



Working Together to Empower Children Facing Deportation: Information for Volunteers and Pro Bono Attorneys to Learn About CILA's Platform

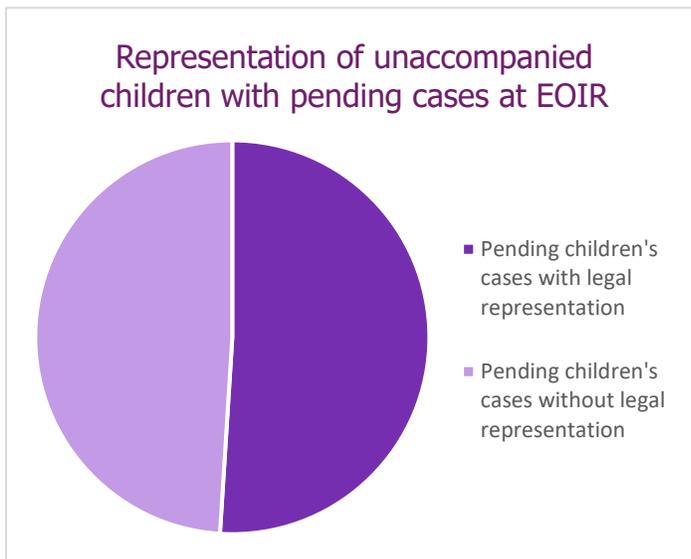
Many children have legal relief available that could offer them protection and more security in the United States. The only thing missing is knowledge and guidance to navigate the system. Children appearing in immigration court alone are unable to access the relief from deportation that is available to them under the law. The need is greater than the services the current system of nonprofit legal service providers can provide.

There is no doubt that appointing a free, specialized attorney to every child in this system is the gold standard. Until that standard is realized, many children need help from attorneys on a pro bono basis to fill this gap.



Children's Access to Lawyers in Immigration Proceedings

Data available from the [Executive Office for Immigration Review](#) (EOIR) shows that thousands of unaccompanied children are currently facing deportation in immigration courts across the United States. Unfortunately, unaccompanied children are not entitled to appointed legal counsel or best interest advocates like children in the juvenile or child welfare systems in the United States.



In fact, [49% of unaccompanied children](#) are facing deportation alone, according to data from EOIR as of July 2022. We must find a way to elevate the voices of youth by providing representation. Although children may have spoken to a lawyer while they were in detention, there is no right to appointed counsel in immigration proceedings. Additionally, many parts of the country do not have legal service providers that represent unaccompanied children for free or low cost. This means that youth in some areas are not represented upon release from detention, unless a pro bono attorney is willing to take their case.

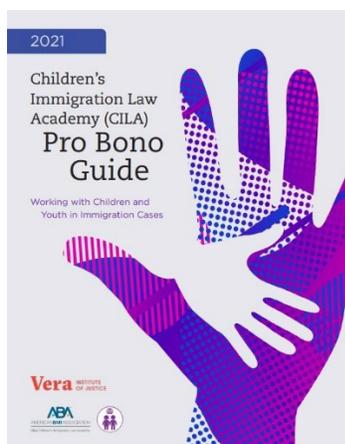
The above chart shows data from EOIR, demonstrating that almost half of the population of unaccompanied youth nationwide lack legal representation for their pending immigration cases. Obtaining legal counsel is difficult for unaccompanied children. Many states lack legal service providers, who can provide free or low-cost legal services to unaccompanied children. Additionally, the cost of hiring a private attorney is a major barrier for many young people who are often still in school and may not be eligible to work in the United States. Children and youth often lack support, and they must navigate legal matters on their own. A pro bono attorney can make a difference in the life of a child or youth to help explain their rights and their options and to walk alongside them in representation.

Collaborating to Empower Children Facing Deportation

The ABA's Children's Immigration Law Academy (CILA) hosts a platform called [Pro Bono Matters for Children Facing Deportation](#) on CILA's website. The platform works similarly to a bulletin board. The platform is a place for nonprofit legal service providers who work with children and youth in immigration matters to post pro bono opportunities in need of assistance. Interested lawyers and advocates can search and share available pro bono cases and opportunities.



The platform is always growing. Eighteen organizations can currently post pro bono opportunities to help children and youth in immigration cases across the nation. Some organizations provide mentorship and training to attorneys who are not familiar with immigration law, while other organizations seek experienced attorneys. Read the case cards, and express interest in a pro bono opportunity that fits best for you. The posting organization will contact you so you can both learn more, and then you can get started.



Whether you are a new or seasoned immigration or children's attorney, CILA has resources available to support you in your representation. A great starting point is the [CILA Pro Bono Guide: Working with Children and Youth in Immigration Cases](#), available on CILA's website. Additionally, CILA's [website](#) features numerous recorded trainings and written resources to help pro bono attorneys working with children and youth in immigration cases, all available for free. The materials cover introductory material and more advanced topics. CILA also sends a quarterly [e-newsletter](#) to pro bono attorneys, those interested in engaging in a pro bono case in the future, or for anyone who wants to learn more.

Until there is universal representation for all children in immigration proceedings, we hope the platform can be used as a tool to help connect legal service organizations with pro bono attorneys, and CILA hopes to help bridge the gap by providing resources to help guide pro bono attorneys in effective representation of youth.

ABA Commission on Immigration (COI) & ABA Children's Immigration Law Academy (CILA) Resources for Pro Bono Attorneys: *All Available for Free*

General Go-To Resources

- COI's [**Family Group Dedicated Docket Pro Bono Manual**](#): 160+ page comprehensive manual with sections on Common Forms of Relief in Immigration Court and before USCIS, Effective Representation, Ethical Considerations, an Introduction to Immigration Court, an Introduction to USCIS, and Practical Pointers. Includes how-to checklists. *Updated Nov. 2022.*
- CILA's [**Pro Bono Guide: Working with Children and Youth in Immigration Cases**](#): 117-page guide that covers important skills for working with children and youth in immigration cases including trauma-informed lawyering and interviewing tips and strategies along with sections focused on key forms of relief. The guide covers the basics of necessary skills and substantive law in children's cases, while also providing practical tips and links throughout to learn more. *Updated Sept. 2021.*
- COI's [**Ethics of Representing Families on the Dedicated Docket**](#): 12-page ethics guide that provides best practices for representing family groups, including conducting intakes, conflicts of interest, and special issues when representing spouses and children. *Updated Feb. 2022.*
- COI's [**Practice Guide: Seeking Expedited Adjudications, Short-List Notices, and Case Assistance**](#): 12-page guide that explains how and when to seek expedited case adjudications with USCIS, short-notice lists at the Asylum Office, and case assistance from other government entities. *June 2022.*
- COI's [**Practice Guide: Statements as Evidence: Drafting and Editing Declarations, Affidavits, and Letters**](#): 20-page guide that describes of the types of statements, experts, and witnesses in immigration cases as well as practical tips and considerations for drafting statements. Also included are sample client and expert declarations, and consent to release or exchange confidential information. *June 2022.*
- COI's [**Primer: Immigration Enforcement Mechanisms at the U.S. Border**](#): 28-page primer that provides a broad introduction to the enforcement mechanisms employed at the U.S. southern border, including information affecting unaccompanied children, families, and adults. *Dec. 2022.*
- COI & CILA's recorded training [**Representing Children and Families in Immigration Matters**](#): Three panels on how to best represent children and families. The first panel provides an overview of key forms of legal relief. The second panel is an overview of representing an individual in removal proceedings and before USCIS. And the third panel provides best practices when working with families and children. *Mar. 2022.*



- CILA recorded training series [Unaccompanied Children and Immigration 101](#) covering nine topics:
 - Introduction to Working with Unaccompanied Children; Trauma-Informed Lawyering with Unaccompanied Children; Family-Based Immigration and VAWA for Unaccompanied Children, Options for Child Survivors of Crimes, Including Trafficking; and Ethical Representation of Unaccompanied Children. *2019.*
 - Introduction to Removal Proceedings for Unaccompanied Children; Introduction to Asylum for Unaccompanied Children; and Introduction to Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. *Updated Mar. 2022.*
- CILA's [Helpful Resources in Representing Unaccompanied Children](#): Provides many resources with links for practitioners to access sources of law and policy, as well as information from stakeholders and practice guides. *Updated July 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [Child Interviewing Techniques](#): Covers practical tips and skills to work with and interview child clients. *Apr. 2021.*
- CILA's [Tips for Working with Migrant Children and Trauma-Informed Lawyering](#): 21-page resource covering trauma-informed lawyering tips for practitioners and pro bono attorneys new to working with migrant children. *Feb. 2023.*
- CILA's [Cultural Competency When Representing UCs](#): 8-page resource that assists attorneys in creating a safe space for their clients to share their complete identity, which will also help the attorney to persuasively present the child's case to an adjudicator and provide effective communication. *Nov. 2019.*
- CILA's [Bite-Sized Tips for New Practitioners & Pro Bono Attorneys](#): Includes seven short videos from the CILA team each featuring a tip for new practitioners. CILA compiled the tips into a written resource and provided CILA resources to learn more. The tips range from practicing intentionally, to research tips, to information regarding case preparation. *Oct. 2022.*
- CILA's blog post [Keeping the Government Accountable: Upholding Civil Rights and Due Process for UCs](#): reviews information on filing a Department of Homeland Security civil rights complaint and questions to incorporate into screenings. *Oct. 2019.*
- CILA and the National Immigration Litigation Alliance (NILA): Provides multiple [recorded trainings and written resources](#) created to support advocates as they pursue the case beyond the immigration court level. If the pro bono project involves **brief writing, appellate work, or litigation**, these resources will be an asset to your practice. Trainings cover topics such as Legal Writing, Advanced Immigration Legal Research, Winning at the BIA, and Introduction to Federal Court Practice. CILA's [blog post](#) summarizes key resources and trainings developed in the partnership.

Asylum, Withholding of Removal, & Protection under the Convention Against Torture (CAT)

- CILA's [Asylum Case Theory and Evidence Matrix](#): Chart regarding legal elements with space to include relevant facts and supporting documentation to help advocates stay organized and effectively prepare a case. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org.
- COI's recorded training [Asylum 101 for Families on the Dedicated Docket](#): Substantive overview of asylum law, particularly as it relates to families on the dedicated docket. Great resource for those who are new to asylum law. *Feb. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training series [Unaccompanied Children and Immigration 101](#): Introduction to Asylum for Unaccompanied Children. *Updated Mar. 2022.*
- CILA's [Withholding of Removal and Protection Under the CAT resources](#): Case Evidence List, Developing Your Case Chart, and Key Sources of Law and Cases. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org. *Jan. 2020.*
- COI's recorded training [Engaging Country Conditions Experts in Asylum Cases](#): Panel of country conditions experts and attorneys discuss strategies for working together before and during the asylum case, tips for testimony preparation, and special considerations when working with children and youth. Panelists shared insights, experiences, and practical pointers. The webinar included an accompanying [Quick Guide: Engaging Country Conditions Experts in Asylum Cases](#). *Dec. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [A Deep Dive Into Current Conditions in El Salvador, Guatemala, & Honduras with the Experts](#): Reviews the political and cultural context of each of these countries to help advocates better work with clients and assess forms of relief. *Aug. 2021.*
- CILA's [Trauma-Informed Representation in Asylum Cases: Asylum Interview/Asylum Merits Hearing Checklists](#): 15-page resource that provides practical tips and guidance for trauma-informed representation in asylum cases. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org. *Updated June 2022.*
- CILA's [Country Conditions Compilation: Conditions for LGBTQIA+ Children & Youth in Seven Countries](#): 76-page resource divided by country, that includes relevant quotes from articles and reports. The resource also identifies some local organizations that help and support LGBTQIA+ individuals in those countries. The resource is intended to be a helpful starting point for advocates' research on the issues facing their LGBTQIA+ clients in their home countries. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org. *August 2022.*



Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

- COI's recorded training [TPS for Removal Proceedings](#): Provides an overview of Temporary Protected Status and best practices for representing TPS-eligible families who are in removal proceedings on the dedicated docket. *Nov. 2021.*

The Cuban Adjustment Act (CAA)

- COI's recorded training [The Cuban Adjustment Act: Overview of Relief and Common Issues](#): Offers a summary of the Cuban Adjustment Act, common issues and creative solutions thereto. Panelists also shared practical pointers and reflections from the field. *July 2022.*

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)

- CILA's [Special Immigrant Juvenile Status \(SIJS\) Case Theory and Evidence Matrix](#): Chart regarding legal elements with space to include relevant facts and supporting documentation to help advocates stay organized and effectively prepare a SIJS case. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org.
- CILA's recorded training series [Unaccompanied Children and Immigration 101](#): Introduction to Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. *Updated Mar. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [SIJS in Texas 101: An Overview of State Court Proceedings for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status](#): Great overview of Texas family law and best practices for approaching SIJS custody cases in Texas Family Court. *Feb. 2022.*
- CILA's [The ABCs of SIJS](#): 7-page resource providing an overview of SIJS including changes that occurred in 2022. *June 2022.*
- CILA's [Special Immigrant Juvenile Status \(SIJS\) Overview](#): 2-page overview of SIJS including information on SIJS eligibility requirements, key citations, and information on the process. *Updated Oct. 2022.*
- CILA's [Quick Reference Guide – Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and EB-4 Immigrant Visa Availability](#): 1-page resource answering the common question of what does it mean when visas are currently “unavailable” for children and youth with SIJS. *Updated Oct. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [Overcoming Analysis Paralysis: Practical Considerations for Adjusting Status Based on SIJS](#): Provides an overview of adjustment of status based on SIJS. *Jan. 2021.*
- CILA's [Frequently Asked Questions – Overcoming Analysis Paralysis: Practical Considerations for Adjusting Status Based on Special Immigrant Juvenile Status \(SIJS\)](#): 28-page FAQ that serves as a follow-up written resource to the training to answer questions about adjustment of status based on SIJS. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org. *Aug. 2021.*



Representing Clients in Immigration Court

- COI's [Practice Advisory: Seeking Prosecutorial Discretion](#): 16-page practice advisory that includes an overview of the various prosecutorial discretion (PD) Memos and explains best practices for how to request PD and what types of discretion to seek. Includes a template PD request. *Updated Sept. 2022.*
- COI's recorded training [Mechanics of Immigration Court Series Part I: The Master Calendar Hearing](#): How to determine if your client is in immigration removal proceedings and how to secure the relevant case file, appearances in immigration court, what to expect at a Master Calendar Hearing (including a mock hearing), and how to use WebEx for court appearances. *Feb. 2022.*
- COI's recorded training [Mechanics of Immigration Court Series Part II: Corroboration, Preparing Witnesses, and Working with Experts](#): How to prepare witnesses for trial and bolster credibility, what types of evidence to submit and how to react to evidence submitted by OPLA, how to handle police reports and RAP sheets, engaging lay witnesses, using expert witnesses, and country conditions. *Feb. 2022.*
- COI's recorded Q&A [Mechanics of Immigration Court Series Part II: Follow-Up](#): In a follow-up video to Part II, panelists answer questions from the Q&A that they did not have time to address during the initial webinar. *Feb. 2022.*
- COI's recorded training [Mechanics of Immigration Court Series Part III: The Individual Hearing](#): How to prepare materials for the individual hearing, how to anticipate and respond to objections, tips for direct and cross-examinations, how to handle interruptions by the immigration judge, and how to best preserve the record for appeal. *Mar. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [Unaccompanied Children and Immigration 101](#): Introduction to Removal Proceedings for Unaccompanied Children. *Updated Mar. 2022.*
- COI's recorded training [Accelerated Timelines: Gathering Evidence and Making Your Case with Experts for Cases on the Dedicated Docket](#): Panelists address best practices in working closely and together with experts to advance the clients' case, with reflections directly from two experts themselves. *Aug. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [Working with Experts to Build Your Evidentiary Record](#): Overview of how to work with expert witnesses in asylum cases in immigration court. *July 2020.*
- COI's recorded training [Motions to Reopen in Immigration Court](#): Experts provide an overview on motions to reopen in immigration court and reflect on their experiences and recent case law. The webinar included an accompanying [Quick Guide: Motions to Reopen in Immigration Court for Cases on the Dedicated Docket](#). *Sept. 2022.*
- CILA's [Tips for Working with Children and Youth Remotely in a Hearing or USCIS Asylum Office Interview](#): 16-page tips sheet that offers pointers for advocates to consider before a remote proceeding so that they get prepared and know what to



expect. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org. *Mar. 2022.*

- CILA's [How to Prepare for an Individual Hearing: Different Practitioners' Perspectives](#): 15-page resource that provides different tips on how to prepare and represent a client in an individual hearing. If you need the password to access this page, contact CILA at cila@abacila.org. *Updated Dec. 2022.*

Self-Care

- COI's recorded training [The Lifeguard is Drowning: Identifying Burnout in Immigration Practitioners](#): Offers concrete ways to help immigration practitioners experiencing burnout and secondary trauma, to help them build sustainable careers in this field. *Apr. 2022.*
- CILA's recorded training [Secondary Traumatic Stress and Self Care](#): Discusses how and why secondary traumatic stress manifests including how to develop a strategic approach that focuses on self-care. *Mar. 2022.*