

## The need for immigration legal services:

The Immigrant Integration team works to grow and sustain the field of low-cost, high-quality immigration legal services providers so that immigrants have access to culturally competent assistance to navigate our immigration policies.

- On average in the U.S., there are 1,413 undocumented immigrants for every nonprofit legal services professional, and in some places, there is far less capacity.\*
- There are a million or more undocumented immigrants who may have legal remedies that would allow them to lawfully stay in the U.S., but they are either unaware of the opportunity or lack the legal resources to apply for the remedies.†
- There are about 9 million eligible permanent residents (green card holders) who are eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship but have not yet done so.‡

**The impacts of immigrants having access to qualified immigration legal service providers include:** the ability to remain in the country, be reunited with a loved one, and increase their earning potential.

## Growing the immigration legal services field

The Recognition and Accreditation Program in the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) allows non-attorneys working for a nonprofit immigration legal service provider who have completed training in immigration law to receive credentials from the DOJ to practice immigration law. There are 848 organizations recognized by the DOJ and 2,271 accredited representatives providing high-quality immigration legal services to low-income immigrants who otherwise may not have access to counsel. In addition to accredited representatives, there are immigration attorneys who assist immigrants and can provide pro bono representation. Also, within these programs, there are paralegals or legal assistants who can prepare and draft documents, and coordinate with clients to compile documents for applications. There are also community navigators or *promotores* who can provide referrals to accredited representatives. UnidosUS has subsidized training for Affiliates for nearly ten years.

## Immigration legal services within the UnidosUS Affiliate Network

There are 50 UnidosUS Affiliates providing immigration legal services.

Three Affiliates have had recognition since the 1980s and were involved in the implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, and 15 of the Affiliates have been recognized for more than 10 years. Following the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy in 2012, the passage of an immigration bill in the Senate in 2014, and an announcement of further executive actions on immigration, nine Affiliates received recognition in 2014 and 2015, demonstrating increased capacity in preparation for implementation of changes in immigration policy and at a time when UnidosUS and other national networks and funders were collaborating to expand immigration legal services capacity nationally. Even during the challenging circumstances under the Trump administration, nine Affiliates received recognition between 2017-2020. While there is great expertise and history within the UnidosUS Affiliate Network in providing immigration legal services, **the number of Affiliates with recognition has doubled in the last nearly ten years.**

\* <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2331502422112492>

† <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/233150241400200402>

‡ [https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/22\\_0405\\_plcy\\_lpr\\_population\\_estimates\\_2019\\_-\\_2021.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/22_0405_plcy_lpr_population_estimates_2019_-_2021.pdf)

## Immigration Legal Services

UnidosUS Affiliates Recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice to Provide Immigration Legal Services

Affiliate Organization Name	State	Recognition Date	Affiliate Organization Name	State	Recognition Date
Ayuda*	DC, Virginia	2/23/1996	Instituto del Progreso Latino	Illinois	8/24/2007
Canal Alliance	California	10/17/2011	La Esperanza, Inc.	Delaware	10/8/2010
CASA	Maryland, Virginia	10/25/2010	La Maestra Community Health Centers	California	5/11/2015
CASA Familiar, Inc.	California	5/19/2017	La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE)	Texas	4/28/2010
Center for Employment Training	California	9/1/1989	Latin American Coalition	North Carolina	1/17/2008
Center for Latino Progress CPRF	Connecticut	10/11/2012	Latin American Community Center	Delaware	6/28/2022
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) DC	Washington, DC	2/23/1996	Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)	DC, Maryland	7/24/2018
Centro Hispano of Dane County	Wisconsin	6/16/2015	Latino Memphis	Tennessee	4/19/2017
Centro Romero	Illinois	11/30/2001	Latinos Progresando	Illinois	11/19/2004
Chicanos Por La Causa	Arizona	11/21/1980	Make the Road New York	New York	6/21/2016
Coalition of FL Farmworker Organization, Inc.	Florida	11/4/2016	Mexican American Opportunity Foundation	California	8/31/2018
Community Council of Idaho	Idaho	6/16/2016	Multicultural Family Center	Texas	3/29/2019
Community Services of Nevada	Nevada	1/28/2022	Promise Arizona	Arizona	10/27/2016
Comunidades Unidas	Utah	11/21/2014	Proyecto Inmigrante	Texas	2/17/2009
Council for the Spanish Speaking, Inc./ Centro Hispano	Wisconsin	3/30/1982	Proyecto Vida Digna*	Texas	—
East Boston Ecumenical Community Council (EBECC)	Massachusetts	4/14/1999	Redlands Christian Migrant Association	Florida	10/20/2015
El Concilio*	California	3/25/2009	Sacred Heart Center (SHC)	Virginia	4/6/2018
Enlace*	Illinois	—	Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund	California	6/26/2020
Erie Neighborhood House	Illinois	6/3/2011	Sea Mar's Citizenship Program	Washington	4/26/2017
Esperanza Immigration Legal Services	Pennsylvania	4/13/2011	Social Justice Collaborative	California	7/6/2018
Friendly House	Arizona	2/8/1982	Spanish Speaking Citizens' Foundation*	California	—
Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (IHICA!)	Alabama	10/10/2008	Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)	Tennessee	6/23/2014
Hispanic Services Council	Florida	10/3/2012	The Resurrection Project	Illinois	9/8/2014
Hispanic Unity of Florida, Inc.	Florida	10/9/2013	TODEC Legal Center	California	12/12/2014
Hispanic Women Organization of Arkansas	Arkansas	1/17/2023	UMOS, Inc.	Wisconsin	11/28/2014

Organizations with an asterisk\* are **not** DOJ recognized but have an attorney on staff. For further information, contact Laura Vazquez at [lvazquez@unidosus.org](mailto:lvazquez@unidosus.org)