**Warning! Do not hire anyone who...**

- Refuses to give you a written contract
- Charges you for *blank* immigration forms. Get free forms at: uscis.gov/forms.
- Charges you to “get on a waiting list” or “put your application in line” for immigration reform. There is no list. There is no line.
- Guarantees you a work permit or promise you a good result because of their special contacts at Immigration.
- Pretends to be a qualified lawyer or bonded immigration consultant.
- Takes your money without giving you the services promised.
- Asks you to lie on a form or sign a blank document. If you do this, you may *never* get your immigration application approved.
- Keeps your original documents or charges you to get them back.

**Complaints:**

Your Local District Attorney
State Bar of California
(800) 843-9053
calbar.org
Federal Trade Commission
ftccomplaintassistant.gov
Office of Immigrant Assistance,
CA Department of Justice
caaag.state.ca.us

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**Warning! There is no new amnesty!**

Congress has not approved immigration reform yet. Until the reforms become law, providers must **not** take your money to file an amnesty or immigration reform case.

We will post a notice at **ilrc.org** on the day immigration reform passes.

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**Protect Yourself!**

**Learn How to Get the Best Available Immigration Help**

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**Shop smart!**

- Find a *qualified* legal services provider,
- Ask questions, and
- Get a second – or third – opinion before you decide who to hire.
Lawyers can:

- Give you legal advice,
- Help you apply, and
- Speak for you in Immigration Court.

Look for a lawyer specializing in immigration. To make sure your lawyer is licensed visit: calbar.ca.gov or call (415) 538-2000. Ask the lawyer for her state bar number.

Non-profits with Accredited Reps can:

- Give you legal advice, and
- Help you apply (in most situations).

To make sure your Rep is authorized, check him/her out at: justice.gov/eoir/ra/raroster.htm

Do not use an accredited rep who is not on this list!

Bonded Immigration Consultants can:

- Give you the forms you need and help you fill them out.
- Translate questions and answers for your forms.
- Help you collect documents.

Immigration consultants are not lawyers. They must say they are not lawyers and have signs in their office saying they are not lawyers. They cannot:

- Give you legal advice,
- Speak for you in Immigration Court, or
- Keep your original documents.

Be careful! Only bonded immigration consultants can help with immigration cases.

Check if your consultant is bonded at: sos.ca.gov/business/sf/bond_search/

In California, only 3 kinds of providers can help you with your immigration case:

- Lawyers
- Non-profit agencies with Accredited Reps (The U.S. government authorizes some people to help with immigration. They are called accredited representatives)
- Bonded Immigration Consultants

Comparing Providers:

Look for a provider who will:

- Answer your questions, and
- Tell you your options.

Shop, check, and compare

- Talk to 2 or more legal service providers,
- Check each provider’s license/status, and
- Don’t use anyone who doesn’t follow the rules explained in this brochure.

Do not hire anyone who:

- Says “Trust me,” without answering your questions,
- Guarantees that you will win your case, or
- Promises you a work permit or visa right away.

In California, only 3 kinds of providers can help you with your immigration case:

- Lawyers
- Non-profit agencies with Accredited Reps (The U.S. government authorizes some people to help with immigration. They are called accredited representatives)
- Bonded Immigration Consultants

Warning! Do not use anyone advertised as a notario público. In the U.S., notarios are not lawyers. Notarios cannot give legal help.

Checklist: Bring this with you when you meet the provider...

Did the provider:

- Show you her credentials or proof she paid the bond?
- Ask you to sign a written contract?
  - Make sure the contract lists the services you will get and how much you will pay.
  - If you don’t speak English well, bonded immigration consultants must give you a contract in your language, too.
  - If you cancel in writing within 72 hours of signing the contract with a consultant, you have the right to get all your money back.
- Explain the forms and the process?
  - Do not sign blank forms.
  - Do not sign anything that is not true or that you do not understand.
- Give you copies of your contract and all papers filed for your case? (You may have to ask for the copies.)
  - Keep your copies in a safe place.
  - Do not give your provider original documents. Lawyers (not immigration consultants) may need your original documents to give to immigration authorities.
- Give you receipts for your payments?
  - Make sure the receipt is signed by the provider and says:
    - the date you paid, what services you paid for.
- Tell you the interest rate for any loan or payment of fees?