



What to know about the Unauthorized Practice of Law in the Immigration Context

The Practice of Law is limited to attorneys and people working under their direct supervision.

- Only admitted attorneys (who are not disbarred or suspended) can practice law or hold themselves out as practicing law.
- Practicing law means giving legal advice, assessing and communicating the strength or weakness of legal claims, making legal arguments, advising and representing individuals in a legal context.
- Attorneys cannot assist non-attorneys in practicing law.
- No one who is not an attorney can portray themselves as an attorney or receive payment for acting as an attorney.

DOJ Accredited Representatives and Reputable Individuals with permission can assist and represent individuals in USCIS and EOIR (Immigration Court) matters.

- Accreditation must be granted by the Department of Justice to Accredited Representatives.
- Reputable Individuals must:
 - Have Good Moral Character
 - Appear on an individual basis, at request of individual, and have a pre-existing relationship
 - Receive no payment
 - Be granted permission

People who are not attorneys, accredited representatives or reputable individuals with permission can provide limited assistance with immigration forms.

- They can help fill out blank immigration forms using information provided by the applicant.
- They can (and should) read form instructions to applicants.
- They can provide interpretation and translation services to help people understand the forms in their primary language.
- They can provide general legal information, provided it is not applied to an individual's specific facts.
 - Legal information means providing general information about what the law requires but not advising people about their specific cases.

TIPS

- If you are not an attorney, accredited representative or reputable individual granted permission, you can say:
 - I am not an attorney and I cannot give you legal advice or represent you.
 - Here is some general legal information about [Fill in the blank]. You should consult with a lawyer to receive advice about how this information affects you.
 - I can read this form and its instructions to you.
 - I can help you fill out this form with information that you provide.
 - I can interpret this form for you into a language that you understand.