

Confirming Licenced Attorneys

You can confirm whether an individual is a licensed attorney within New York State by contacting: The New York State Unified Court System, Attorney Registration Unit at 212-428-2800 or at www.nycourts.gov.

Confirming Representatives

For a list of the organizations and representatives that are recognized by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and who can represent clients in federal immigration courts only, go to www.usdoj.gov/eoir <<http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir>> and click on “EOIR Legal orientation and Pro Bono Program” and then click on the link for “Recognition & Accreditation.”

Legal and Social Services Assistance

For referrals to legal and social service providers contact the New York Immigration Hotline at 800-566-7636.

Additional Resources

City residents can also go to the District Attorney’s Northern Manhattan Office, which was established to provide the community north of 96th Street with easy access to the resources of the District Attorney’s Office. The information you provide to the Northern Manhattan Office will be forwarded to the Immigrant Affairs Program.

To report or provide information about a fraud, scam, or other crime to the Immigrant Affairs Program, please call: 212-335-3600 (interpreters are available in various languages including French, Fujinese, Mandarin, Cantonese and Polish).

To report or provide information about a fraud, scam, or other crime at the District Attorney’s Northern Manhattan Office, please call: 212-864-7884

You may also write to:
Immigrant Affairs Program
One Hogan Place, Room 753A
New York, NY 10013

Immigrant Affairs Program



ROBERT M. MORGENTHAU
DISTRICT ATTORNEY





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Dear Friends,

Manhattan's diverse and vibrant community is home to many immigrants from countries all over the world. In 2007, I created the Immigrant Affairs Program to address the victimization of immigrants who are often vulnerable to immigration fraud, scams, and other forms of exploitation. The District Attorney's Office aims to protect individuals from such crimes, regardless of their legal status, and to empower victims and witnesses to seek help. I hope you find this brochure informative, and I encourage you to avail yourself of all the resources offered by this office.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Morgenthau

The Immigrant Affairs Program was created to address the victimization of immigrants. Immigrants seeking residency or citizenship are often preyed upon by criminals who steal from them by employing a variety of fraud schemes. Unscrupulous attorneys, fake attorneys, or other individuals and agencies that offer assistance to immigrants may demand large sums of money for services they have no intention or ability to provide. Undocumented immigrants may also be targeted for criminal schemes and exploitation related to their employment, wages, and housing. The program is meant to aid and encourage both documented and undocumented immigrant victims and witnesses who may fear cooperating with law enforcement because of their immigration status to do so. Regardless of immigration status, a victim or witness of an immigration fraud, scam, or other crime can report that offense to the Immigrant Affairs Program. When appropriate that complaint will be assigned to an Assistant District Attorney who will investigate the matter.

Examples of Fraud Schemes or Scams

- Individuals or immigration service providers who represent themselves as attorneys and who provide legal advice when they are not licensed attorneys.
- Individuals who pretend to be agents for the federal immigration authorities and who offer special treatment or services.
- Individuals or businesses that promise immigrants employment or work visas they cannot provide.
- Construction companies that hire immigrants to work on government funded projects but do not pay them the salary required by law.
- Individuals who provide false investment opportunities or engage in pyramid schemes.
- Individuals who produce and sell fraudulent social security cards, licenses, passports, and other documents.
- Individuals or businesses that offer housing and other services but just take your money and disappear.

What to Be Careful With

- Immigration service providers who tell you they can get you a special deal with the immigration authorities.
- Individuals who are not licensed to practice law but who hold themselves to be lawyers.
- "Notario" fraud. In this country, a "notario" is not necessarily an attorney.
- Service providers who will not provide a written contract.
- Lawyers or service providers who do not provide or return original documents or copies of forms submitted to the immigration authorities or other government agencies.
- Service providers who threaten to report you to the immigration authorities.
- Service providers with cash-only payment policies. Make sure to get a written receipt for any funds paid.