

UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF IMMIGRATION LAW

USCIS

March 23, 2023

- Thank you for joining us for the **Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law** webinar, hosted by **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** and the **Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)**.
- Today, we are hosting this webinar as part of the [federal partnership](#) with the Institute of Museum and Library Services. We work together to share different aspects of citizenship and immigration information with museum and library professionals.
- We appreciate this partnership and are excited to have everyone participating today.
- Let's review the agenda – today, you will hear from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the USCIS Office of Citizenship and the USCIS Public Engagement Division.
- We will share an overview of the
 - USCIS Citizenship Resource Center;
 - the Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law; and
 - information on common immigration scams.

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****USCIS owns the images**

Disclaimer



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Materials presented today are for informational purposes only and is not legal advice. The information disseminated today, and statements made by USCIS personnel are intended solely for the purpose of providing public outreach and to raising awareness of the Agency's stakeholders about issues of mutual interest. It is not intended to, does not, and may not be relied upon to create any right or benefit.

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IMLS WELCOME



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INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES

www.ims.gov

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USCIS OVERVIEW CITIZENSHIP RESOURCE CENTER



USCIS OFFICE OF CITIZENSHIP

www.uscis.gov/citizenship

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- The Citizenship Resource Center has a collection of helpful resources and free study materials for a variety of users including:
 - **Immigrants who are interested in becoming U.S. citizens.** Lawful permanent residents (LPRs) will find information about the naturalization process, eligibility requirements, and study materials to prepare for the naturalization interview and test.
 - **Educators who play a critical role in preparing learners.** Educators including teachers, volunteers, and program administrators will find several resources for the classroom. Educators can also search for free USCIS training seminars designed to enhance the skills needed to teach U.S. history, civics, and the naturalization process to immigrant students.
 - **Organizations that are interested in supporting immigrants in becoming citizens and assisting them to integrate into American civic society.** Whether an organization is just beginning to help immigrants on their

journey towards citizenship or is an experienced service provider, they will find resources to help enhance their overall efforts and programs.

- The Citizenship Resource Center is managed by the Office of Citizenship. Learn more about the [Office of Citizenship](#) and its mission.

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USCIS OVERVIEW UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF IMMIGRATION LAW (UPIL)



**Community Relations Specialist
USCIS Public Engagement Division**
www.uscis.gov/outreach

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- USCIS Community Relations Specialists build collaborative relationships with local stakeholders and provide educational presentations to the public through regular meetings, special sessions with specific and targeted agendas, email dissemination of communications materials and advise on new USCIS initiatives and updates.
- Today's presentation is on UPIL, the unauthorized practice of immigration law.

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AVOID IMMIGRATION SCAMS



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Help stop the spread of immigration scams in your community. Only an attorney or authorized representative working for an organization recognized by the Department of Justice can give legal advice.

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- Help stop the spread of immigration scams in your community. Only an attorney or authorized representative working for an organization recognized by the Department of Justice can give legal advice.

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Avoid Scams



Common Scams

Learn how to become an authorized provider, identify common help, get community organizations and legal assistance, and get resources to help you avoid becoming a victim of an immigration scam. Use this information to avoid common immigration scams.

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- Before we get started, I want to show you how you can find helpful information on our website at www.uscis.gov/avoidscams.
- Don't become a victim of immigration scams! If you need legal advice on immigration matters, make sure the person helping you is authorized to give legal advice.
- Only an attorney or an accredited representative working for a Department of Justice (DOJ) recognized organization can give you legal advice.
- Anyone wishing to provide the public with immigration services must be authorized by the Department of Justice (DOJ)'s Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP).
- Visit the OLAP's [Recognition and Accreditation Program](#) page to learn how an organization can apply for recognition and accreditation (R&A).

USCIS Role in Review

- OLAP offers USCIS the opportunity to review applications for applicants' qualifications.

- Each USCIS district office has a Recognition and Accreditation (R&A) team or point of contact who reviews the application.
- In addition to reviewing the submitted materials, USCIS may:
 - Consult records of disciplined practitioners;
 - Conduct basic background checks and,
 - Contact colleagues of the applicant for input.
- At the completion of the review, USCIS will submit its findings to the Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP) and provide a copy to the applicant.

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****Image obtained from bing.com images, using the filter “Free to modify, share, and use commercially”**

WHAT IS UPIL?



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There is a lot of confusion about what UPIL is and what it is not.

- What does it mean to be unauthorized?
- What does it mean to practice immigration law?
- What are the indicators of UPIL? How do I report UPIL?

www.uscis.gov/avoidscams

(more information about UPIL and other immigration scams)

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- USCIS partnered with ICE, DOJ, and the FTC on June 9, 2011, and launched the UPIL Initiative. Agencies on the UPIL task force include DOL, DOJ, FTC, DOS, ICE/HSI, and USCIS/FDNS.
- In this presentation, we will discuss “*What does it mean to be unauthorized?, What does it mean to practice immigration law? What are the indicators of UPIL? How do I report UPIL?*”

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WHO IS AUTHORIZED?



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A person is authorized to practice immigration law if they are:

Attorney: A person licensed to practice law in any state, possession, territory, or commonwealth of the United States, or of the District of Columbia who is in good standing and is not under suspension, disbarred, or otherwise restricted from practicing law.

Accredited Representative: An accredited representative is a person who has been approved by the Department of Justice and works for a recognized organization.

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- A person is authorized to practice immigration law if they are:
- **Attorney:** A person licensed to practice law in any state, possession, territory, or commonwealth of the United States, or of the District of Columbia who is in good standing and is not under suspension, disbarred, or otherwise restricted from practicing law.
- **Accredited Representative:** An accredited representative is a person who has been approved by the Department of Justice and works for a recognized organization.

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VERIFYING AN ATTORNEY



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- Each state's list of licensed attorneys is available online or by contacting their state supreme court.
- A quick search will provide you with the status of their license and may inform you of any past or pending disciplinary actions against them.

[Free Legal Help \(americanbar.org\)](http://FreeLegalHelp.americanbar.org)

Photo from webpage



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- Because immigration law is federal, an attorney can be licensed in any state to practice. That means that if you live in Maryland and search for your attorney and she/he is not listed, that does not mean that the attorney is not licensed.
- For additional resources to find each state's licensing authority: Go to the American Bar Association to find links to each state's licensing authority.
www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home/flh-lawyer-licensing/

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MD ATTORNEY GRIEVANCE COMMISSION & OFFICE OF BAR COUNSEL



The screenshot shows the Maryland Courts website. The header features the Maryland state flag and the text "MARYLAND COURTS Fair. Efficient. Effective Justice For All". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: COURTS, COURT HELP, E-SERVICES, LAWYERS, MEDIA, and COMMUNITY. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with links: YOU ARE IN: Lawyers, Atticus Curatorum, Appointed Attorneys Program, Attorney Code/Address Change (District Court Only), Attorney Grievance Commission, Attorney Information System (AIS), Attorney Listing, Attorney Compliance Requirements, Bar Associations, Board of Law Examiners, Certificate of Good Standing, Change of Address, Client Protection Fund, and Commission on Judicial Disabilities. The main content area is titled "Maryland Attorney Listing" and contains a paragraph explaining that the listing is an index of all attorneys admitted to the bar in the State of Maryland. It also includes a search section titled "Attorney Search" with a form for entering a last name (required) and a checkbox for similar last names, along with a "Search" button and a "New Search" link.

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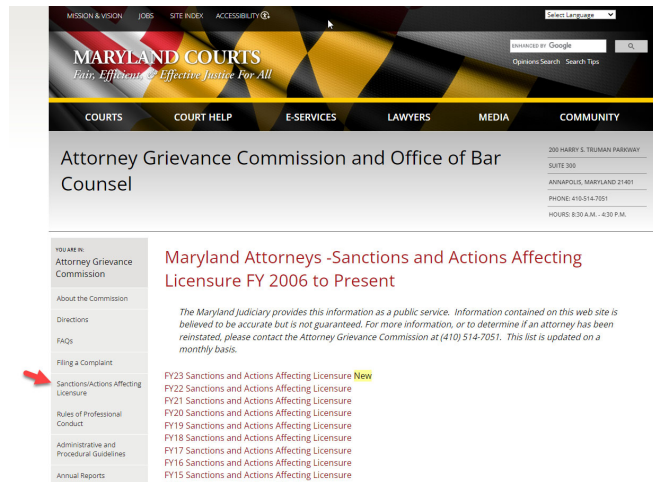
- As an example, this slide shows the Maryland Licensing authority webpage and how to search an attorney.

****Image: Shown on this slide is the site for MD's licensing authority and how to search an attorney.**

<https://www.courts.state.md.us/attyssearch> *The Maryland Judiciary provides this information as a public service.*

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MD ATTORNEY GRIEVANCE COMMISSION & OFFICE OF BAR COUNSEL, Cont'd.



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- *Under Sanctions/Actions Affecting Licensure, you can find information that is updated monthly.*
<https://www.courts.state.md.us/attygrievance/sanctions>

****Image: Shown on this slide is the site for MD's licensing authority. The Maryland Judiciary provides this information as a public service.**

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ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE



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Only those individuals on the Department of Justice (DOJ) Executive Office for Immigration Review's (EOIR) list of accredited representatives may represent petitioners or applicants before USCIS.

The DOJ maintains the list of accredited representatives and recognized organizations.

<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-accreditation-roster-reports>

(List of Accredited Representatives and Organizations and how to apply)

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- This only pertains to accredited representatives, not licensed attorneys.
- An individual seeking accreditation may not apply on their own behalf. A Recognized Organization must apply for accreditation on behalf of the representative.
- Examples would be organizations such as Justice for Our Neighbors, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, etc. All are non-profit recognized organizations that can submit applications on behalf of individuals seeking accreditation to the EOIR Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP).
- **Recognized Organization:** "A non-profit religious, charitable, social service, or similar organization that provides immigration legal services primarily to low-income and indigent clients within the United States, and, if the organization charges fees, has a written policy for accommodating clients unable to pay fees for immigration legal services."
- The organization must be a Federal tax-exempt organization organized in the United States; it must have (or simultaneously

apply for) at least one accredited representative; it must have access to adequate knowledge, information, and experience in all aspects of immigration law and procedure; and it must designate an authorized officer to act on behalf of the organization. 8 C.F.R. § 1292.11(a).

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THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ)



THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Search this site

ABOUT

OUR AGENCY

TOPICS

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CONTACT

Home » Executive Office for Immigration Review

SHARE

<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognized-organizations-and-accredited-representatives-roster-state-and-city>

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- This is the link for EOIR R&A organizations and representatives

****Image: Shown on this slide is the site for the United States Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review. The Department of Justice provides this information as a public service.**

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DOJ RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS AND ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVES



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- This is an interactive map. Simply click on the state to find their respective recognized organizations and accredited representatives.

****Image: Shown on this slide is the site for the United States Department of Justice *RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS AND ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVES ROSTER BY STATE AND CITY. The Department of Justice provides this information as a public service.***

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DOJ FIND LEGAL REPRESENTATION



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- Here you can find information on:
 - the recognition and accreditation program,
 - list of pro bono legal service providers,
 - list of attorneys and representatives who are currently ineligible to practice immigration law and
 - important information before you take legal advice.
 - The next slide will show us the hyperlink for “List of attorneys and representatives who are currently ineligible to practice immigration law” highlighted here by the red arrow.

****Image: Shown on this slide is the site for the United States Department of Justice *FIND LEGAL REPRESENTATION*. The Department of Justice provides this information as a public service.**

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DOJ LIST OF CURRENTLY DISCIPLINED PRACTITIONERS



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<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-of-currently-disciplined-practitioners>

Search by:
Name, City/State, Date of Discipline &
whether or not they were reinstated

- **If you identify a suspended or disbarred attorney who continues to practice before DHS**, please notify DisciplinaryCounsel@uscis.dhs.gov.
- **If you identify a suspended or disbarred attorney who continues to practice before EOIR or the BIA**, please notify EOIR.Attorney.Discipline@usdoj.gov.

- Here is the link from the previous slide.
- If you identify a suspended or disbarred attorney who continues to practice before DHS, please notify DisciplinaryCounsel@uscis.dhs.gov.
- If you identify a suspended or disbarred attorney who continues to practice before EOIR or the BIA, please notify EOIR.Attorney.Discipline@usdoj.gov.

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WHO IS NOT *AUTHORIZED*?



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- **Disciplined Attorneys** – an attorney who engaged in illegal or unethical activity leading to suspension or disbarment and has been sanctioned by the Board of Immigration Appeals. See <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/discipline.htm>
- **Notary Publics** are not required to be attorneys in the U.S. Notary Publics are not to be confused with “Notarios” or “Notarios Públicos”.
- https://www.nationalnotary.org/file%20library/nna/reference-library/what-is-a-notary-public-m63459_180119.pdf
- **Well intentioned family members, friends, neighbors** - these people may accompany individuals to interviews but they may **not** give legal advice.

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- A disciplined attorney is an attorney who engaged in illegal or unethical activity leading to suspension or disbarment and has been sanctioned by the Board of Immigration Appeals.
- **Notary Publics are not required to be attorneys in the United States. They are not to be confused with “Notarios” or “Notarios Públicos.” How does a Notary Public differ from a Notario Público?** Though they sound similar, the roles and duties are very different. In Latin America, a Notario Público is an attorney or a high-ranking official (such as a judge). In the United States, a Notary is a responsible person appointed by the state government to witness the signing of important documents and administer oaths. They are forbidden from preparing legal documents or giving advice on immigration or other matters unless he or she is also an attorney.
- Here is a helpful fact sheet on the functions and limitations of Notary Publics in the U.S.:

https://www.nationalnotary.org/file%20library/nna/reference-library/what-is-a-notary-public-m63459_180119.pdf

- **Well intentioned persons** may not give legal advice UNLESS they are considered a “reputable person” and permitted by DHS to represent an applicant/petitioner. Even “reputable individuals,” who can represent people at interviews, cannot file applications/petitions per 8 CFR 103.2.

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NOTARY PUBLIC VS. “NOTARIO”



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Notary public (in the U.S.): Is authorized only to witness the signature of forms.

Notario Público (in many Latin American (and European) countries): Has the equivalent of a law license and is authorized to represent others like an attorney.

The problem: When individuals with a notary public license in the U.S. misrepresent themselves as a "notario público" to immigrant populations that ascribes a vastly different meaning to the term.

https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_services/immigration/projects_initiatives/fight-notario-fraud/

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Notary public (in the U.S.): Is authorized only to witness the signature of forms.

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The problem: When individuals with a notary public license in the U.S. misrepresent themselves as a "notario público" to immigrant populations that attributes a vastly different meaning to the term.

USCIS regulations state that with few exceptions no one may prepare or file another person's immigration papers or represent the person in an immigration matter unless he or she is an attorney or a U.S. Justice Department approved "accredited representative." Courts have held that even a nonattorney's selection of which legal forms to complete can constitute the unauthorized practice of law.

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FORM G-28 NOTICE OF ENTRY OF APPEARANCE AS ATTORNEY OR ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE



Provides notice to USCIS, ICE, and CBP as to who the representative/attorney is.

Required for DHS to communicate with them about applicants' information and case status.

See www.uscis.gov/g-28

The image shows the official Form G-28, 'Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative'. It is a two-part form. Part 1, 'Information About Attorney or Accredited Representative', includes fields for the attorney's name, address, phone number, and email. Part 2, 'Notice of Appearance as Attorney or Accredited Representative', includes fields for the case number, the specific matter being represented, and the date of appearance. The form also includes checkboxes for the type of representative (Attorney, Accredited Representative, or Other) and the type of case (Immigration, Naturalization, or Citizenship).

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- Form G-28 is needed for each individual attorney or accredited representative involved with the case.
- Often, an applicant retains the services of a law firm where multiple attorneys may work with that applicant.
- Each attorney seeking information or attending interviews, etc. must submit their own G-28 that is signed by the applicant. USCIS recognizes only one G-28 at a time.
- NOTE: The G-28 must specify what form(s) or immigration matters the attorney/representative is representing.

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FORM G-28



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The Form G-28 contains declarations and acknowledgments ensuring that whoever signs is fully aware of the requirements and any associated penalties for providing false information.

Part 2. Eligibility Information for Attorney or Accredited Representative

Select **all** applicable items.

- 1.a. ☐ I am an attorney eligible to practice law in, and a member in good standing of, the bar of the highest courts of the following states, possessions, territories, commonwealths, or the District of Columbia. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in Part 6. Additional Information.

Part 5. Signature of Attorney or Accredited Representative

I have read and understand the regulations and conditions contained in 8 CFR 103.2 and 292 governing appearances and representation before DHS. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the information I have provided on this form is true and correct.

1. a. Signature of Attorney or Accredited Representative

- 1.b. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

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- The Form G-28 contains declarations and acknowledgments ensuring that whoever signs is fully aware of the requirements and any associated penalties for providing false information.

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WHAT DOES *PRACTICE* MEAN?



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Only an authorized representative – an attorney or accredited representative – can engage in conduct that constitutes “practice” or “preparation, constituting practice.”

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- Only an authorized representative – an attorney or accredited representative – can engage in conduct that constitutes “practice” or “preparation, constituting practice.”

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WHAT DOES *PRACTICE* MEAN?, Cont'd.



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Practice means the act or acts of any person appearing in any case, either in person or through the preparation or filing of any brief or other document, paper, application, or petition on behalf of another person or client before or with DHS.

Preparation, constituting practice, means the study of the facts of a case and the applicable laws, coupled with the giving of advice and auxiliary activities, including the incidental preparation of papers.

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- The lawful function of a notary public or service consisting solely of assistance in the completion of blank spaces on printed DHS forms (clerical function) by one who charges nominal fees (or no fees), and who does not hold himself or herself out as qualified in legal matters or in immigration and naturalization procedure is NOT preparation constituting practice. 8 CFR §1.2
- Preparers who give **legal** advice = UPIL

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UNAUTHORIZED LEGAL ADVICE



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Unauthorized Legal Advice May Include, but is not limited to:

- How to answer questions on forms
- Advising individuals on available immigration options
- Advising what documentation to include with forms
- Advising when to file

The activities above are unauthorized if performed by someone other than a licensed attorney or an accredited representative.

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Unauthorized Legal Advice May Include, but is not limited to:

- How to answer questions on forms
- Advising individuals on immigration options available to an applicant or petitioner
- Making claims they can get government documents because they have special influence or connection with the government
- Accepting an individual's money for USCIS filing fees without submitting documents to USCIS
- Applying for benefits on behalf of an individual who is ineligible
- Advising what documentation to include with forms
- Advising when to file

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SIGNATURES AND UPIL



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Be wary of any attorney or accredited representative who asks individuals to sign blank USCIS forms.

The G-28 does **not** substitute for a court order granting legal guardianship and the right to sign for another on a USCIS form.

USCIS may reject or deny any form submitted with a faulty or deficient signature.

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- Be wary of any attorney or accredited representative who asks individuals to sign blank USCIS forms.
- The G-28 does **not** substitute for a court order granting legal guardianship and the right to sign for another on a USCIS form.
- USCIS may reject or deny any form submitted with a faulty or deficient signature.
- See USCIS Policy Memorandum PM-602-0134.1 issued February 15, 2018 and 8 CFR § 103.2(a)(2) and (a)(7).

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SIGNATURES AND UPIL, Cont'd.



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Except in the situations below, individuals must sign their own benefit request.

Exceptions:

- A parent or legal guardian may sign for someone under age 14;
- A legal guardian may sign for someone who is deemed mentally incompetent; or
- An individual may sign on behalf of an incapacitated adult with a durable Power of Attorney. (*Attorneys or authorized representatives may act in this capacity but must also provide a Form G-28 with the POA document.*)

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- Be wary of an attorney or accredited representative who offers to sign for the applicant or petitioner (Read the exceptions on the slide). Those that do may be engaging in activity that could be unethical, or unlawful.

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USCIS OVERVIEW

COMMON IMMIGRATION SCAMS



<https://www.uscis.gov/scams-fraud-and-misconduct/avoid-scams/common-scams>

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- Now we will briefly discuss some of the common scams we have seen at USCIS, which are also highlighted on our USCIS Common Scams Webpage. These scams include:
 - Government impersonators
 - Job offer scams,
 - Payments by Phone or Email, and
 - “Notarios Publicos”
- Please note, the scams I am discussing, do not include all of the scams we have seen at USCIS. For a more comprehensive list, I encourage you to visit the following USCIS Common Scams Webpage: <https://www.uscis.gov/scams-fraud-and-misconduct/avoid-scams/common-scams>

Government impersonators

- Look out for individuals who pose as USCIS officials. USCIS will only contact you through official government channels and will not contact you through your personal social media accounts (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.).

Job Offers Scams

- Beware of companies offering a job in the United States from overseas or by email. If you receive a suspicious job offer by email before you leave your country to come to the United States, it may be a scam, especially if you are asked to pay money to receive a job offer. If you see a job offer on social media, make sure the company is legitimate before sharing any of your personal information.

Payments by Phone or Email

- We will never ask you to transfer money to an individual. We do not accept Western Union, MoneyGram, PayPal, Venmo, or gift cards as payment for immigration fees. In addition, we will never ask you to pay fees to a person on the phone or by email. You can pay some immigration fees online, but only if you pay through your USCIS online account and Pay.gov.
- Remember, you can learn more on our Paying USCIS Fees page.

“Notarios Publicos”

- In many Latin American countries, the term “notario público” (which is Spanish for “notary public”) means something different from what it means in the United States.
- In the United States, notary publics are people authorized by state governments to witness the signing of important documents and to administer oaths, but are not necessarily

authorized to provide legal services.

- A notario público is not authorized to provide you with any legal services related to immigration. Only an attorney or an accredited representative working for a Department of Justice (DOJ)-recognized organization can give you legal advice.
- Beware of individuals who pose as immigration attorneys (such as unlicensed or disbarred attorneys). For more information, go to the Department of Justice's websites:
 - [Recognition & Accreditation Program](#)
 - [Currently Disciplined Practitioners](#)
 - [Find Legal Representation](#)
- Please remember, if you receive a suspicious email, forward it to us at USCIS.Webmaster@uscis.dhs.gov.
- If you suspect someone is committing immigration fraud, please visit our Report Immigration Scams Webpage:
<https://www.uscis.gov/scams-fraud-and-misconduct/avoid-scams/report-immigration-scams>

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WHAT ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN?



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Take detailed statements from victims, and if possible, collect the following information:

- Obtain the name of the company and individual (name, title, position)
- Obtain the address of the company and individual, as well as any other contact information (phone/fax/email)
- Obtain a detailed description of the UPIL allegations and supporting documents

Submit all the information and evidence to:

<https://www.uscis.gov/scams-fraud-and-misconduct/avoid-scams/report-immigration-scams>

Possible questions to ask of potential victims:

- Ask questions including, but not limited to
 - What was promised, what did they say they would provide you, a work authorization, green card?
 - How much did the company or individual ask the victim to pay and how much was actually paid?
 - How did the company/individual contact the victim? Or how did the victim first hear about the company or individual?
 - When/How was the first contact with the victim made?
 - How did the victim pay the company/individual? Method of payment?
 - What documents were asked of you?
 - Did they prepare any docs on your behalf?
 - Does the company/individual have a website? What is it?
 - Does the company/individual have a business card? *Make a copy of it.*
 - Get copies of any correspondence, receipts, etc.
- USCIS encourages victims of UPIL to report to the FTC, local law

enforcement, and any other entity that deals with UPIL in their state.

- Check out the list on the Report Scams page: <https://www.uscis.gov/avoid-scams/report-scams>).
- Additional resources and information can be found at the USCIS fraud report web page: uscis.gov/report-fraud

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AFTER REPORTING UPIL, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



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The information is forwarded to the Fraud Detection and National Security (FDNS) Division of USCIS.

The FDNS investigation is focused on the organization/individual committing UPIL-related fraud, not on the victims.

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- Assisting FDNS in their investigation will not only help you, but it can also result in protecting others from becoming victims to continuation of the UPIL or future scams by that organization/individual.
- It is important to provide as much information as possible, such as, the 5 Ws, (who, what, when, where, why, & how). Keep good notes of the process.

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WHAT ARE SOME OUTCOMES OF UPIL INVESTIGATIONS?



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The outcomes range from issuance of Cease-and-Desist Letters to criminal prosecution.



Some investigations may begin as UPIL but can lead to the discovery of other illegal activity.

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- UPIL can lead to discovery of human trafficking networks, fraudulent document vendors, national security threats, human smuggling, etc.
- Criminal organizations rely on “enablers” (knowingly or unknowingly) that can either be legal or illegal activities or businesses such as attorneys, accountants, transportation lines, etc.

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****Image obtained from google.com images, using the filter “Free to modify, share, and use commercially”**

UPIL UNDERREPORTED



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UPIL is often underreported for a variety of reasons:

- Victims may feel embarrassed that they were taken advantage of;
- The UPIL perpetrator may threaten the applicant and/or their loved ones with deportation;
- Victims simply don't know who to report it to; and
- Victims may fear they themselves will be deported

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UPIL is often underreported for a variety of reasons:

- Victims may feel embarrassed that they were taken advantage of;
- The UPIL perpetrator may threaten the applicant and/or their loved ones with deportation;
- Victims simply don't know who to report it to; and
- Victims may fear they themselves will be deported

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IMPORTANT TIPS & BEST PRACTICES



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- Call the office that licenses attorneys in that state (this is usually the “state bar association” or the supreme court of that state) and ask that office if the attorney has a bar number and is in “good standing.”
- Go to the EOIR site, to find out who is *not* permitted to represent you in immigration court: www.justice.gov/eoir/discipline.htm
- Also, available in Spanish: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/lista-de-abogados-disciplinados-actualmente>

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- Important Tips and Best Practices. You can contact the relevant state bar association/state supreme court to find out if the attorney is in good standing.
- Go to the EOIR site to find out who is *not* permitted to represent you in immigration court.
- This is also available in Spanish.

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IMPORTANT TIPS & BEST PRACTICES Cont'd.



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If you have a case in immigration court, only take legal advice from:

- A licensed attorney or an accredited representative.

If someone claims to be an attorney and you want to know if that person is allowed to represent you in immigration court:

- Ask in what state(s) he or she is licensed to practice law.

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If you have a case in immigration court, only take legal advice from:

- A licensed attorney or an accredited representative

If someone claims to be an attorney and you want to know if that person is allowed to represent you in immigration court:

- Ask in what state(s) he or she is licensed to practice law.

NEXT SLIDE

TIPS & BEST PRACTICES Cont'd.



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

- If someone claims to be an accredited representative and you want to know if that person is allowed to represent you in immigration court:

Go to the EOIR Website for more information:

<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers>

Or call (703) 305-9029 for information.

- If you think you have been a victim of immigration fraud:
Contact the EOIR Fraud and Abuse Prevention Program at:
EOIR.Fraud.Program@usdoj.gov or (877) 388-3840.

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- And finally, if someone claims to be an accredited representative and you want to know if that person is allowed to represent you in immigration court, go to the EOIR site shown on the slide or call (703) 305-9029 .
- If you think you have been a victim of immigration fraud:
- Contact the EOIR Fraud and Abuse Prevention Program at:
EOIR.Fraud.Program@usdoj.gov or (877) 388-3840.

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UPIL RESOURCES



- Visit USCIS Avoid Scams: www.uscis.gov/avoidscams
- Go to the EOIR Website for more information: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers>; Or call (703) 305-9029 for information.
- Contact the EOIR Fraud and Abuse Prevention Program at: EOIR.Fraud.Program@usdoj.gov or (877) 388-3840.
- Federal Trade Commission: ftc.gov to report fraud.

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Go to the EOIR Website for more information:

<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers>

Or call (703) 305-9029 for information.

Contact the EOIR Fraud and Abuse Prevention Program at:

EOIR.Fraud.Program@usdoj.gov or (877) 388-3840.

Additional Links and UPIL Resources

- www.uscis.gov/avoidscams
- www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_services/flh-home/flh-lawyer-licensing/
- <https://www.courts.state.md.us/attyssearch>

<https://www.courts.state.md.us/attygrievance/sanctions>

- [Executive Office for Immigration Review](#)
 - <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/942301/download>
<https://www.justice.gov/eoir/page/file/942311/download>
 - <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognized-organizations-and-accredited-representatives-roster-state-and-city>
 - <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/find-legal-representation>
 - <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/discipline.htm>
 - <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/lista-de-abogados-disciplinados-actualmente>
- https://www.nationalnotary.org/file%20library/nna/reference-library/what-is-a-notary-public-m63459_180119.pdf

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USCIS RESOURCES



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- To subscribe or view a list of upcoming local and national engagements, please visit: uscis.gov/outreach
- To share feedback on today's engagement or contact us: Public.Engagement@uscis.dhs.gov
- USCIS Citizenship Resource Center: uscis.gov/citizenship



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Thank you!

END OF PRESENTATION

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