

Consumer Bill of Rights Regarding Immigration Assistance Service Providers

Immigration Assistance Service Providers are people or businesses that charge fees for any kind of immigration-related services. They are not lawyers and are not typically accredited or recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice.

They Cannot:

- Give any legal advice on any immigration matter, including advising on selecting governmental agency forms for immigration-related benefits.
- Represent you in court or before the federal government or any immigration authority.

They Can:

- Provide translation services.
- Help you gather documents.
- Photocopy documents for your application.

If you use an Immigration Assistance Service Provider, you have a right to:

- **A written contract.** The provider must explain the contract to you and answer any questions. The contract must:
 - Be in plain English and any other language the provider discussed services with you.
 - List all the services you are getting and the itemized fee and cost for each service.
 - Contain a contract “Cancellation Form” on a separate final page.
 - Be signed.
- **A receipt.** The provider must give you a receipt that includes:
 - Date
 - Provider’s legal name and address
 - Breakdown of the money you paid for each service
 - Amount of tax, if any
 - Total amount paid
- **A refund.** Within three (3) days of entering a contract with a provider, you can cancel without a penalty and get 100% of your money back *unless you give up this right in writing due to a specific, urgent immigration issue*. At any time, you can cancel and get back your money for services the provider did not perform or costs it did not pay on your behalf. If you cancel the contract, the provider must also return all your original documents.
- **Free government forms.** Federal immigration forms are available on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website uscis.gov. It is illegal for a provider to charge you for free government forms.
- **Copies of paperwork for your file.** The provider must give you copies of all papers and forms prepared for you when you ask for them and without charge. The provider must give you copies of documents submitted to, or received from, a governmental entity within two weeks of submission or receipt.
- **Be informed.** The provider must not disclose information or submit documents on your behalf without your consent, unless the disclosure or submission is required by law. If the provider is required by law to make a submission or disclosure, the provider must inform you in writing.
- **Money if you are harmed by the provider.** Providers must maintain a bond for your protection. You can go to court to recover money from the provider or its bond company.

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Free legal referral.

You can call the Office of New Americans hotline at 1-800-566-7636, the New York State Office of the Attorney General at 1-800-771-7755, or your local district attorney or prosecutor for a free legal referral.

Contact 311 to file a complaint about a business providing immigration services.

You do not have to give your name or your immigration status to make a complaint. 311 can take calls in many different languages. You can also file a complaint online or get additional information at nyc.gov/dcwp.