

## *Finding Reputable Immigration Legal Help*

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Only licensed attorneys and representatives accredited by the US Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Legal Access Programs can provide immigration legal advice. Before contacting a lawyer or accredited representative about working on your immigration case, learn as many facts about your immigration history and gather any immigration paperwork and records.

Consult with your local Irish Immigration Center for accurate and up to date immigration information, as well as referrals for legal help [http://ciic-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/Centers\\_CIIC\\_colors.png](http://ciic-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/Centers_CIIC_colors.png)

### *Avoid Immigration Scams*

- Never pay a notary public/notario, travel agent, tax preparer or forms preparer to tell you what immigration benefits to apply for or forms to complete.
  - Filing the wrong application is not only a waste of money - it could also have severe consequences, such as deportation.
  - If it seems too good to be true... it probably is!
- Never pay for an immigration form.
  - All immigration forms are available for free at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)
- Never sign a blank form or a form that has false information.
  - Carefully read all documents before signing.
  - You are responsible for anything with your signature on it that is submitted to the government.
- Do not leave original documents with anybody.
  - Provide copies to your legal representative, if needed.

### *Finding & Working with an Attorney or Accredited Representative*

- Check credentials
  - **Attorneys** licensed to practice in **any state can give immigration legal advice**. An immigration attorney may be admitted in a state other than where s/he practices. Check if your lawyer is licensed to practice law by using this list of lawyer licensing databases for all states at: [http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal\\_services/flh-home/flh-lawyer-licensing.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home/flh-lawyer-licensing.html)
  - **An Accredited Representative** is a non-lawyer with permission from the US Department of Justice Office of Legal Access Programs to represent individuals applying for immigration benefits. The accredited representative must be working for certain non-profit organizations formally recognized by the US Department of Justice Office of Legal Access Programs.
    - . Check if they are accredited at: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-accreditation-roster-reports>
- Check for past disciplinary actions
  - To see if your immigration lawyer or DOJ accredited representative has been disciplined and why at see: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-of-currently-disciplined-practitioners>

### What Rights Do Clients Have?

If you work with an immigration lawyer or accredited representative, you have certain rights. You have the right to:

- A written statement or contract, explaining the work the lawyer will do in your case and the fees he or she will charge for that work
- An explanation of the law and your options so that you can make important decisions about your case
- Be kept informed about your case status and what has been filed
- A complete copy of any forms or documents submitted in your case
- An accounting of your case, including the total costs and receipts for payments.
  - Avoid paying in cash. When paying a lawyer or application fee, use a check, money order or credit card.
- USCIS will mail you a receipt notice after they receive your application, petition or request. Make sure to keep the receipt for your records.
- If you are unsure whether your immigration service provider is giving trustworthy advice, do not hesitate to seek a second opinion. When doing so, always work with a licensed attorney or accredited representative.