

The Wrong Help Can Hurt

WHERE TO GET THE RIGHT HELP

When you need help with your immigration paperwork, it is important to get the right help.
FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

1 Find Help in the Right Place

✓ **DO:** Use trusted websites to find a licensed lawyer or accredited representative.

- **TRUSTED WEBSITE:** [DOJ Recognition & Accreditation Program](https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-accreditation-roster-reports)
www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-accreditation-roster-reports
- **TRUSTED WEBSITE:** [Catholic Legal Immigration Network Affiliate Directory](https://www.cliniclegal.org/find-legal-help/affiliates/directory)
www.cliniclegal.org/find-legal-help/affiliates/directory
- **TRUSTED WEBSITE:** [National Immigration Legal Services Directory – Immigration Advocates Network](https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/)
www.immigrationadvocates.org/legaldirectory/

✗ **DO NOT:** Look for help or pay for services on social media.

2 Know the Costs Before You Start

- Private lawyers charge fees. Ask about payment plans.
- Non-profit groups may help for free or low cost ("pro bono" help).

✓ **ASK:** How much will this cost? Are there government fees?

3 Be Careful Who You Trust

- Some people pretend to be lawyers or immigration agents.
- Beware of anyone contacting you on social media or calling your phone asking for money.
- Community members who are unlicensed may intend to help, but can make serious and costly mistakes

✗ **Never pay someone online or by phone who asks for money suddenly. DO NOT pay by Zelle.**

4 Know Your Rights as a Client

- A real legal helper will give you a written contract.
- You have the right to see all papers and forms before they are sent to the government.
- You have the right to copies of everything in your case.

✓ **You have the right to know what is happening.**

5 Tell Your Friends and Family

✓ **DO:** share this guide with your community. If you find a good legal helper, tell others about them.

✓ **DO:** Help your friends stay safe from fake helpers.

How to Check if Someone is a Real Legal Helper:

- Ask for their name and the name of their organization.
- Look them up on the DOJ website or a trusted legal directory.
- Ask to see their license before you pay any money. Use this 50-state list to check to make sure they are in good standing with their State Court.
www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home/flh-lawyer-licensing/
- Call the organization to make sure the person works there.
- If something feels wrong, stop. Ask someone you trust for advice.

**IMPORTANT: Only lawyers and DOJ accredited representatives can legally help you with immigration papers.
Do not pay anyone else for immigration services.**



Use this step-by-step guide by the American Bar Association to learn how to verify.

<https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/immigration/immigration-scams-identify-and-verify-english.pdf>