

Finding Legal Advice

Know Your Rights

If you choose to have a representative when filing an application or petition with USCIS, you may be represented by an attorney or an accredited representative of a recognized organization. A representative must file a "Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative" form (Form G-28) with the application or petition. If you choose, an attorney or accredited representative of a recognized organization may represent you when you file an application or petition with USCIS. A representative must file a Form G-28, Notice Of Entry Of Appearance As Attorney Or Representative, along with the application or petition.

If

You are filing **within** the United States

You are filing an application or petition at an office **outside** the United States

You need legal advice about an immigration matter but cannot afford to hire an attorney

Then

Attorneys and accredited representatives may communicate with USCIS on your behalf and receive information from USCIS regarding your application or petition.

Attorneys and accredited representatives may communicate with USCIS on your behalf and receive information from USCIS regarding your application or petition. You may also be represented by an attorney admitted to the practice of law in the country where you file the application or petition. An attorney admitted to the practice of law in a country other than the United States must ask the USCIS official to permit him or her to represent you.

You may be able to ask an attorney, an association of immigration lawyers, a state bar association, or a specially-accredited organization about the availability of free or reduced-cost legal services on immigration issues.

Attorneys

Attorneys must be a member in good standing of the bar of a U.S. State (or U.S. possession, territory, Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia) and not be under any court order restricting their practice of law. Attorneys will check the first block on Form G-28 and must provide information regarding their admission to practice.

Only attorneys and accredited representatives may communicate on your behalf regarding your application with USCIS.

In choosing an attorney, you should:

- Ensure that the attorney is a member in good standing of the "bar" of a U.S. State (or possession, territory, Commonwealth or District of Columbia)
- Ensure that the attorney is not under any court order restricting their practice of law
- Review the current attorney licensing document for the attorney and contact the relevant State bar admission authorities to verify the information. See the "American Bar Association – State Bar Associations" link to the right for a list of state bar associations.

- Review the “List of Currently Disciplined Practitioners” in the link to the right. This is where the Executive Office for Immigration Review lists if an attorney has been expelled or suspended from practice before USCIS/DHS
- Review the “List of Previously Disciplined Practitioners” available from the “List of Currently Disciplined Practitioners” page on the EOIR website

A lawfully admitted attorney should honor your request for this information, as State Bar practice rules require disclosure of this information to clients. Before you pay attorney fees for help with your immigration case, make sure that the individual is a licensed attorney.

You should also review the lists of currently disciplined and previously disciplined practitioners on the Executive Office for Immigration Review website. These lists will help you to determine whether the attorney has been expelled or suspended from practice before USCIS/DHS. To review these lists, please see the links in the “External Links” section of this page.

Accredited Representatives

Accredited representatives must work for a Recognized Organization in order to be eligible to represent you before USCIS and file a Form G-28. They may be authorized to practice before the Immigration Courts, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and/or USCIS.

If you choose to work with an accredited representative from a recognized organization, you should:

- Check that they are authorized to practice before the Immigration Courts, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and/or USCIS
- Ask to see a copy of the BIA decision granting official recognition
- Visit the “List of Currently Disciplined Practitioners” link to the right to review lists of currently and previously disciplined practitioners on the EOIR website to see if the accredited representative has been expelled or suspended from practice before USCIS/DHS.

An accredited representative of a recognized organization should honor your request for this information. Recognized organizations may only charge nominal (inexpensive) fees, if any, for providing services in immigration matters.

Attorneys Outside the United States

An attorney outside the United States may represent you if your application or petition is filed outside the United States. The attorney must be licensed to practice law, be in good standing in a court of general jurisdiction of the country in which he or she resides, and be engaged in such practice. Additionally, the attorney must receive permission to represent you from the USCIS official.

Notarios, Notary Publics and Immigration Consultants

Notarios, notary publics and immigration consultants may NOT represent you before USCIS. For more information on what services a notario may or may not provide, please see the “Don’t Be a Victim of Immigration Fraud” link to the left side of this page.

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