

**SIX WAYS FOR LAWYERS TO HELP RESIST POLICIES THAT HURT
IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES:**

I. Give Money

- A. Even before this current crisis, all of our agencies were short-staffed given the level of need. Now the numbers of calls that we have been receiving for immigration legal services assistance have grown exponentially and we anticipate that this growth will continue over the next four years. Any pro bono work that you do will assist with this but in order for that work to be effective, we will need to take time away from our clients to train and mentor. If we had an extra hand to handle cases while we train and mentor it would double the impact of the pro bono services provided.
- B. <http://www.philabarfoundation.org/2017-Special-Circumstances>
The Philadelphia Bar Foundation has set up a special circumstances fund to address the fact that many nonprofit legal aid organizations in our community are experiencing urgent increases in client demand for their services and also potentially significant cuts in their federal and state funding. They are in need of an immediate infusion of resources due to these special, unexpected circumstances. Donations to the **Special Circumstances Campaign** will allow the Bar Foundation to issue *Special Circumstances Grants* to local legal aid organizations currently receiving a regular annual grant from the Foundation. The Bar Foundation has the unique capacity, through well-established processes, to evaluate and respond to requests for special assistance from the full range of legal aid organizations. This is a standard part of the Foundation's operations, although the current special circumstances are anything but ordinary.
- C. If you're tapped out, throw a home fundraiser for an immigration and refugee non-profit of your choice. Invite some friends, serve them dinner and charge them money (whatever you deem appropriate) and make it clear on the invitation that the charge is to go to an immigration or refugee charity to help them fight the administration's anti-immigrant anti-refugee policies.

II. Sign up at the Philadelphia Bar Association to offer volunteer legal services

- A. The Philadelphia Bar Association has set up a database and form for which you can provide information such as area of expertise or knowledge, hours of availability, and contact information. The legal aid nonprofits will then be able to reach out to you for assistance and keep track of who has been contacted.

III. Attend a Citizenship Training and take a citizenship case

- A. There will be two trainings on citizenship in **March**. One is being held at Ballard Spahr and one will be at the Bar Association and will be open to all lawyers seeking to volunteer. CLE credit will be available. At the trainings, you will learn of times, dates and locations of citizenship clinics that will be taking place around the city in **May**. You will have an opportunity to sign up for one of these clinics at the training and you will be expected to attend the clinic that you sign up for and begin the citizenship application process with your client at the clinic.
- B. The four non-profit immigration legal services providers in Philadelphia, HIAS Pennsylvania, Nationalities Services Center, Esperanza Immigration Legal Services and Friends of Farmworkers, will ensure that pre-screened clients are given appointments at each of these clinics. A pro bono coordinator at the Bar Association will match each client with a pro bono attorney so that when the clinic occurs, a client will have an appointment during the clinic with a pro bono attorney. The clinics will be staffed by an immigration attorney expert who will be there to answer questions. During the clinic, pro bono attorneys will spend between two and three hours getting to know the client and completing all of the necessary paperwork to file the naturalization application. Once the paperwork is complete, administrative volunteers at the clinics will assist you in putting the completed package together and ensuring that the package gets mailed to the court for filing. If the client has failed to bring necessary documentation so that the package cannot be completed that day, the pro bono attorney will make a follow-up appointment with the client at his or her office in order to complete and file the application. The immigration attorney expert who is at the clinic to answer questions will provide his or her contact information to the attorneys that are volunteering so that he or she can be contacted if the attorney has any follow-up questions after the clinic is over.
- C. After the citizenship application has been filed, the pro bono attorney will continue to provide representation to the client through the citizenship process (approximately five months) and will have the opportunity at the end of the process to attend the client's oath ceremony. The attorney must ensure that there is an interpreter at all phases of the representation when one is necessary. The oath ceremony is the ultimate event in the representation and is extremely moving and inspiring. We hope attending this will motivate the pro bono attorney to take on more citizenship cases pro bono after the initial case has been completed. It is said that the best defense to deportation is citizenship and in these dark times, where detentions in advance of attempts to deport our friends and neighbors, our co-workers, our colleagues and even our family members are happening more than ever before, we need all of the assistance we can get in helping immigrants naturalize.

IV. Attend a citizenship training and participate in a legal screening day

- A. As stated above, we will provide a training on citizenship on dates in **March**. That training will be open to all lawyers seeking to volunteer. CLE credit will be available. At the training, you will learn of times, dates and locations of citizenship screening days that will be taking place around the city in **April**. You will have an opportunity to sign up for one of these screening days at the training and you will be expected to attend the screening day that you sign up for and spend approximately four hours meeting with clients and determining, based on your interviews with the clients, who would be appropriate for the citizenship clinic days mentioned above. Those clients who are not appropriate for those clinics will be referred to one of the four immigration non-profit organizations listed above or to a private immigration attorney depending on the facts and circumstances of the client's issues.
- B. The screening days will be staffed by an immigration attorney expert who will be available to answer questions during the day and volunteer administrative folks who will assist the experts and the pro bono volunteers with any logistical issues that arise during the screenings. Pro bono attorneys will be provided with a list of referral resources for those clients who do not qualify for representation at the citizenship clinics and will be provided with a form to complete for those clients who do qualify. Names and contact information of the clients who do qualify will be provided to the Philadelphia Bar Association pro bono coordinator for this project so that he or she can assign the person to a screening day and a pro bono volunteer who is attending the screening day.
- C. Pro bono attorneys who attend a screening day have no further obligations after the screening day. It is hoped, however, that the experience of learning about citizenship and meeting with an immigrant eligible for citizenship will inspire pro bono attorneys to sign up for a citizenship clinic so that he or she can provide direct representation or will sign up to attend another screening day in the months after the first set are completed.

V. For Family Law Attorneys Only: Provide Permanency Planning Representation for Families Facing Deportation

- A. Many undocumented parents of U.S. citizen children are desperately afraid of being taken away in the middle of the day or the middle of the night, leaving their U.S. Citizen children suddenly without a caregiver. These parents need help drafting, executing and in some cases filing documents that will ensure that arrangements for their children can be made if they are suddenly unable to provide for them. We will provide training to family law lawyers about the variety of mechanisms that are available for parents in this situation on a date in March. The training will be open to all family law attorneys seeking to undertake pro bono representation for these parents and will include CLE credit. At the training contact information will be taken by the Philadelphia Bar Association's pro bono coordinator.

- B. After the training, when immigration non-profit agencies encounter a client seeking to make these arrangements, the client will be referred to the pro bono coordinator who will match the client with a pro bono attorney. These referrals and subsequent connections will be accomplished in a manner similar to the way in which VIP attorneys receive cases from VIP. In accordance with federal and state law, the pro bono attorney assigned to the case must provide any necessary interpreters for the representation.

VI. For tax attorneys only: Provide pro bono services to immigrants and refugees seeking assistance in filing their taxes

- A. Most immigrants and refugees are working and need assistance in filing their taxes. While their taxes are not complicated, generally speaking, due to language barriers and cultural differences about what sorts of things one has to report to the government, having legal assistance with tax preparation is extremely helpful.
- B. If you are a tax attorney and are willing to assist low income immigrants and refugees with filing their returns, please contact the Philadelphia Bar Association's pro bono coordinator and provide your information to him or her. When a non-profit immigration or refugee agency encounters a client who needs this assistance the client will be referred to the pro bono coordinator and the coordinator will match the client to the pro bono attorney. In accordance with federal and state law, the attorney who undertakes the representation must provide interpreters when necessary at all stages of the representation.

VII Attorneys who speak languages other than English

We are in need of attorneys who speak languages other than English who would be willing to pair up with attorneys who do have experience in immigration, family law, tax, as well as for the naturalization clinics.

VII. Write to your federal and state legislators regularly and often.

- A. As you know, the legal landscape with respect to immigrants and refugees has changed rapidly and drastically in the last month. We expect these changes to continue as Congress begins considering budget appropriations and the President continues to make policies about immigrants and refugees based on the false premises that they are terrorists, that they steal jobs and that they are criminals. We hope that we can count on each and every one of you to unrelentingly communicate with your federal and state officials telling them that you disagree with these policies and that they are bad for the country.
- B. If you want help doing this, join these mailing lists: www.picc.org, www.aclu.org and www.hiaspa.org. PICC (the Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Organization), the ACLU and HIAS PA are all engaged in advocacy regarding

legislative developments. We therefore have toolkits for writing letters and postcards regarding specific issues/proposals on our websites and facebook pages. You can use these resources for yourselves and you can also throw regular legislative advocacy parties with your friends, neighbors and co-workers.