

FINDING AND CHOOSING AN IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY

United States immigration law is complex and involves many federal statutes, executive actions, and court decisions. International students and scholars may need to seek assistance from a qualified immigration attorney.

What to Look for in an Attorney

- **Member of AILA (American Immigration Lawyers Association).** Being an AILA member does not ensure the quality of the lawyer, but it may indicate that the lawyer is keeping up with immigration law.
- **How the attorney sets his/her fees.** Compare how much lawyers charge. Most immigration lawyers work on a flat fee basis, but some may bill hourly. Be concerned if you see an attorney charging too much or too little for their services.
- **Licensed attorney.** Check the state bar to see if the attorney is licensed and in good standing.
- **Disciplinary action.** Has the attorney ever been disciplined by the Board of Professional Responsibility of the state bar?
- **Reputation.** Does the lawyer have a good reputation in the community or referrals from someone you trust?
- **Focus of practice.** Choose a lawyer that specializes in the area of immigration law that relates to your case (i.e. employment, asylum, deportation, etc.).
- **Ethics.** Avoid lawyers that tell you it is okay to lie or act dishonestly in your case.

How to Use AILA Find a Lawyer

The online Immigration Lawyer Search (ILS) can help you find an attorney in your area. All lawyers participating in the service are AILA members, are licensed to practice law in a state or territory of the United States, and are currently a member in good standing with AILA and their State Bar Association.

Go to www.ailalawyer.com

Under “Type of Lawyer” choose the type that best suits your issue. Types include:

- Asylum & Protection (for seeking asylum or refugee status)
- Deferred Action (DACA & DAPA)
- Business & Employment (work-based sponsorship such as the H-1B visa)
- Students & Exchange Visitors (F-1 and J-1 visa holders)

Other Resources

<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/search?state=CO>

This handout is provided for information purposes only. The University of Denver does not endorse or recommend any specific immigration attorney.