

IMMIGRATION SERVICES: LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN TEXAS

Update: September 13, 2006

WHO MAY LEGALLY PROVIDE IMMIGRATION SERVICES?

With minor exceptions, immigration services may be provided only by:

1. licensed attorneys;
2. law students under certain supervision;
3. certain persons with a pre-existing relationship with the immigrant and who are working for free; and
4. accredited representatives of a non-profit religious, charitable, social service, or similar organization established in the United States and recognized as such by the Board of Immigration Appeals (also called the "BIA" - see important information about the BIA below).

A notary public or a "notario publico" cannot help you with immigration forms unless they are approved by the federal government and working for an organization that is also approved by the federal government.

LICENSED ATTORNEYS - Attorneys are licensed by the state in which they practice law. In order to verify that an attorney is licensed and is in good standing in the state in which he or she is licensed to practice, contact the State Bar Association in the state in which the attorney is practicing law. In Texas, the contact information is the State Bar of Texas, www.texasbar.com.

You can also find out if an attorney is specialized in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization Certifications. A lawyer could be experienced and helpful in providing immigration assistance and not be "board certified." Lawyers who are board certified in immigration law need to specialize in immigration work and pass a special exam before they can advertise that they are "board certified." The Texas Attorney General's Office does not recommend one type of lawyer over another, but simply provides this information so that you can understand what the term "board certified" means.

LEGAL REFERRAL SERVICES - If you are looking for a lawyer to assist you with an immigration issue, here is a list of organizations that may be able to help you in your search.

NAME OF LEGAL REFERRAL SERVICE	REFERRAL LINE	COUNTY
ARLINGTON BAR ASSOCIATION	817-277-3113	Tarrant
CENTRAL TEXAS LAWYER REFERRAL	512-472-8303	Travis
CORPUS CHRISTI BAR ASSOCIATION	361-883-3971	Nueces
DALLAS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION	214-220-7444	Dallas
EL PASO BAR ASSOCIATION	915-532-7052	El Paso
HARRIS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION	713-236-8000	Harris
HOUSTON LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE, INC.	800-289-4577; 713-237-9429	Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris & Montgomery



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

JEFFERSON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION	409-835-8438	Jefferson, Orange
NORTH DALLAS BAR ASSOCIATION	972-980-0472	Dallas, Collin, Denton, Tarrant
PLANO BAR ASSOCIATION	972-424-6113	Collin
SAN ANTONIO BAR ASSOCIATION	210-227-1853	Bexar
TARRANT COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION	817-336-4101	Tarrant

The **State Bar of Texas Lawyer Referral Information Service** helps find lawyers for persons in counties where there is no local lawyer referral service. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Here's how it works:

- Call 1-800-252-9690 or 1-877-983-9227. You will be asked in which county you need a lawyer and to briefly state your problem.
- You will be given the name and phone number of an attorney. When you call the attorney to schedule a meeting, it is very important that you tell him or her that you were referred by the State Bar of Texas.
- Your 30 minutes of legal consultation will cost you \$20. After that initial 30 minutes, it is up to you and the attorney to negotiate fees if you decide to authorize the lawyer to take action on your legal problem.

AILA - The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) is the national association of over 8,000 attorneys and law professors who practice and teach immigration law. Founded in 1946, AILA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides its members with continuing legal education, information, professional services, and expertise through its 35 chapters and over 50 national committees.

AILA can help find an immigration attorney through Immigration Lawyer Referral Service (ILRS). No more than \$100 will be charged for an initial half-hour consultation. For an attorney referral, call 1-800-954-0254 or e-mail ilrs@aila.org. The e-mail should contain your name, location and what your need is for an immigration lawyer, e.g., asylum, deportation, etc. When you speak to the lawyer, it is very important that you mention that you received his or her referral through AILA's Immigration Lawyer Referral Service.

BIA RECOGNIZED AGENCIES - The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) is the highest tribunal on immigration and nationality matters in the United States. The BIA is responsible for the recognition of organizations and the accreditation of representatives wishing to appear before the Immigration Courts, the Department of Homeland Security and the BIA.

A list of the non-profit organizations recognized by the BIA can be found on its website, www.usdoj.gov/eoir/statspub/raroster.htm, which is updated quarterly. Representatives of those organizations must be designated by such organizations and be accredited by the BIA. Accredited representatives may not provide representation of individuals unless they work under the direction and for the recognized non-profit organization recognized by the BIA.

The BIA's list is organized alphabetically by name of the organization, including the accredited individuals who work for those organizations. If the name of the organization appears, but the name of an individual does not appear under the organization's name, this means either that the organization does not yet have an approved person to provide immigration services or that the individual who was approved no longer works for the organization. The dates correspond to the date the organization and the individual were recognized and accredited by the BIA. For ease of locating organizations in Texas, the following list is arranged alphabetically by city. The following organizations are recognized to provide immigration services **as of May 4, 2006:**



AMARILLO:

Catholic Family Service, Inc.12/08/83
Diocese of Amarillo
P.O. Box 15127
Amarillo, TX 79105
Hernandez, Lydia (INS Only)09/22/05

AUSTIN:

Catholic Charities of Central Texas03/28/02
Office of Immigrant Concerns
1605-A East Seventh Street
Austin, TX 78702
Helmcamp, Leslie06/01/03
Rios-Segura, Maria Guadalupe06/07/05
Robles, Maribel05/24/05

Immigration Counseling and Outreach Services03/10/87
(Formerly: Austin-Travis County Ref. Svcs.)
5555 North Lamar, Suite K-100
Austin, TX 78751
Buchanan, Gabriela (INS Only)03/29/04
English, Terri (INS Only)08/27/03
Tran, Quoi (INS Only)08/27/03

Political Asylum Project of Austin, Inc.10/11/94
314 East Highland Mall Boulevard, Suite 501
Austin, TX 78752
Arango, Gustavo (INS Only)03/18/04
Buller, Lindsey03/27/06
Llenado-Petty, Lora03/27/06
Sanchez, Isidora (INS Only)03/27/06

Refugee Rights, Inc.04/15/88
4526 Burnet Road
Austin, TX 78756

BAY CITY:

Federation of Employers & Workers of America06/06/06
2901 Bucks Bayou
Bay City, TX 77414
Hinojosa, Arnulfo (INS Only)06/06/06
Romero, Rita (INS Only)06/06/06



BEAUMONT:

Catholic Charities	08/09/89
Diocese of Beaumont	
1410 North Oakland	
Beaumont, TX 77701	
Garza-Cruz, Alma (INS Only)	11/05/04
Spinney, Carmen Lopez (INS Only)	08/19/04

BROWNSVILLE:

South Texas Immigration Council, Inc.	06/24/77
845 East 13th Street	
Brownsville, TX 78520	
Alvarez, Micaela	03/01/03
Ayala, Nati	07/12/05
Contreras, Rosalva	07/12/05
Moreno, Margarita	07/12/05
Pena, Benigno	06/14/05

CORPUS CHRISTI:

Catholic Social Services, Inc.	10/06/89
Immigration Assistance Program	
1322 Comanche	
Corpus Christi, TX 78401	

DALLAS:

Catholic Charities	11/09/93
Diocese of Dallas	
5415 Maple Avenue, Suite 400	
Dallas, TX 75208	
Alonzo, Silvia (INS Only)	03/11/05
Bayumi, Ismat Sayed (INS Only)	09/29/03
Cansino, Ruth (INS Only)	03/11/05
Castillo, Daniela (INS Only)	02/28/06
Chac, Jorge A. (INS Only)	09/29/03
Cooper, Gary (INS Only)	03/11/05
Del Rosario Mezo, Amalia (INS Only)	09/28/05
Dinh, Lap Van	11/08/01
Mendoza, Linda (INS Only)	02/28/06
Nettle, Jennifer (INS Only)	02/28/06
Nieto, Rafael (INS Only)	02/28/06
Odrian, Lelys (INS Only)	02/28/06
Pecina, Maria Eugenia (INS Only)	02/20/04
Robles, Sonia (INS Only)	02/20/04

Salazar, Aldo01/13/05
 Slaughter, Vanna K.02/20/04
 Ventura, Maria (INS Only)02/28/06



Centro Social Hispano03/03/93
 606 North Bishop
 Dallas, TX 75208



International Rescue Committee05/30/97
 7515 Greenville Avenue, Suite 603
 Dallas, TX 75231
 David, Elisa M. (INS Only)06/02/06
 Polavieja, Enrique (INS Only)06/02/06



DEL RIO:

Clinica de Inmigracion de San Jose07/20/83
 P. O. Box 786
 Del Rio, TX 78840



DENTON:

Opening Doors Immigration Services07/18/03
 Trinity Presbyterian Church
 2200 North Bell Avenue
 Denton, TX 76209
 Hanson, Robert S. (INS Only)07/18/03
 Starnes, Anne (INS Only)05/24/05
 Thomson, Suzanne C. (INS Only)07/18/03



EL PASO:

Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services, Inc.03/27/90
 2400 A East Yandell
 El Paso, TX 79903
 Garcia, Elvia02/17/05
 Gomez, Laura (INS Only)03/05/04
 Guerrero, Maria del Carmen01/04/06
 Lopez, Alberto (INS Only)02/17/05
 Maldonado, Edgard04/07/05
 Martinez, Yolanda (INS Only)03/05/04
 Zamora, Maria A. (INS Only)02/17/05



El Paso Legal Assistance Society08/15/79
 1220 North Stanton
 El Paso, TX 79902





Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center04/24/89

(Formerly: Las Americas Ref Asy Project)

106 East Yandell
El Paso, TX 79902

- Bourg, Judy12/12/05
- Hernandez, Pamela05/05/05
- Hudak, Catherine12/22/04

United Neighborhood Organization04/22/98

8660 Montana, Suite I
El Paso, TX 79925

- Garcia-Moreno, Ida Marcela04/02/04
- Huerta, Carman (INS Only)04/02/04
- Lujan, Victorina04/02/04
- Prieto, Laura04/02/04
- Ramirez, Sara04/02/04

United Neighborhood Organization03/09/06

747 East San Antonio, Suite 100
El Paso, TX 79901

- Almonte, Martha03/09/06
- Garcia, Emma (INS Only)03/09/06
- Leon-Sepulveda, Liliana (INS Only)03/09/06
- Valenzuela, Lucy S.03/09/06

FORT WORTH:

Catholic Charities12/08/83

Diocese of Fort Worth
1216 West Magnolia Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76104

- Brady, Elizabeth D. (INS Only)07/19/05
- Camacho, Xergio Chacin (INS Only)05/10/06
- Hoang, Hoai (INS Only)07/19/05
- Olivares, Michael (INS Only)07/19/05
- Tur, Juana Ana B. (INS Only)05/10/06

Lutheran Social Services of the South, Inc.10/05/94

Tarrant County Area
5001 South Freeway
Fort Worth, TX 76115

San Miguel Lutheran Church05/10/96

Social Ministry
4301 East Lancaster
Fort Worth, TX 76103



World Relief Corporation12/22/92
 5000 James Avenue
 Fort Worth, TX 76115
 Bao, Jonathan (INS Only)04/20/05
 Godfrey, Gina (INS Only)04/20/05

HARLINGEN:

Casa de Proyecto Libertad02/21/90
 113 North First Street
 Harlingen, TX 78550
 Prado, Nilda R.09/29/04

ProBAR - South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representatio07/07/92
 301 East Madison Avenue
 Harlingen, TX 78550

HOUSTON:

Alliance for Multicultural Community Service04/20/01
 6440 Hillcroft, #411
 Houston, TX 77081

American Red Cross01/17/83
 Greater Houston Area Chapter
 2700 S.W. Freeway
 P.O. Box 397
 Houston, TX 77001

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Galveston-Houston12/08/83
 2900 Louisiana Street
 P.O. Box 66508
 Houston, TX 77266
 Alvarenga, Toni (INS Only)08/23/05
 Teofilo, Trisha04/20/05

Central American Refugee Center04/14/92
 6006 Bellaire Boulevard, Suite 100
 Houston, TX 77081

Houston Community Services09/12/79
 5115 Harrisburg
 Houston, TX 77011
 Castillo, Edward M.09/03/04
 Escalante, Graciela (INS Only)12/12/05



Immigration Counseling Center, Inc.02/02/75
 6430 Richmond Avenue, Suite 450
 Houston, TX 77057

Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston11/13/01
 3217 Montrose Boulevard
 Houston, TX 77006

International Community Services, Inc.07/20/03
 3131 West Alabama, Suite 100
 Houston, TX 77098

International Services of the YMCA of the Greater Houston Area10/12/83
 6300 Westpark, Suite 600
 P.O. Box 740425
 Houston, TX 77057

Owlett, Barbara A. (INS Only)08/23/05

Teref, Nebiat (INS Only)02/01/06

Vargas-Craddock, Ramona C. (INS Only)04/07/05

Lutheran Social Services of the South, Inc.05/08/92
 3131 West Alabama, Suite 124
 Houston, TX 77098-2031

KYLE:

Bernardo Kohler Center02/17/04
 3601 Dry Hole Road (CR 210)
 Kyle, TX 78640

Walding, David R. (INS Only)02/17/04

LAREDO:

Asociacion Pro Servicios Sociales, Inc.07/27/76
 406 Scott Street
 Laredo, TX 78040

Catholic Social Services of Laredo, Inc.07/31/84
 1901 Corpus Christi Street
 Laredo, TX 78044-3305

Martinez, Daniel06/30/03

Refugee Assistance Council03/11/93
 1102 Santa Maria Street
 P.O. Box 706
 Laredo, TX 78042



LONGVIEW:

Hispanic American Association of East Texas01/07/03

Immigrant Service Center

1406 Birdsong

Longview, TX 75606

LUBBOCK:

Catholic Family Service08/13/85

Diocese of Lubbock

102 Avenue J

Lubbock, TX 79401

 Infante, Maria (INS Only)03/09/06

 Jimenez, Rosario (INS Only)08/22/03

 Puente, Margarita (INS Only)05/10/06

MCKINNEY:

Iglesia Bautista Cristiana07/15/98

507 Titus Street

McKinney, TX 75069

 Camacho, Alejandro01/18/05

 Granados, Gloria (INS Only)07/20/05

PORT ARTHUR:

South Jefferson County Chapter American Red Cross06/25/87

3747 Doctors Drive

Port Arthur, TX 77642

SAN ANTONIO:

Bexar County Legal Aid Association11/04/82

434 South Main Street, Suite 300

San Antonio, TX 78204

Catholic Charities02/09/76

2903 West Salinas

San Antonio, TX 78207

 Gonzales, Yolanda G. (INS Only)06/01/03

Iglesia del Hogar, Centro de Asistencia de Asistencia de Inmigracion ..12/12/05

1071 West Kirk Place

San Antonio, TX 78226

 Rodríguez, Bertha D. (INS Only)12/12/05



Jewish War Veterans of the USA - Post 75307/31/87
 Laurel Heights Station
 P.O. Box 12705
 San Antonio, TX 78212
 Braunstein, Alvin08/22/05

Refugee & Immigration Center for Education Legal Services11/23/93
 1305 North Flores
 San Antonio, TX 78212

SAN JUAN:

Diocese of Brownsville01/18/89
 Catholic Social Services
 700 North Virgen de San Juan Boulevard
 San Juan, TX 78589
 Acuna, Santa E. (INS Only)12/22/04

TYLER:

Hispanic American Association of East Texas10/28/98
 1111 East Erwin
 Tyler, TX 75702

Our Savior's Lutheran Church09/21/00
 (Formerly: Generations Together of Our S.L.C.)
 4900 Kinsey Drive
 Tyler, TX 75703
 Guerrero, Gustavo (INS Only)11/14/03