

What is immigration law?

- ◆ Immigration law refers to the national government policies that control the manner and means by which people may be permitted to come in and out of a particular country, the deportation of individuals failing to follow those prescribed protocols, and the naturalization of aliens, which is the process by which someone becomes a citizen.
- ◆ America's Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), a federal law enforcement agency under the United States Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"), identifies and investigates any threats to the nation's border and works to dismantle vulnerabilities regarding the nation's economic, transportation, and infrastructure security. ICE was established by the Homeland Security Act of 2002.
- ◆ Immigration lawyers may help noncitizens seeking to live, work, or visit the United States. For instance, an immigration attorney might help a noncitizen seeking to study at an American university by guiding them through the process through obtaining a student visa. On the other hand, a diplomat or temporary worker may seek the counsel of an immigration attorney when looking to come into the country for a more temporary period of time.
- ◆ Many immigration attorneys work on deportation issues. Deportation refers to a noncitizen's removal from the United States. Federal statute (specifically the Immigration and Naturalization Act) governs whether or not a noncitizen who entered without inspection (called an "EWI") or a legal permanent resident (called an "LPR") may seek to become a naturalized citizen.

What do immigration attorneys do on a day-to-day basis?

- ◆ **Interviewing and assessing prospective clients:** Some immigration offices can only take certain clients, such as individuals who are below the poverty line. Some offices work with a specific nationality.
- ◆ **Counseling clients:** Immigration lawyers advise clients on issues relating to the procurement of a visa or employment authorization for non-naturalized employees. Immigration attorneys also advise their clients with regard to ICE's investigations, arrests, and detentions.
- ◆ **Conduct legal research:** As hearings on immigration matters are conducted as administrative proceedings, an immigration attorney must know whether any holdings by the Board of Immigration Appeals ("BIA"), the Attorney General, or the U.S. federal courts constitute binding law for their particular client.
- ◆ **Drafting documents:** Immigration attorneys write motions, petitions, and applications for remedies and benefits.

Where do immigration attorneys work?

- ◆ **Private law firms:** With a focus on business, private firms help domestic and international corporations to hire and transfer noncitizen employees from foreign offices.
- ◆ **Non-profits:** Immigration attorneys commonly work for public interest organizations. For instance, Mid-South Immigration Advocates specializes in only asylum cases.
- ◆ **Government agencies:** Some immigration lawyers work for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, while still others work for other agencies acting in enforcement or administrative roles.

If I'm interested in becoming an immigration lawyer, what classes should I take or in which activities should I participate as a law student looking to prepare for my career?

- ◆ Take an immigration law course
- ◆ Participate in the immigration track during Alternative Spring Break
- ◆ Intern, extern, or clerk at the immigration court
- ◆ Volunteer for a public interest organization that works in the area of immigration law, such as the Community Legal Center or the Tennessee Immigrants and Refugee Rights Coalition
- ◆ Work for a government agency while in law school
- ◆ Become fluent in a second (or third) language by taking a class at main campus
- ◆ Conduct informational interviews with immigration attorneys

Immigration Law Resources



University of Memphis
Law School
Career Services Office

Check Out the American Bar Association

- ◆ The American Bar Association's Commission on Immigration's website can be found here:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_services/immigration.html
- ◆ From the Commission on Immigration's "About Us" page:
The Commission directs the Association's efforts to ensure fair treatment and full due process rights for immigrants and refugees within the United States. Acting in coordination with other Association entities, as well as governmental and non-governmental bodies, the Commission:
 - 1) Advocates for statutory and regulatory modifications in law and governmental practice consistent with ABA policy;
 - 2) Provides continuing education and timely information about trends, court decisions and pertinent developments for members of the legal community, judges, affected individuals and the public; and
 - 3) Develops and assists the operation of pro bono programs that encourage volunteer lawyers to provide high quality, effective legal representation for individuals in immigration proceedings, with a special emphasis on the needs of the most vulnerable immigrant and refugee populations.

Online Resources

- ◆ The Immigration Legal Resource Center (ILRC) seeks to improve immigration law and policy, expand the capacity of legal service providers, and advance immigrant rights. Check out their website at: <https://www.ilrc.org/>
- ◆ The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) is the national association of more than 15,000 attorneys and law professors who practice and teach immigration law. AILA member attorneys represent U.S. families seeking permanent residence for close family members, as well as U.S. businesses seeking talent from the global marketplace. Check out AILA's website at <http://www.aila.org/> to find additional online resources like links to executive offices and relevant agencies, other immigration-related organizations, and legal research about immigration.
- ◆ The Public Service Jobs Directory is a great resource for public interest careers. Check out their career guide for Immigration and Refugee Law at the following website:
https://www.psjd.org/Immigration_and_Refugee_Law

University of Memphis Law Library Resources for Immigration Law

- ◆ *States and Federal Immigration Law: Limitation and Enforcement Policies*—Elena Torres
eBook
- ◆ *Immigration Law and Procedure in a Nutshell*—David S. Weissbrodt
Call No.: KF4819.85 .W45 2017 (Available on the first floor of the law library in Open Reserve)
- ◆ *A Simple Guide to the Immigration Laws of the United States: What You Need to Know When You Come to America*—Marcus Anton Jarvis
eBook