls. The Taliban threatened S.'s family because of her education. S. left her vocation as a midwife when the Taliban began targeting clinics for bombings. I., S., H., and Y. fled to Indonesia, where they remained for a year. However, they were unable to work or obtain permanent status and had to return to Afghanistan, where the Taliban continued to threaten them. When the Taliban retook the country, S.'s father, a local governor under the former government, was injured in fighting. Late last year, the Taliban came to I.'s parents house in search of I. Fearing for their safety, I., S., H., and Y. fled to Pakistan, then Brazil, and made it to the US in March 2023.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed asylum applications for I. and S. in June 2023. 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 individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0163112

38. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0142467

39. H. is a woman from India. She and her husband, B. filed their applications pro se with USCIS. After their interview the Chicago Asylum Office referred their cases to court. This family speaks Hindi and lives in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Hindi

Country of Origin: India

Client's Story

H. was sexually assaulted by her uncle when she was a young girl. As an adult, H.'s uncle sexually assaulted her again. H.'s uncle also threatened to abuse H.'s daughter, a minor. After H. reported her uncle to the police, he threatened to harm her and kidnap her daughter. H.'s uncle is an influential community member, and the police are unable to protect H. and her family.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

H. and her husband are currently in removal proceedings before the Chicago Immigration Court; there are no future hearings scheduled in 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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0148068, 21-0148404

40. 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, Indiana.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0152573

41. 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

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0147034

42. M. is a man from Ecuador. He is currently awaiting the rescheduling of his next Master Calendar hearing date. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

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 forced vendors to pay them in order to sell there. Around August of 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 of the overcharging of 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 of 2019, gang members kidnapped M. and took him to a remote location where they beat him and took his money. After this incident, M. fled the country, but people continued to go to his shop looking for him and threatened to harm his girlfriend and daughter, which led them to flee as well.

Expected Tasks

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

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, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0145604

43. 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

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0151700

44. 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

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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 toward 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0155215

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

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish

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. Although N. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA) at the border, it has not yet been filed with the immigration court.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0147272

46. 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. and his family speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories:

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Kichwa, Spanish

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 his wife, 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 in around June 2023. Pro bono counsel must file K., L. and M.'s I-589s with the Chicago Immigration Court prior to June 27, 2024. K., L. and M. are currently in removal proceedings before the Chicago Immigration Court; there are no future hearings scheduled in their cases. All affidavits and supporting materials for K., L. and M.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0164144

47. P. is a man from Nicaragua. P. speaks Spanish and lives in a western suburb of Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Nicaragua

Client's Story

As a university student in Nicaragua, P. helped form a political organization that advocates for democracy, justice, and human rights. P. was active in the organization as a leader and participated in public demonstrations in opposition to Nicaraguan government policies. P. fled the country after pro-government forces threatened, detained, beat, and tortured him.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

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

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0152440

48. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0143330

49. A. is a woman from Guatemala. Her four children are derivatives on her application for asylum. A.'s eldest daughter, C., has an independent asylum case at the asylum office. Her two youngest daughters arrived subsequently as unaccompanied minors and are not yet scheduled for court. A. and her family speak Spanish and live in Central Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Canjobal

Country of Origin: Guatemala

Client's Story

A's partner abused A. and their children, raped A., and controlled her. He became particularly violent after she gave birth to their second daughter because he was angry that the child was a girl. As a result of the abuse, A. has long-term hearing loss. A.'s partner forced her daughter, C., to scavenge for food at a local dump, attempted to sell C. to a drug trafficker, and threatened to rape C. When A. moved with her children to another part of Guatemala, her partner found them and threatened to kill them with the help of his drug trafficking associates. Fearing for their lives, A. fled with her children to the United States.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

Because A. and her son filed for asylum after their one-year deadline, her pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All documentation to their cases will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Documentation in C's case will be due one week prior to her asylum interview.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0143124

50. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 20-0143706

51. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0148257

52. T. is a lesbian cisgender woman from Namibia. She speaks English, and lives in a suburb of Chicago, Illinois. T.'s affirmative asylum application was filed in June 2022, and she is now

waiting for an asylum interview.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): English

Country of Origin: Namibia

Client's Story

During high school, T. realized that she was attracted to girls. She was verbally and physically assaulted my family members and peers because she liked to play soccer, which was considered a "boy activity." Her uncle threatened to cut her breasts off if she continued playing. T.'s aunt kicked T. out of her home because she considered T.'s boyish behavior un-Christian. T. started dating a boy to hide her sexual orientation. T. became pregnant and had a child who lives in Namibia. T.'s uncle locked her in a chicken cage in for several days in order to expel demons from T. with the help of other community members. They freed T. after she promised to stop acting like a boy. T. went to the police who told her maybe she deserves the abuse if she wants to act like a man. Later, T. dated a woman, but when they kissed in a restaurant, two men threatened her and stabbed her arm. T.'s uncle forced T. to marry her cousin, who subsequently drugged, beat, and raped T. T. fled to the United States on April 10, 2022, and filed her asylum application pro se on June 6, 2022.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to her 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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0160456

53. S. is a woman from Honduras. She speaks Spanish and lives in a western suburb of Illinois with her children, who are derivatives on S.'s asylum application and are also independently eligible for asylum.

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Honduras

Client's Story

S.'s partner, who is the father of her children, severely abused her for years. Their children often witnessed the violence that their father perpetrated against S. She made several police reports but received no response from the government until finally she was able to secure an order of protection. However, S.'s partner violated the order of protection, and the police did not enforce it. When S. tried to leave her partner, he threatened to take the kids away from her. S. and her children fled Honduras, entered the United States in May 2021, were placed in removal proceedings, and timely filed for asylum.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Litigating in immigration court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients, Writing legal

memos

Important Client Context

They are awaiting their Master Calendar Hearing. All supplementary filings will be due to court at least 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0153208

54. 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

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0164443

55. 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:

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): 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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0164176

56. 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, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Domestic and Gender Violence

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0150662

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

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IN

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0146095

58. 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

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0146245

59. 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, Illinois

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0147562

60. A. is a woman from Mexico. Her three daughters, B., C., and D. will be derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. A. and her children speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Mexico

Client's Story

A. lived in Mexico with her partner and three children. The cartel La Familia Michoacana extorted A. and her partner's fish vendor business. Despite relocating to another part of Mexico, the cartel found them and increased the extortion demands. When A.'s partner didn't pay, the cartel kidnapped both A. and her partner. The cartel released A. to gather

the money. A day later, cartel members raped A. because she had failed to gather the money. The cartel threatened to kill her if she did not have the money upon their return and sent her photos of her partner tied up. A. went to the police, but they refused to take down a report. A. and her daughters fled. Soon after, they learned their home was burned down. A.'s partner is presumed dead.

Expected Tasks

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

Important Client Context

Although A. and her daughters 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 them 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 A. and her daughters' individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

NIJC Contact

Lili Henkel, lhenkel@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0159472

61. 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

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

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.

Expected Tasks

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

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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0146760

62. S. is a man from Colombia. His wife, A. and their kids, E. and P., are derivatives on his application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. S. and his family are awaiting a new Master Calendar hearing date. They speak Spanish and live in a southwestern suburb of Chicago, Illinois.

Asylum Categories: Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: Immigration Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Colombia

Client's Story

S. worked as an engineer for a Colombian airline. His position involved overseeing luggage and goods and granted him access to many parts of the airport that are generally restricted. In 2018, two of S.'s colleagues approached him and asked him to collaborate with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) by facilitating the transportation of drugs through the airline. S. declined this request, but subsequently received more requests, and eventually threats from members of the FARC. S. tried to report the attempted recruitment to airport administrators and the police, but the threats only worsened. At one point, two men went to S.'s wife, A.'s, workplace and told her that she'd better advise her husband to collaborate with them or else he'd be in danger. At the end of 2018, the family received a letter indicating that S. had until the end of the year to collaborate with them, or the lives of his entire family would be at risk. The family immediately fled. After this, family and friends reported that people had come to S.'s home looking for him.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

S. submitted his application for asylum with USCIS in December 2020, completed an asylum interview in 2021, and was referred to the immigration court. Because the asylum application was filed more than one year after S. and his family 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. 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@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0147596, 21-0147271

Asylum – Affirmative

63. K. is a lesbian cisgender women from Venezuela. She is filing for asylum affirmatively and must submit her application by December 6, 2023. She speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

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

Deadline: Application filed by 12/06/23

Venue: USCIS

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish, Portuguese

Country of Origin: Venezuela

Client's Story

Beginning at a very young age, K. suffered multiple instances of rape and sexual abuse throughout her life. Her family often kicked her out of the house as a child because she is a lesbian. Her brother threatened K. at gunpoint. The father of K.'s daughter physically, sexually, and verbally abused her. K. tried to get a protective order against him, but it was not enforced. He began custody proceedings against K., during which he outed K. as a lesbian and the judge granted sole custody of their daughter to the father. Around 2017, K. became politically active through her support of Capriles, an opposition party to the Maduro government. She organized people online, worked on voting campaigns, and attended protests. She also went to Gay Pride marches. The Venezuelan police detained her twice for her activism. While she was detained, the police said they would make her and her lesbian partner-at-the-time straight and teach them "how to be women." No official charges were filed against K. But after she was released the second time, Venezuelan officials came looking for K. to arrest her again. K. fled to Colombia around 2018. K. obtained legal residence in Colombia. In Colombia, she met her new partner, B. B. is also seeking asylum but has a separate case. K. and B. did not feel safe as lesbian women and experienced housing and job discrimination because of their sexual orientations.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

K. and B. entered the United States together around December 7, 2022. USCIS must receive K.'s asylum application by December 6, 2022. Although K. and B.'s claims are separate, their cases would ideally be accepted together.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0162629, 23-0161512

64. B. is a lesbian cisgender women from Venezuela. She is filing for asylum affirmatively and must submit her application by December 6, 2023. She speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: Application filed by 12/06/23

Venue: USCIS

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Venezuela

Client's Story

B. knew she was a lesbian from a young age but always felt she had to keep her sexual orientation a secret. Her peers in school bullied her, calling her anti-LGBTQ slurs. Around 2017, B. attended protests against the Maduro government. She was arrested and detained for around six months for her participation but no formal charges were brought against her. After she was released, she received death threats over text message for her anti-Maduro political opinion. B. attempted to relocate for safety and moved back and forth between her sister's house in Colombia and her father's house in another state of Venezuela. In Colombia, she began dating K. K. is also seeking asylum but has a separate case. When B.'s father found out she was dating a woman, he sent her nasty messages and disowned her. B. and K. experienced discrimination in Colombia because they are a lesbian couple.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

B. and K. entered the United States together around December 7, 2022. USCIS must receive B.'s asylum application by December 6, 2022. Although B. and K. have separate claims, their cases would ideally be accepted together. B. has a tender-age daughter she would like to include in her asylum application.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161512, 23-0162629

65. O. is a bisexual cisgender man from Venezuela. He speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. His application was timely filed and he is now waiting for an interview with the Chicago Asylum Office.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+, Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs

Deadline: N/A

Venue: USCIS

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Venezuela

Client's Story

O. fears returning to Venezuela because he was verbally and physically abused by his father for being effeminate. As a child, O.'s cousin sexually abused him and called him homophobic names. Later, another cousin sexually abused O. O. was too afraid to report his cousins to the police or be open with his sexual orientation because the police refused to help his transgender friend after she was raped and kidnapped. In 2019, O. fled to Peru, where he still feared that people would harm him if he was open with his sexual orientation. In addition to fear of return to Venezuela based on his sexual orientation, O. fears return because he left the country without permission and believes he will be viewed as a traitor to the Maduro government.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

O. entered the United States in September 2022 and timely filed for asylum before USCIS. O. is currently living with his boyfriend, whom he met and first began dating in Peru and who is also an NIJC client.

NIJC Contact

Moises Lopez Soltero, mlopezsoltero@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0159933

66. D. is a gay cisgender man from Ghana. He speaks Twi and English and lives in Chicago. NIJC timely filed his affirmative asylum application, and he is waiting for an interview with the Chicago Asylum Office.

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: N/A

Venue: USCIS

Location: IL

Language(s): Twi, English

Country of Origin: Ghana

Client's Story

When D. was in his twenties, he started to question his sexual orientation and entered into a relationship with a business owner in his community. The two men had a

clandestine relationship for about seven years. Around 2021, people in their community found out about the relationship. A group of men broke into their shared home while they were being intimate and beat them. Shortly after, he fled to the United States. While he was afraid to seek medical treatment in Ghana, he has sought assistance in the United States for severe recurring headaches that he believes are a result of being beaten.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

NIJC timely filed D.'s asylum application. 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0159379

67. L. is a cisgender gay man from Pakistan. He speaks English and lives in Chicago, Illinois. L.'s affirmative asylum application was filed on October 12, 2023. (22-0160587)

Asylum Categories: LGBTQ+

Deadline: Application filed by 10/12/23

Venue: USCIS

Language(s): English

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Pakistan

Client's Story

From a young age, L. was bullied and physically attacked by his peers for being gay. He entered the United States in December 2020 with his family, but shortly after, he was outed to several members of his family, who were not accepting and told him that they would force him to marry a woman in Pakistan. In 2023, they kicked him out of the house, and he decided to seek asylum, since he has been relying on his father's student visa for status. L. fears forced marriage and further attacks if he were to return to Pakistan as an out gay man.

Expected Tasks

Legal research, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

L. qualifies for an exception to the one-year filing deadline because he has F-2 status. NIJC staff filed his I-589 in October 2023. 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@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 22-0160587

SIJS – Predicate Order

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

Deadline: Obtain Predicate Order by 04/01/24

Venue: Family Court
Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish
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 tried to contact her or provide any financial or emotional support. S.'s mother fled Columbia in October 2022 because the guerrilla was trying to recruit her young nephew. S. was left behind with a sister who is part of the LGBTQ+ community and because of that S. and her aunt received threats. S. fled shortly afterward and joined her mother in the United States on July 2023.

Expected Tasks

Litigating in state court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

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 Columbia.

NIJC Contact

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0164380

69. A. is a 15-year-old girl from Honduras. She lives with her mother, who speaks Spanish, in a northwest suburb of Chicago (Cook County)

Deadline: Obtain Predicate Order by 04/01/24

Venue: Family Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Honduras

Client's Story

When A.'s mother and biological father were in a relationship he would hit her while pregnant with A. and when A. was born her father attempted to kidnap her from the hospital. Due to abuse and his involvement in the 18 street gang in Honduras, they separated. A.'s father has never been a part of A.'s life and has not provided emotional or financial support.

Expected Tasks

Litigating in state court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

A pro bono attorney will need to file a petition seeking to establish paternity, grant sole allocation of parental responsibilities to A.'s mother and obtain an order finding that A.'s reunification with her father is not viable due to his abandonment and neglect and that it is not in A.'s best interest to return to Honduras.

NIJC Contact

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0163966

70. B. S. & L. are 10, 6, & 3 siblings from Honduras. They live with their mother, who speaks Spanish, in Northeast Illinois (Will County).

Deadline: Obtain Predicate Order by 07/01/24

Venue: Family Court

Language(s): Spanish

Location: IL

Country of Origin: Honduras

Client's Story

B.'s mother and father separated when B. was about three years old. After their separation, B. would see her father about once a month when her mother would take her to visit him. About two years ago, B.'s mom filed a lawsuit demanding child support to help raise B. Prior to that, B.'s father provided no financial support, and he has not provided emotional support since he separated from her mother. The last time B. spoke to her father was in 2021 when she went to see him for Christmas. S & L.'s have a different father and he was arrested and framed for the kidnapping of a girl in Honduras and was recently convicted to 11 years in prison. Their mother fled to the United States with her two younger children because of threats she received after the conviction. B. has since joined her here.

Expected Tasks

Litigating in state court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

B. has a different father than S. & L. therefore a pro bono attorney will need to file two separate petitions for sole allocation of parental responsibilities on behalf of B., S., & L.'s mother, and obtain an order finding that reunification with their fathers is not viable due to their abandonments, and that it is not in their best interest to return to Honduras.

NIJC Contact

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0161060, 23-0165052

71. A. and P. are brothers, 13 and 10, from Ecuador. They live with their mother who speaks Quichua and Spanish, in Chicago (Cook County).

Deadline: Obtain Predicate Order by 07/01/24

Venue: Family Court

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish, Quechua

Country of Origin: Ecuador

Client's Story

A. and P.'s mother and father separated when they were seven and five years old respectively. Afterwards, the brothers had no contact with their father and he has never tried to see them, contact them, or provide for them financially.

Expected Tasks

Litigating in state court, Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Preparing client testimony, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

A pro bono attorney will need to file a petition for sole allocation of parental responsibilities for A. and P., and obtain an order finding that A. and P.'s reunification with their father is not viable due to abandonment, and that it is not in A. and P.'s best interest to return to Ecuador.

NIJC Contact

Berenice Sanchez Ruiz, bsanchezruiz@heartlandalliance.org
NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0162217

U Visa

72. A. is a woman from Mexico who is eligible to file a U Visa application. USCIS must receive A.'s application prior to January 28, 2024. A. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago.

Deadline: Application filed by 01/26/24

Venue: USCIS

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Mexico

Client's Story

A. has suffered physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual abuse by her husband. On one occasion, A.'s husband removed her clothing without A.'s consent and raped her. A. transported herself to the hospital to receive treatment. She filed a police report against her husband. She received counseling to heal from the abuse she suffered. A. is no longer living with her abusive husband. A. will require a waiver of inadmissibility for having entered the United States without inspection.

Expected Tasks

Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

NIJC Contact

Jackie Mares, jmares@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 21-0147613

73. R. is a man from Guatemala who is eligible to file a U Visa application. USCIS must receive R.'s application prior to February 16, 2024. R. speaks Spanish and lives in Melrose Park.

Deadline: Application filed by 02/15/24

Venue: USCIS

Location: IL

Language(s): Spanish

Country of Origin: Guatemala

Client's Story

R. faced many years of physical and emotional abuse by his ex-partner. R.'s ex-partner was possessive, aggressive, and threatened him. R.'s ex-partner often withheld R. from seeing his son. In one incident, she grabbed a knife and chased R. with it. R. reported the abuse to the police and obtained an order of protection. R. continues to receive counseling for the violence he experienced. R. has two U.S. citizen children and one child in Guatemala. Along with his U Visa application, R. will require a waiver of inadmissibility for having entered the United States without inspection.

Expected Tasks

Preparing affidavits, Preparing applications, Working with vulnerable clients

Important Client Context

NIJC Contact

Jackie Mares, jmares@heartlandalliance.org

NIJC Case Number(s): 23-0165024