



**AILA’s USCIS Asylum Office Guide  
Updated October 18, 2019<sup>1</sup>**

*By AILA’s Asylum & Refugee Liaison Committee*

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<sup>1</sup> This best practices guide was written by AILA’s [Asylum & Refugee Liaison Committee](#) and contains information specific to each USCIS asylum office, including contact information for the office and local AILA liaisons, interview wait times, rescheduling requests, and more. While to the best of our knowledge this information was accurate as of the date of the practice pointer, some information may have become outdated since it was written. Check the [USCIS website](#) to ensure that you have the latest filing address, contact information, and procedures.

## **Arlington, VA (ZAR)**

This office is often referred to as “ZAR.” It changes its rules and procedures frequently. Published rules are sometimes not followed.

### **Location and Contact Information**

*Street Address:*

Arlington Asylum Office  
1525 Wilson Blvd, #300  
Arlington, VA 220598-2500

*Mailing Address:*

Arlington Asylum Office  
1525 Wilson Blvd  
Mailstop 2500  
Arlington VA 20598-2500

*Main Number:* (703) 235-4100

*Fax Number:* (703) 812-8455

*Public Email Address:* [Arlington.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Arlington.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Director:* Jedidah Hussey, [Jedidah.M.Hussey@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Jedidah.M.Hussey@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Phone #:* (703) 235-4108

*Deputy Director:* Jody-Ann Tyrell, [Jody-Ann.Tyrell.uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Jody-Ann.Tyrell.uscis.dhs.gov)

*Phone #:* (703) 235-4753

*Supervisory Program Manager:* Marcus Barnes, [marcus.W.Barnes@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:marcus.W.Barnes@uscis.dhs.gov)

1. **Walk-in Time for Inquiries by Attorneys<sup>2</sup> and the Public:** members of the public, without an appointment, may walk in on Wednesdays from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. ZAR also has an [InfoPass scheduling system](#). ZAR prefers that all appointments, including document submission, be scheduled through Infopass.

#### **Open to the public:**

- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 7:00 am – 3:00 pm
- Tuesday: 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

People may walk in during these times and request an appointment, or make an inquiry, to be answered later. Below, Section 4, Delivery of Documents, addresses times available for delivery of documents/supplemental evidentiary filings.

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<sup>2</sup> ZAR has stated that if an attorney is in the office for an interview for another case, then they can make an inquiry for an unrelated case at that time. As long as resources permit, ZAR will try to provide an answer at that time.

2. **Rescheduling Requests:** Please send reschedule requests via email to [ZARRescheduleRequest@USCIS.DHS.gov](mailto:ZARRescheduleRequest@USCIS.DHS.gov).
3. **Expedite Interview Requests:** Due to severe backlogs, ZAR is considering requests for expedited interviews due to emergent circumstances, such as extreme family hardship or medical emergencies. All requests must be submitted in writing using the ([Expedited Interview Request Form](#)) via hand-delivery, e-mail to [ZARRescheduleRequest@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:ZARRescheduleRequest@uscis.dhs.gov), or U.S. mail. All requests will receive a response – either by interview notice or notice of denial of the request.
4. **Delivery of Documents:** Supplemental evidence may be filed by mail (must use Mailstop number 2500), or in person. ZAR prefers that attorneys schedule an Infopass appointment to deliver documents, but as of August 2019, they will still accept document submissions from walk-ins. Mailstop 2500 is in the state of Maryland, resulting in what may be a five-day delay to ZAR. A lawyer, or paralegal who brings a letter from the lawyer verifying the paralegal’s employment, may walk in and hand-deliver documents.

Additional evidence must be submitted one week (7 days) in advance or your case will be rescheduled or the officer may refuse to accept the documents. You should now submit supplementary documents, in duplicate, one week before the interview. For cases being interviewed in Atlanta and Montgomery, documents must be submitted as above, but 15 days in advance to the Arlington address rather than 7 days in advance. The asylum officer has the discretion to accept limited additional evidence in certain situations, for example where evidence was not available prior to the deadline for submission. Officers have been instructed to engage with a supervisor to determine if the documents can be accepted. It is helpful to have a table of contents, and tabs (either on the bottom or on the side).

Documents may be hand-delivered during limited hours: Monday, Thursday, or Friday between 7:00 am-11:00 am and Wednesday between 7:00 am-3:00 pm. *See two memoranda: one from Jedidah Hussey on [hours of operation](#) (updated Nov. 15, 2017 and another on late [document submission](#) (updated Nov. 2017) for more details.*

5. **Service Area:** This asylum office serves the following states: Alabama, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

This office also serves the following counties in the state of Pennsylvania: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Bradford, Butler, Cambria, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forest, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Somerset, Venango, Warren, Washington, and Westmoreland.

6. **Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs:**

[Washington, D.C. Chapter:](#)

Lindsey Wilkes  
1140 3<sup>rd</sup> St NE, Floor 2  
Washington, DC 20002  
(202) 888 - 7821  
[lindseywilkes@gmail.com](mailto:lindseywilkes@gmail.com)

[Georgia-Alabama Chapter:](#)

Lynn Pearson  
Tahirih Justice Center  
230 Peachtree Street NW, Suite 1960, Atlanta, GA 30303  
(470) 481-4700  
[lynnp@tahirih.org](mailto:lynnp@tahirih.org)

Vice-Chair  
Rachel Efron-Sharma  
2900 Chamblee Tucker Road  
Building 5-200  
Atlanta, Georgia 30341  
(770) 313-7658  
[rachel@effronimmigration.com](mailto:rachel@effronimmigration.com)

[Carolinas Chapter:](#)

Joanna Gaughan  
100 E Parrish St. #400  
Durham, NC 27701  
919-956-7888  
[joanna.m.gaughan@gmail.com](mailto:joanna.m.gaughan@gmail.com)

[Pittsburgh Chapter:](#)

Suzanne M. Susany, Esquire  
100 Fifth Ave. Suite 900  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
412-434-4754  
[susany@sosf.org](mailto:susany@sosf.org)

7. **ZAR Liaison Committee Practice Tips:** Before submitting individual questions, AILA members must first send an inquiry to the asylum office's public email inquiry box at: [ArlingtonAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:ArlingtonAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov). If you are requesting expedited processing of your case, we suggest you include evidence of your client's compelling circumstances – such as medical records and affidavits. If ZAR doesn't respond within 21 days, if the answer is not helpful, or there is some other emergency, then send an email to [zarliaison@ailadc.org](mailto:zarliaison@ailadc.org) or go through the Liaison website using the format below. Also, you must include a PDF document of electronic copies of the inquiries you have filed and/or responses you received.

- **Format for Question**

- A#:
- Client Name:
- Question:
- Prior Attempts to resolve this matter:
- Name of Attorney:
- AILA Member #:
- Contact Information of Attorney:
- Please note that for individual inquiries, ZAR should respond directly to the attorneys within two to three weeks of the meeting. If you do not hear from ZAR in this time frame, let us know.
- Representatives may use electronic devices such as laptops and tablets to take notes and review client documents during asylum interviews at ZAR. You need to request a form at check-in or at the start of the interview. Internet connection and recording must be disabled, so you'll need to download any documents that you want to reference during the interview onto the device in advance.

8. **Additional Information:** ZAR often answers questions by quoting from the [Affirmative Asylum Procedure Manual](#).

**Asylum Pre-Screening Center (ZAC), Sub-office of Arlington, VA Asylum Office (ZAR)**

This pre-screening center opened in December 2015 and is under the jurisdiction of the Arlington Asylum Office (ZAR). As of August 2016, this pre-screening center had 45 officers. They handle telephonic RFIs and CFIs for ZAR. This office is also covering some interviews for other offices depending on need, such as Los Angeles, Newark, and Houston.

**Contact Information**

*Acting Deputy Director:* Heather Hogan, (703) 246-7201, [Heather.J.Hogan@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Heather.J.Hogan@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Supervisory Program Manager:* Catherine Motolenich-Torres, [catherine.motolenichtorres@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:catherine.motolenichtorres@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Scheduling:* [ZAC-MPA@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:ZAC-MPA@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Inquiries:* [ZAR-APSO.ZAR-APSO@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:ZAR-APSO.ZAR-APSO@uscis.dhs.gov)

**Boston, MA - Sub-office (ZBO) of Newark, NJ Asylum Office (ZNK)**

**Location and Contact Information**

*Street Address:*

USCIS  
 Boston Sub Office of the Newark Asylum Office  
 JFK Federal Building  
 15 New Sudbury Street, 6th Floor, Suite 600  
 Boston, MA 02203

*Main Number:* (617) 565-9500

*Fax Number:* (617) 565-9507

*Public Email Address:* BostonAsylumOffice@uscis.dhs.gov

1. **Walk-in Time for Inquiries:** Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
2. **Open to the public:**  
Monday – Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (by appointment only).
3. **Rescheduling requests:** It is best to fax them a letter requesting to reschedule. The Boston Asylum Office will approve a first request to reschedule. It is still important to give a bona fide reason for the request, but it should be approved. Once an interview has been rescheduled, it becomes the first priority for scheduling purposes. Thereafter, a second request must contain evidence of the reason for the request. The office uses the good cause standard for the second reschedule request and the exceptional circumstances standard for the third reschedule request. The reason to reschedule a second time has to be more than simply stating the need for more time to prepare. Please do not send generalized requests for second or third reschedule requests. Be specific and provide supporting evidence.

Requests for Emergency Expedite:

If there's a reason to fast track the case, contact the Boston Asylum Office directly. The Boston Asylum Office will only consider expedite requests where there is an emergent reason such as a family member who has been threatened in the home country or for some medical emergencies. You must provide documentation, if possible, of reasons for expediting an interview. It is best to fax the emergency expedite request.

Requests to be on the Stand-by List/Short Notice List:

Separate from the expedite list, there is a "stand-by" or "short notice" list. If an attorney's case is interview-ready and they can go forward on a few days' notice, let them know. The sub-office keeps a list of available substitutes to keep their interview schedule full. You may contact Mary Riordan or Claire Schell at the Boston sub-office, preferably in writing by hand if possible. One should normally submit a letter requesting that a case be placed on the "short notice" list, along with all the additional documents one expects to submit. The client should also be prepared for an interview, because notice can be as short as one day or as long as two weeks. The asylum office will call the attorney and offer an interview slot.

Normally, once a short notice request is made, the asylum office will send a notice verifying that the case has been placed on the short notice list. Members may call the Boston office to confirm the case is on the stand-by list.

Waiting period: This office is currently scheduling cases according to the "last in, first out" (LIFO) priorities as described on uscis.gov.

4. **Delivery of Documents:** Documents may be hand-delivered on Monday-Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. or by mail to:

Boston Asylum Sub-Office  
 JFK Federal Building  
 15 New Sudbury St., Ste. 600  
 Boston, MA 02203

Please note that the in-person hours on Monday-Thursday are for document submission *only* and not for asking case-specific questions. Please also note that document filings Monday through Thursday will take second priority to applicants being checked in for scheduled interviews. If the attorney comes on a day that is not Friday, the attorney will have to wait until applicants checking-in for an asylum interview are processed.

Additional/supporting evidence must be submitted at least three (3) business days before the interview. The asylum office does not automatically reschedule if an attorney files inside the three (3) days or even at the time of the interview.

Form of submission: Submit original package (supporting documents and country reports) plus one (1) copy for principal and one (1) copy for each derivative. Please two-hole punch the top and fasten with two-prong fasteners, binder clips, or rubber bands (no binding of any kind). Put tabs along the left side or the bottom. The Index and cover-letter should have the client's full name and A-number.

Be selective with the supporting documents and evidence. Create an annotated index of the research you have done, and consider including an excerpt of the most important points of each piece of the research in the index itself, to save time for the examiner. Then, make sure you include a title, a summary, and maybe a link to access the report online. Consider the problem of documentation that is too large for one file and the concerns of dividing up documentation which increases the risk the asylum office might lose or separate documents.

5. **Service Area:** The Boston Sub-Office will be the primary point of service for the following areas within the Newark Asylum Office's service area: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.
6. **Local AILA Asylum Office Liaisons:**

[New England Chapter:](#)

Anita Sharma 98 North Washington Street, Ste. 106 Boston, MA 02114 (617) 742-9296	Audrey Robert- Ramirez <u>RAMIREZ &amp; KAIN</u> 50 Congress Street, Ste 200 Boston, MA 02109	David McHaffey 176 Federal Street, Suite 502 Boston, MA 02110 (617) 482-4900
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<a href="mailto:asharma@pairproject.org">asharma@pairproject.org</a>	Tel: 617-545-4804 <a href="mailto:audrey@ramirezka.com">audrey@ramirezka.com</a>	<a href="mailto:david@mchaffeylaw.com">david@mchaffeylaw.com</a>
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**Chicago, IL (ZCH)**

**Location and Contact Information**

*Street Address:*

181 West Madison Street, Suite 3000  
Chicago, IL 60602

*Mailing Address:*

USCIS  
Chicago Asylum Office  
181 W. Madison Street, Suite 3000  
Chicago, IL 60602

*Main Number:* (312) 849-5200

*Fax Number:* (312) 849-5201

*Public Email Address:* [chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Walk-in Hours:* Monday – Friday, 8:00AM to 4:00PM

*Asylum Office Director:* Kenneth Madsen, ext. 5225

*Asylum Office Deputy Director:* Lisa Flanagan, ext. 5221

*Chief of Staff:* Timothy J. Bondy, ext. 5211

*Branch Chief:* Affirmative Asylum, Darice Alvertos, ext. 5208

*Branch Chief:* CF/RF, Joi Robinson, ext. 5265

*Congressional Liaison:* (312) 849-5200

1. **Hours of Operation:** 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
2. **Waiting Period:** The Chicago Asylum Office schedules interviews for newly filed cases generally within 43 days of filing pursuant to the change in priorities announced by USCIS on January 29, 2018. Cases filed before January 29, 2018 are currently in the backlog, and there is no timeline for when those cases will be interviewed. Many applicants often wait in excess of one (1) year to receive a decision after their interview.
3. **Rescheduling Requests:** Please alert the Chicago Asylum Office immediately if an interview needs to be rescheduled. Rescheduling requests must be made in writing and sent via mail, hand delivery, or fax. You may also contact the Chicago Asylum Office by email at [chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov).



The request for a rescheduled interview must include the reason(s) for the request and why the applicant or attorney cannot appear on the scheduled date. UAC cases will be granted one (1) interview reschedule as a matter of discretion due to the unique circumstances of these clients.

4. **Expedite Requests:** To request expedited processing of a case, contact [chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov) with your client's name, A-number, an explanation of the need for expedited processing, and evidence in support of the request.

The Chicago Asylum Office maintains a "short list" for individuals willing to travel to Chicago on short notice to fill any last-minute openings in their affirmative asylum interview schedule. To place a client on the "short list", e-mail [chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov).

If you request expedited processing or place your client on the "short list," ensure that the case file is complete and that all relevant documents have been provided to the asylum office. If there are changes to the I-589, you may provide an updated I-589 to the officer at the interview to reduce the amount of time devoted to making edits to the application at the start of the interview.

5. **Delivery of Documents:** The Chicago Asylum Office pre-assigns officers to cases a week before the interview. Attorneys may submit additional supplementary documents to the Chicago Asylum Office on Wednesday through Friday prior to the interview. These documents will be added to the file for review by the pre-assigned officer.

Attorneys in circuit ride locations should submit two copies of any supplemental documentation at least two weeks prior to the interview. If this is not possible, bring two sets of supplemental documentation to the interview. If there is information you want to ensure that the officer reviews prior to the interview (i.e. supplemental affidavit), scan and e-mail the document to the asylum office:

E-mail: [chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

Subject Line: [DATE] Interview in [LOCATION] – Supplemental Filing

Content: Provide the client's name, A-number, date and time of the interview. DO NOT send the entire supplemental filing, only the essential pieces (i.e. do not send voluminous country condition information).

6. **Service Area:** The Chicago Asylum Office has jurisdiction over cases arising in Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
7. **Circuit Ride Information:** The Chicago Asylum Office conducts "circuit rides" in Minnesota, Ohio, Kansas, Nebraska, Montana, Missouri, and other locations as resources permit. For inquiries about whether an interview has been scheduled, contact:

E-mail: [chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

Subject Line: ATTN: Scheduling Supervisor

Content: Provide the client's name and A-number. Request information regarding whether an interview has been scheduled.

**8. Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs:**

Chicago Chapter:

Amanda Crews Slezak National Immigrant Justice Center 208 LaSalle Street, Suite 1300 Chicago, IL 60604 Phone: (312) 660-1379 Fax: (312) 660-1505 <a href="mailto:acrews@heartlandalliance.org">acrews@heartlandalliance.org</a>	Christopher Elmore Attorney at Law 3108 N. Cicero Ave. Chicago, IL 60641 312.600.7273 <a href="mailto:christopher@celmorelaw.com">christopher@celmorelaw.com</a>
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Minnesota/Dakotas Chapter:

Alison Griffith The Advocates for Human Rights 330 Second Avenue South Suite 800 Minneapolis, MN 55401 (612) 341-746-4673	Alan Goldfarb Davis & Golfarb 1201 Harmon Place Suite 303 Minneapolis, MN 55403 Phone: (612) 630-2244 Fax: (612) 630-2245 <a href="mailto:alan@dgvisalaw.com">alan@dgvisalaw.com</a>
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Ohio Chapter:

Scott Bratton  
3150 Chester Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44114  
(216) 566-9908  
[scott@imwong.com](mailto:scott@imwong.com)

Wisconsin Chapter:

Gabriela Parra  
The Law Office of Kevin Layde  
P.O. Box 1226  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
Phone: (414) 488-1200  
[parrg09@gmail.com](mailto:parrg09@gmail.com)

1. **Additional Information:** If an attorney is representing several family members, including multiple principal applicants and multiple derivatives, send a letter to the Chicago Asylum Office after filing the asylum applications to request that the principal

applicants in the family be scheduled for asylum interviews on the same day. The Chicago Asylum Office will not otherwise know that the principal applicants are related and relying on similar evidence for their respective interviews. No cell phones or recording devices, including laptops, are allowed in the asylum office. Water is allowed, but food is not.

### **Houston, TX (ZHN)<sup>3</sup>**

#### **Location and Contact Information**

*Street Address:*

16630 Imperial Valley Drive, Suite 200  
Houston, TX 77060

*Mail Address:*

Houston Asylum Office  
P.O. Box 670626  
Houston, TX 77267-0626

*Main Number:* 281-931-2100 (please send all case status inquiries to the e-mail address)

*Public E-mail (all correspondence including inquiries and reschedule requests):* [Houston.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Houston.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Asylum Office Director:* Robert Daum (ext. 2174)

*Acting Deputy Director:* Irvin Gadson (ext. 2139)

*AILA Liaison – Supervisory Asylum Officer (SAO):* (ext. 5909)

*Affirmative Asylum Section Chief:* Lubna Fazal

*Credible and Reasonable Fear Section Chief:* Bryan Hemming

*Family Residential Facilities Section Chief:* Audrey McDonnell

All correspondence sent by a representative of record to the Houston Asylum Office, both via E-mail and regular mail, must be accompanied by a fully executed Form G-28. This includes status inquiries and submissions of additional documentation for previously filed applications.

1. **Hours of Operation:** 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
2. **Waiting Period:** Asylum applicants are usually called in for their scheduled interview relatively promptly. Occasionally, you may experience waiting room delays. To minimize congestion in the waiting room, the Houston Asylum office is piloting a pager system that allows applicants, interpreters, and attorneys to exit the secure waiting room while they are waiting, enabling them to use electronic devices and walk downstairs in the lobby. The office will send a signal to the pager a few minutes before the AO will call the case. This provides the applicant with plenty of time to return to the waiting room and pass through security. Pagers can be obtained from the front desk. The office has a children's

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<sup>3</sup> Updated July 2019 by Samantha Del Bosque.

area with limited books, toys, and games. There is also a T.V. with some cartoons that may be turned on upon request. This is to make the waiting room more family-friendly.

3. **Rescheduling Requests:** All requests to reschedule must be made by the applicant (or attorney of record) in writing to the asylum office by email using the contact information listed above. Please send them attention: "Rescheduling." Include the original interview date in the subject line.

The request for a rescheduled interview must include the reason for the request and accompanying documentation such as a hearing notice, travel itinerary, etc. As a matter of policy, first time reschedule requests are generally honored as long as an explanation is provided for the request and the request is submitted in advance of the interview date. Subsequent reschedule requests require a showing of good cause and will only be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4. **Delivery of Documents:** The Houston Asylum Office prefers that supporting documentation be filed with the asylum application when the application is initially filed with USCIS (at the USCIS Service Center). In the event that supplemental documentation needs to be submitted after an application has been filed, the office requests that it be submitted directly to the Houston Asylum Office well in advance of the interview, accompanied by a certified English translation if the documents are not in English. Supplemental materials/documentation may be mailed to the Houston Asylum Office, hand delivered to the front window, or sent via courier, and should be tabbed and indexed. Day of submissions may result in case processing delays.
2. **Service Area and Circuit Rides:** The Houston Asylum Office serves the following states: Colorado, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming. The office schedules circuit rides throughout the year, resources permitting, to Denver, CO; El Paso, TX; Salt Lake City, UT; and Harlingen, TX. Depending on an applicant's location, interviews will be scheduled at the Houston Asylum Office or at the circuit ride location nearest to the applicant's address.

### **New Orleans Sub-office**

The New Orleans office is a Sub-Office of the Houston Asylum Office. It adjudicates cases in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee. For more information please reference the AILA Best Practices section on the New Orleans Sub-office.

### **Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs:**

[Colorado Chapter:](#)

Lisa Green

1790 30th Street, Suite 200

Boulder, CO 80301

Phone: (303) 444-9500

Email: [lisa@LGAimmigration.com](mailto:lisa@LGAimmigration.com)

(Chair of the Asylum Committee in Denver)

Christina Brown

P.O. Box 100909

Denver, CO 80250

Phone: (303) 747-3494

Email: [cbrownlawoffice@gmail.com](mailto:cbrownlawoffice@gmail.com)

Texas Chapter (includes New Mexico and Oklahoma):

Samantha Del Bosque

1717 St. James Place, Suite 450

Houston, TX 77056

Phone: (713) 496-0100

Email: [Samantha@tahirih.org](mailto:Samantha@tahirih.org)

Additional Information:

- If an attorney is representing multiple family members (siblings or parent/child) filing individually, you may contact the Houston Asylum Office after filing the asylum applications to request that the principal applicants in the family be scheduled for asylum interviews on the same day.
- To make a specific request for a special accommodation (female interviewer, handicap accessibility, presence of student observers or witnesses, etc.), please contact the office ahead of time.
- Visitors to the Houston Asylum Office are permitted to take cell phones, laptops, PDAs, and other electronic devices onto the premises. Cell phones must be silenced (vibrate or low volume) while in the waiting area and all electronic devices including cell phones must be completely turned off during the interview. Audio and video recording is not permitted on the premises.
- USCIS does not provide interpreters for non-English speaking applicants at affirmative asylum interviews. Accordingly, all applicants, including Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC's), are required to bring a competent interpreter with them to their interview.
- If an applicant is attending an interview with children, it is requested the applicant also bring someone (not the interpreter) who can monitor the children in the waiting area while the applicant's interview is conducted.
- Applicants should bring all original documents (passports, certificates, letters, etc.) in their possession for which copies have been submitted as part of the application.
- Decisions will generally be scheduled for pick-up at the office, unless the applicant lives further than 300 miles from the office, in which case a decision will be mailed.
- All decisions for cases interviewed at circuit ride locations are sent by mail.

### Los Angeles, CA (ZLA)

#### **Location and Contact Information:**

*Street Address:*

14101 Myford Rd.

Tustin, CA 92780-7020

*Mail Address:*  
USCIS  
Los Angeles Asylum Office  
P.O. Box 2003  
Tustin, CA 92781-2003

E-mail: [LosAngelesAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:LosAngelesAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov).

*Main Number:* 714-368-5700  
*Fax Number:* 714-368-5799

The main phone number is typically only answered in the morning. Calling in the afternoon and reaching someone is generally only possible if you have the direct dial number of the person you need to reach.

*Email (general inquiries):* [LosAngelesAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:LosAngelesAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Asylum Office Director:* David Radel, [David.M.Radel@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:David.M.Radel@uscis.dhs.gov)  
*Deputy Director:* Marianne Hong, [Marianne.x.hong@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Marianne.x.hong@uscis.dhs.gov)

1. **Hours of Operation:** Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM daily. Walk-in hours for this office are Wednesdays from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM.
2. **Waiting Period:**  
From Filing to Interview: ZLA has a long backlog of un-interviewed applications. They are interviewing cases on a last-in, first-out basis, meaning the most recently filed cases are being interviewed first.

On the Day of the Interview: In the past, it has been common to wait 2-3 hours or longer past the scheduled interview time to be called in by an officer. Anecdotal evidence suggests this remains the case. Morning cases still waiting at noon were told to go to lunch and come back. If you have a morning case and you have not been told to go to lunch by noon, you may inquire at the check-in window to see if your case has been assigned and, if so, whether the officer will be able to begin the interview soon or whether you should go to lunch. No food or drink is allowed in the waiting room. There is a water fountain.

To Pick-Up the Decision: Out of status applicants return to the office two weeks after their interview to pick up the decision. Once there, ZLA reports that 80% of applicants wait 30 minutes or less to receive their decisions. Decisions that are mailed out, either because the applicant is in status or because processing (including background checks and headquarters review, if necessary) has not been completed, can take significantly longer.

For Circuit Ride Phoenix Cases: There is no advantage to requesting to be put on the waiting list in Anaheim. According to the LA Asylum Office, the wait time in Anaheim

is longer than the wait time for Phoenix. In addition, the LA office will not permit those in Arizona to be placed on the “stand by list” because of the distance and time it would take for someone in Arizona to come to the Anaheim office on a moment’s notice.

3. **Scheduling and Rescheduling Requests:**

Getting an Application Out of the Backlog: If you believe that *extraordinary circumstances* exist that warrant getting a case scheduled for interview at an earlier time, you can submit a *written request* to Marianne Hong or David Radel. Please include evidence of the extraordinary circumstance(s).

Rescheduling Requests: All attorney inquiries and reschedule requests should be sent *in writing* to the general email at [losangelesasylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:losangelesasylum@uscis.dhs.gov). Reschedule requests sent via email to the general email box usually receive a response within one to two days acknowledging receipt of the request and the office’s response. Reschedule requests should be sent in as early as possible in advance of the interview date.

Note that the first reschedule request is permitted without the need for showing cause. All subsequent requests must be accompanied with a showing of good cause for the reschedule. Additionally, a request to reschedule stops the asylum processing KLOK until the applicant appears for the rescheduled interview. Due to the backlog, ZLA’s ability to reschedule interviews is extremely limited. Thus, making a rescheduling request risks having the case go into the backlog with a stopped KLOK, making it impossible for the applicant to apply for work authorization no matter how long it takes to get the case rescheduled.

Stand-By List: The office has closed the “stand-by” list until further notice.

4. **Delivery of Documents:** Any supplementary documents must be received by the asylum office *in duplicate at least one week* before the date of interview. If you are sending fewer than five (5) pages, you can email them to [LosAngelesAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:LosAngelesAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov). Please label the documents with the applicant’s name, A-number, and interview time and date (if applicable).

Applicants who submit documentation on the day of the interview, either to the officer or at the window, risk having their interview rescheduled and their EAD clock stopped. Limited exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, but only with the approval of the duty officer. Applicants will need to show good cause for the untimely submission and that the same-day review of the documents will not significantly burden the interviewing officer.

5. **Service Area and Circuit Rides:** The Los Angeles Asylum Office has jurisdiction over cases arising out of Arizona, Hawaii, the Territory of Guam, select California counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura) and select Nevada counties (Clark, Esmerelda, Lincoln, and Nye).

The Los Angeles Asylum Office does circuit rides in Arizona, Hawaii, and the Territory of Guam. It does not do circuit rides in Nevada; those cases are interviewed in the Los Angeles Asylum Office.

An asylum officer is sent on a “circuit ride” detail to either Phoenix, Hawaii, or Guam on a periodic basis. The frequency and length of such details largely depends on the number of filings in a given area. The circuit rides take place at a USCIS facility.

An applicant who resides in a circuit ride location who can present proof of extraordinary circumstances can request to be interviewed at ZLA. However, due to the backlog, ZLA may not be able to honor the request. The procedure for making such a request is the same as for scheduling/ rescheduling described above.

**6. Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs:**

Los Angeles Chapter:

Melissa Wong 800 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 900 Los Angeles, CA 90017 <a href="mailto:melissa@sggimmigration.com">melissa@sggimmigration.com</a>	Violetta Beyder 4311 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 314 Los Angeles, CA 90010 (323) 989-3332 <a href="mailto:vbeyderesq@gmail.com">vbeyderesq@gmail.com</a>	Akram Abusharar 501 N. Brookhurst Street, Suite 202 Anaheim, CA 92801 (714) 535-5600 <a href="mailto:abushararlaw@gmail.com">abushararlaw@gmail.com</a>
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San Diego Chapter:

Tatyana Edwards  
Law Offices of Tatyana Edwards  
402 West Broadway, Suite 770  
San Diego, CA 92101  
[tatedwards@gmail.com](mailto:tatedwards@gmail.com)  
(619) 699-5875

Arizona Chapter:

Katharine E. Ruhl  
Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project  
738 N. 5th Ave., Ste. 103  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
[kruhl@firrp.org](mailto:kruhl@firrp.org)

Hawaii Chapter:

N/A

**7. Additional Information:**



- Visitors to the Los Angeles Asylum Office are permitted to take cell phones, laptops, PDAs, and other electronic devices onto the premises. Audio and video recording devices must not be used on the premises. Attorneys are allowed to take notes on a laptop during interview.
- Cell phones must be silenced (vibrate or low volume) while in the waiting area. Cell phones must be completely turned off during interviews.

## **Miami, FL (ZMI)**

### **Location and Contact Information:**

*Street and Mailing Address:*

U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services  
1501 Biscayne Blvd, Suite 300  
Miami, FL 33132

*Main Number:* (786) 456-2900

*Fax Number:* (786) 456-2910

*Public Email for Inquiries:* [Miami.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Miami.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Asylum Office Director:* Varsenik Papazian

*Asylum Office Deputy Director:* Kimberly M. Aguilar

1. **Hours of Operation:** 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday (Fridays are closed to the public and to attorneys). The office is open to drop off documents and answer questions Monday through Thursday from 12:00 pm to 3:30 pm and is open on Fridays from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm for document submission only.
2. **Waiting Period:** On the day of the interview, the waiting period can range from 30 minutes to three hours. Some members have reported that even though they had morning interviews, the asylum officer in charge of the case has asked them to come back after lunch because they had to finish reviewing the file.
3. **Rescheduling Requests:** If applicants or their attorneys need to reschedule an interview, they should send an email or a fax to the asylum office.

**Facsimile Request:** send your request in writing with the signature of the attorney or applicant with a copy of your G-28 and copy of the interview notice. Fax it to 786-456-2910

**E-mail Request (preferred method per Miami Asylum Office):** Include a short but descriptive sentence of what is being requested in the subject line of the email, for example, **“Urgent Request to Reschedule Interview.”** Include a short statement signed by the applicant or attorney, a copy of the G-28, and an interview notice to expedite a response time. Email your requests to: [Miami.AsylumResched@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Miami.AsylumResched@uscis.dhs.gov).

NOTE: The first request is generally honored, **as long as it states a reason for the reschedule** and is signed by the applicant or the attorney/representative. A second request is generally granted as long as it states a **good cause** for inability to appear with supporting documentation.

\*\* If you do not get a response in 48-72 hours, go in person with a copy of the request you sent and ask to speak to the duty supervisor\*\* **Tip:** Take a copy of your G-28 and attach your business card and give it to the clerk at the check in desk when you ask to see the duty supervisor.

4. **Filing Supporting Documentation:** The asylum office would like to have all documents filed together at the same time. It is possible to supplement, but they prefer one complete filing including application and all supporting documentation.

The Miami Asylum office now requires all supporting documentation for asylum applications be received, in DUPLICATE, at least one week before the date of the asylum interview. This includes written declarations, identity documents, country of origin information reports, and all other documentary evidence.

Applicants who submit documents less than one week before their interview risk having their cases rescheduled and their employment authorization clock stopped.

5. **Liaison Committee Chairs:**

South Florida:

**Kristie-Anne Padron (Chair)**

Catholic Charities Legal Services  
28 West Flagler Street, Suite 1000  
Miami, FL 33130  
*Phone:* (305) 373-1073 ext. 1213  
*E-mail:* [kpadron@cclsmiami.org](mailto:kpadron@cclsmiami.org)

**Melissa Miranda (Vice Chair)**

Cavanaugh Law Group  
Four Harvard Circle, Suite 100  
West Palm Beach, FL 33409  
*Phone:* (561) 283-2196  
*E-mail:* [melissa@wmc-law.com](mailto:melissa@wmc-law.com)

6. **Service Area:** The Miami Asylum Office also does circuit rides in Jacksonville, Florida, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.
7. **Additional Information:**
  - General Inquiries and status inquiries should be submitted via email to [Miami.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Miami.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

**Tip:** write a short but descriptive sentence of what is being requested in the subject line of the email and include a copy of your G-28 to expedite response time.

- Be advised that the Miami Asylum Office's entrance is through the parking lot located on NE 15th street. Parking fees are very expensive. As an alternative, you can park in the lot behind Trinity Cathedral, located at 464 NE 16th St, Miami, FL 33132.

## **Newark, NJ (ZNK)**

### **Location and Contact Information:**

*Street and Mailing Address:*

1200 Wall Street West  
4th Floor  
Lyndhurst, NJ 07071

*Main Number:* (201) 508-6100

*Fax Number:* (201) 531-1877

*Public email inbox:* [newarkasylumofficemailbox@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:newarkasylumofficemailbox@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Director:* Susan Raufer, [susan.raufer@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:susan.raufer@uscis.dhs.gov)

*Deputy Director:* Mollie Isaacson, [Mollie.Isaacson@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Mollie.Isaacson@uscis.dhs.gov), (201) 508-6116

*Congressional Liaison:* Nathaniel Jones, (201) 508-6269

1. **Hours of Operation:** Monday – Thursday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (appointment only); Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (walk-in hours). The building has public parking. There is a cafeteria on the first floor of the building
2. **Waiting Periods:** Asylum applicants are usually called in for a scheduled interview relatively promptly (within an hour of checking in with the front desk).
3. **Rescheduling Requests:** Rescheduling requests must be submitted by hand, fax or email to [Newark.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Newark.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov) as soon as possible. They must include the applicant's name, A-number, Form G-28, date of scheduled interview, and reasons for the rescheduling request. The requests should be directed to the Newark Asylum Office. Reschedule requests for the Boston Sub-office should be sent to the scheduling officer at [ZNKBostonSub-Office@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:ZNKBostonSub-Office@uscis.dhs.gov).

Rescheduling requests made by the applicant will be randomly rescheduled by a computer. On occasions where the asylum office is the reason for rescheduling, the office will manually set the date to accommodate the attorney's schedule.

The new rescheduled date is generally between three weeks and a year, or longer, due to the order of [scheduling priorities](#).

The first rescheduling request is honored without an explanation, but subsequent requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is best practice to submit a detailed reason

for the request as well as supporting documentation. For example, many reschedule requests are due to a previously scheduled hearing/interview. Submitting a copy of the redacted hearing in support of your request is highly recommended.

In the case of a no-show, please contact the office no more than two weeks after the scheduled date to request the interview be rescheduled and be prepared to provide a reason for the no-show.

4. **Filing Supporting Documentation:** The Newark Asylum Office pre-assigns cases several days before the interview. Additional supplementary documents should be submitted to the office at least one week before the interview. Submitting minimal supporting material of no more than ten (10) pages on the date of the interview is acceptable. However, a substantial submission may cause the case to be rescheduled. Materials can be dropped off at the front desk or mailed directly to the asylum office and should be tabbed and indexed. It is best practice to submit documentation two-hole punched.

The office has confirmed that it will accept country conditions “double-sided.”

To make a specific request for a special accommodation (female interviewer, handicap accessibility, presence of student observers or witnesses, etc.), please contact the office ahead of time. The best way to do this is to send an email to [Newark.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Newark.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov) as far in advance of the interview as possible.

5. **Service Area and Circuit Rides:** This asylum office serves the following states: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, and certain counties in New York and Pennsylvania.

The Newark Asylum Office does circuit rides throughout Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The interviews in Boston, MA, are currently conducted at:

John F. Kennedy Federal Building, Room 605  
Government Center  
15 New Sudbury Street  
Boston, MA 02203-0002  
Phone: (617) 565-9500

Asylum officers travel to St. Albans, VT periodically. The interviews are conducted at:

St. Albans Field Office  
64 Gricebrook Road  
St. Albans, VT 05478

Asylum officers travel to Buffalo, NY periodically. The interviews are conducted at:

Buffalo District Office  
306 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14202

6. **Expedite and short list.** There is an expedite procedure in place to obtain interviews at the Newark Asylum Office for cases that present exigent or humanitarian concerns. Requests should be made in writing directly to the Lyndhurst office once the application has been received and an A-number has been generated. The request should be made out to Ms. Marcia Lopes, [Marcia.c.lopes@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Marcia.c.lopes@uscis.dhs.gov), the scheduling officer, with a copy to the Newark office public mailbox at [Newark.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Newark.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov). A detailed explanation for the expedite request should be provided, as well as any supporting evidence you wish to submit.

The Newark Asylum Office also has a “short list,” which is different from the expedite list. To be placed on the short list, the applicant (and attorney) must be willing to come in for interview with 3-17 days’ notice. The applicant/attorney do not need to present reasoning to come in at short notice.

7. **Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs**

[New England Chapter:](#)

*Includes Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.*

Rosanne Milano 10 Winthrop Square, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Boston, MA 02110 (617) 678-9182 <a href="mailto:rmilano@barkerloscocco.com">rmilano@barkerloscocco.com</a>	Anita Sharma 98 North Washington Street, Ste. 106 Boston, MA 02114 (617) 742-9296 <a href="mailto:asharma@pairproject.org">asharma@pairproject.org</a>	Annelise Araujo 101 Federal Steet, Ste. 1900 Boston, MA 02110 (617) 342-7288 <a href="mailto:annelise@araujofisher.com">annelise@araujofisher.com</a>	David McHaffey 10 Winthrop Square, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Boston, MA 02110 (617) 482-4900 <a href="mailto:david@mchaffeylaw.com">david@mchaffeylaw.com</a>
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[Upstate New York Chapter:](#)

N/A

[New York City Chapter:](#)

Randall Chamberlain  
348 East 65<sup>th</sup> Street #5  
New York, NY 10065  
Phone: (212) 988-5806  
[randall@RCImmigrationLaw.com](mailto:randall@RCImmigrationLaw.com)

Philadelphia Chapter:

Ayodele Gansallo 2100 Arch Street, 3rd Floor Philadelphia, PA 19103 (215) 832-0900 Ext. 5911 <a href="mailto:agansallo@hiaspa.org">agansallo@hiaspa.org</a>	Andrew Mahon 132 East Chestnut Street Lancaster, PA 17602 (717) 208-2481 <a href="mailto:amahon.matteslaw@gmail.com">amahon.matteslaw@gmail.com</a>	Anna Paciorek 1219 Vine Street, Studio F Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215) 485-3700 <a href="mailto:anna@sweetpaciorek.com">anna@sweetpaciorek.com</a>
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8. **Additional Information:** The Deputy Director and the Director will respond to emails and will reply to letter or phone follow-ups as necessary. Emails should contain contact and reply information but should not contain any confidential information. A detailed list of asylum officers and supervisors and designated support staff is provided by the asylum office to local asylum office liaisons.

**New Orleans - Sub-Office for Houston, TX (ZHO)**

**Location and Contact Information:**

*Physical & Mailing Address:*

New Orleans Asylum Sub-Office  
2424 Edenborn Avenue, Suite 300  
Metairie, LA 70001

Email: [neworleans.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:neworleans.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

Parking is available at the office.

*Asylum Office Director:* Peter Haertling

*Supervisory Asylum Officer/Community Engagement:* Peter Haertling

*Phone:* (504) 219-3111

*E-mail:* [peter.g.haertling@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:peter.g.haertling@uscis.dhs.gov)

**Hours of Operation:** 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.; Walk-in hours: Thursdays, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

1. **Waiting Period:** The New Orleans Asylum Sub-Office strives to call in applicants for a scheduled interview relatively promptly (within an hour of checking in with the front desk). However, advocates have reported waits as long as several hours.
2. **Service Area and Circuit Rides:** This asylum office has jurisdiction over all affirmative asylum and NACARA applications within Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee. It has jurisdiction over credible and reasonable fear referrals from these same states, with the exceptions of cases where applicants are detained at the Tallahatchie Asylum Staging Center in Mississippi, which is currently under the Houston Asylum Office's jurisdiction. The office also currently handles all affirmative asylum and NACARA cases in the state of Utah, along with all credible fear and reasonable fear referrals in Colorado.

**3. Rescheduling Requests:** Rescheduling requests must be submitted in person during walk-in hours, by email ([neworleans.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:neworleans.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)), or regular mail/courier as soon as possible. Rescheduling requests should be addressed to Supervisory CIS Assistant Katherine San Martin. They must include the applicant's name, A-number, Form G-28, date of scheduled interview, and reasons for the rescheduling request. Rescheduling requests made by the applicant will be randomly rescheduled by a computer. On occasions where the asylum office requests the rescheduling, the office will manually set the date and attempt to accommodate the attorney's schedule. The new rescheduled date is generally within 3 to 6 weeks.

The first rescheduling request is honored without an explanation, but subsequent requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is best practice to submit a detailed reason for the request as well as supporting documentation. For example, many reschedule requests are due to a previously scheduled hearing/interview. Submitting a copy of the redacted hearing in support of your request is highly recommended.

In the case of a no-show, please contact the office no more than two weeks after the scheduled date to request the interview be rescheduled and be prepared to provide a reason for the no-show.

**4. Filing Supporting Documentation:** The New Orleans Asylum Office pre-assigns cases several days prior to the interview. Additional supplementary documents should be submitted to the office at least one week prior to the interview. The office is willing to accept documents on the date of the interview that don't require in-depth review (i.e., country conditions reports). However, a substantial submission may cause the case to be rescheduled. Materials can be dropped off at the front desk or mailed directly to the asylum office and should be tabbed and indexed. It is best practice to submit documentation two-hole punched.

**5. Special Accommodations:** To make a specific request for a special accommodation (female interviewer, handicap accessibility, presence of student observers or witnesses, etc.), please contact the office ahead of time. The best way to do this is to send an email to [neworleans.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:neworleans.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov) as far in advance of the interview as possible.

**6. Circuit Rides:** The New Orleans Asylum Office conducts circuit rides in Memphis, TN; Nashville, TN; Ft. Smith, AR; and Salt Lake City, UT. Absent exceptional circumstances, adult applicants from Louisiana, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi are required to appear at the Metairie, LA office for their interviews. Minor principal applicants will be scheduled on circuit rides, absent a request from those applicants to travel to New Orleans.

Circuit ride addresses are as follows:

Memphis Office: 80 Monroe Ave 7th Floor, Memphis, TN 38103.

Nashville: 340 Plus Park Boulevard, Nashville, TN 37217.

Fort Smith: 4624 Kelley Highway, Fort Smith, AR 72904.

Salt Lake City: 660 South 200 East, Suite 400, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.



7. **Expedite and short list.** To request an expedited interview for exigent or humanitarian concerns, please make the request in-person, in writing, or by email as discussed above once the application has been received and an A-number has been generated. A detailed explanation for the expedite request should be provided, as well as any supporting evidence you wish to submit.

The New Orleans Asylum Office also has a “short list”, which is different from the expedite list. To be placed on the short list, the applicant (and attorney) must be willing to come in for an interview with less than 21 days’ notice and the application should require minimal or no supplemental filing. The case will be scheduled to make use of the time available due to cancellation by another applicant. The applicant/attorney do not need to present reasoning to come in at short notice, but they must fill out the office’s short notice request form.

8. **Other Information:**

- If an applicant does not have a government issued state ID, they will be permitted entry by the asylum office.
- All parties must be present to check-in—the applicant, attorney and interpreter if needed. Proceed to the front window with your interview notice to check in. The interpreter will be required to complete a form affirming that s/he has the applicant’s consent to serve as interpreter.
- At the conclusion of the interview, attorneys are allowed follow-up or the opportunity to make a closing statement. However, asylum officers are specifically trained not to provide any indication of how they will decide the case.
- If there is a problem with an asylum officer during the interview, it is recommended to speak to his or her supervisor.
- Interviews generally take at least two (2) hours.

AILA liaison: Caroline Barnes (caroline@cjbarneslaw.com)

**New York City (ZNY)**

**Location and Contact Information:**

*Physical Address:*

1065 Stewart Avenue  
Suite 200  
Bethpage, NY 11714

*Mailing Address:*

1065 Stewart Avenue  
Suite 200  
Bethpage, NY 11714

*Main Number:*

*Fax Number:* (516) 261-0141

*E-mail:* [NewYork.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:NewYork.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov)



*Asylum Office Director:* Patricia Menges, [patricia.menges@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:patricia.menges@uscis.dhs.gov)

Case inquiries and questions regarding agency/office policy and procedure can be submitted via mail, in-person, fax, telephone, or e-mail. See below:

**Mail:** Send correspondence to the attention of the Immigration Analysts using the mailing address listed above.

**Fax:** Send the correspondence to the attention of the Immigration Analysts using the fax number listed above.

**Telephone:** Dial (516) 261-0000 and ask to speak to an Immigration Analyst.

**E-mail:** Send the correspondence to the attention of the Immigration Analyst at [NewYork.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:NewYork.Asylum@uscis.dhs.gov).

**In-person:** Visit the office and indicate that you wish to make an inquiry. Walk-in hours are between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. The building has parking. There is a cafeteria in the building (through a separate entrance).

Please direct complaints or concerns to the Director or Deputy Director via mail or fax. In addition, if you submit a case inquiry or pose a question to the Immigration Analysts and do not receive a response within three (3) weeks, please send a letter to the Director or Deputy director via mail or fax. The Director and Deputy Director will not respond to phone calls or e-mails.

1. **Hours of Operation:** 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Walk-in hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
2. **Waiting Period:** Occasionally, you may experience waiting room delays. Interview times are staggered to minimize delays. These delays can sometimes be several hours, so be sure your client has eaten properly and brings a magazine or something else to pass the time. Electronic devices are not allowed in the waiting room. Interview times are staggered to minimize delays.
3. **Rescheduling and Expedite Requests:** To reschedule, send in a written request via mail, hand delivery, fax, or email, before the date of the interview. A first request is normally granted without explanation. Subsequent requests will require an explanation and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Follow-ups on reschedule requests should be submitted if a response is not received within 30 days.

Applicants whose cases are in the backlog may make a written request to the director to have the interview expedited. The written request must state in detail the reasons for the need to expedite, such as immediate relatives in harm's way outside the United States or serious medical issues.

4. **Delivery of Documents:** The New York Asylum Office does not pre-assign cases. Supporting materials can be submitted before the interview or with the front desk on the morning of the interview when the applicant checks in. You should not wait to give this documentation to the officer at the commencement of the interview. Please do not mail documents to the office before receiving an interview notice.
5. **Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs for New York City Chapter:** Alfredo Murga [alfredo.murga@hua-murga.com](mailto:alfredo.murga@hua-murga.com) and Victoria Neilson [vneilson@cliniclegal.org](mailto:vneilson@cliniclegal.org).
6. **Additional Information:**
  - Food and beverages are not allowed in the secure waiting area. There are restaurant style buzzers which applicants or their attorneys can use if they wish to leave the office and eat food, or use the phone or laptop at their car. The applicant must be back at the asylum office waiting room promptly after the buzzer is activated.
  - All electronic devices (including but not limited to cellular telephones, laptops, iPads, etc.) must be turned off while you are inside the secure waiting area. You will have to lock your phone in a locker before going with the officer for the interview.
  - The New York Asylum Office is very strict about time. Applicants, attorneys, and interpreters must check in no later than 30 minutes beyond the appointment time. Any cases that are not prepared to check in and move forward within 30 minutes of their appointment time will be rescheduled unless they can show emergent or extenuating circumstances.
7. **Service Area and Circuit Rides:** The New York Asylum Office does not “ride circuit;” it only hears cases in the Bethpage office. The New York Office hears cases for residents of the following counties in New York: Dutchess, Kings (Brooklyn), Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond (Staten Island), Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester.

Residents of Manhattan and the Bronx fall under the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Asylum Office.
9. **Parking and Public Transportation:** The asylum office building has a large free public parking lot. However, none of it is shaded. The best public transportation option is the Long Island Railroad to Bethpage or Hicksville. Both LIRR offices are a considerable distance from the asylum office and probably require the use of a bus, cab or Uber/Lyft to get to the asylum office. Note: since this is a reverse commute, LIRR options are very limited.

### **San Francisco, CA (ZSF)**

#### **Location and Contact Information:**

*Street Address:*

75 Hawthorne Street, 7th Floor

San Francisco, CA 94105

*Mail Address:*

USCIS  
San Francisco Asylum Office  
PO Box 77530  
San Francisco, CA 94107

*Main Number:* 415-575-1300

(415) 293-1234 works better sometimes and is also listed as the public number on their website

*Fax Number:* 415-575-1393

*Asylum Office Director:* Emilia Bardini, [emilia.m.bardini@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:emilia.m.bardini@uscis.dhs.gov)

Attorneys can cc Monica Ashiku, when emailing Director Bardini:

[Monica.n.ashiku@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:Monica.n.ashiku@uscis.dhs.gov).

APSO Questions: [drew.s.sieminski@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:drew.s.sieminski@uscis.dhs.gov).

*Congressional Liaison:* Michelle Henderson: [SanFranciscoAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:SanFranciscoAsylum@uscis.dhs.gov)

1. **Hours of Operation:** Monday through Friday, by appointment only. Public window open for inquiries Mondays from 12 p.m. – 4 p.m., and Friday morning 8 a.m. -12 p.m. Documents may be dropped off on Mondays between 12 p.m. -2 p.m., and on Fridays from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
2. **Waiting Period:** Interviews take place Mondays through Wednesdays, at 8:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. Interviews on Thursdays take place at 8:30 a.m. or 10:15 a.m. There are no interviews scheduled on Fridays. Officers have two interviews daily (back-to-back interviews). The 8:30 a.m. interview usually begins around 9:00 a.m., and the 10:15 a.m. interview usually starts around 11:00 a.m., sometimes later, but sometimes they start on time. Interviews take at least two hours.
3. **Rescheduling Requests:** The asylum office will take reschedule requests before the interview or the day of the interview. Requests before the interview date must be in writing, via fax, mail or email. Emails to [SFasylumreschedulerequest@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:SFasylumreschedulerequest@uscis.dhs.gov) have proven to work the best. The first request is typically granted, while the second requires a showing of extraordinary circumstances. Special requests may be made directly to the director or deputy director in cases of medical urgency. The office also accepts “short notice requests;” if the attorney and client can come in for an interview on short notice, usually around two or three days before an open interview slot, they can sign up with the director.

The scheduler generally cannot be contacted directly, and therefore it is recommended to include any potential upcoming conflicts in the request.

Although confirmation of a reschedule request by mail or fax should be provided, attorneys should not expect anyone to confirm the new date. If the new interview is approved, attorneys or applicants should expect a new interview notice by mail.

In UAC cases, interview scheduling can be arranged by emailing [SF-minors@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:SF-minors@uscis.dhs.gov). Given the current backlog, an applicant should not expect a rescheduled interview for six months or more. This is not true for UACs. Also, reschedule requests sometimes fall through the cracks. If you feel that this has happened, it is recommended to email the director or deputy director.

4. **Filing Documentation:** The San Francisco Asylum Office accepts filings at the front window on Monday afternoon between 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m., and on Fridays between 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. They also accept documentation by mail, however many attorneys have noted that mailed documents do not reach the file by the time of the interview, or are lost. If you mail documents, definitely get a tracking number. Hand-delivery of the documents to the front window is a common method to make sure the documents reach the file. The San Francisco Asylum Office considers timely submission of documents to be by Monday of the week before the interview.

When an applicant arrives to an interview with additional documents, the front desk will take them and add them to the file. However, they will most likely reschedule the interview. Sometimes asylum officers will accept the documents at the interview.

#### 5. Local AILA Liaison Asylum Chairs:

##### [Northern California Chapter:](#)

Jacqueline Brown Scott  
USF School of Law  
2130 Fulton St.  
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(415) 315-9585  
[jmbrown@usfca.edu](mailto:jmbrown@usfca.edu)

Okan Sengun  
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*For updates and AILA NorCal Liaison Meeting minutes, check [www.ailanorcal.com](http://www.ailanorcal.com).*

##### [Oregon Chapter:](#)

N/A

##### [Santa Clara Chapter:](#)

Xiao Qian Mu  
Phone: (718) 666-2526

[Washington State Chapter:](#)

Minda Thorward  
[thorwardlaw@gmail.com](mailto:thorwardlaw@gmail.com)

6. **Service Area and Circuit Rides:** The San Francisco Asylum Office does circuit rides in Anchorage, Alaska (1 time a year for 2 weeks – 2 officers); Portland, Oregon (once per month), and Seattle, Washington. (It is possible, but unconfirmed, that these circuit rides have ceased/changed following implementation of the “Remain in Mexico” program.)

The San Francisco Asylum Office serves the following counties in the state of California: Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba. You can check jurisdiction using the USCIS service and office locator.

The San Francisco Asylum Office serves the following counties in the state of Nevada: Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey, Wash, and White Pine.

7. **Additional Information:**

- **The Interview Day:**
  - Parking can be tricky, although there are several paid lots in the area. If taking BART, the office is a seven (7) minute walk from the **Montgomery** station. It is advisable to arrive *at least* 30 minutes before the appointment time. There is *one* metal detector station that everyone must pass through before entering the building and getting to the asylum office on the 7th floor. There is another metal detector station on the 7th floor that applicants must pass through before attending their interview. The San Francisco Asylum Office also maintains the right to consider the applicant a “no-show” if he or she is more than 15 minutes late. Public transportation delays (which do happen) are generally not an excuse for late arrivals. The SF Asylum Office has rescheduled interviews for first time late arrivals. For second time late arrivals, the applicant is referred to court.
  - If an applicant does not have a government issued state ID, they will not be permitted entry by the asylum office. An officer will escort applicants without a valid ID through the building.
  - All parties must be present to check-in—the applicant, attorney and interpreter if needed. Proceed to the front window with your interview notice to check in.
  - At the conclusion of the interview, attorneys are allowed follow-up or the opportunity to make a closing statement. However, SF Asylum Officers are

specifically trained not to provide any indication of how they will decide the case. So after the applicant finishes the interview portion, if attorneys ask questions of the officer, such as “do you have any concerns about the case that I can help you answer,” asylum officers generally say something like, “I’ve heard all the facts and will be making my decision based on those.” It is difficult to engage the officer in any kind of discussion, but with some officers it can be done.

- If there is a problem with an asylum officer during the interview, it is recommended to speak to his or her supervisor.
- Interviews take at least two (2) hours.
  
- **Notice pick-up:**
  - Applicants are required to pick up their decision letters approximately 15 days after the interview.
  - Attorneys cannot pick up the decision for their clients.
  - If at the time of the pick-up the decision is not ready, the person at the front desk advises that an applicant can return on a subsequent Friday to check on the status of the decision, or that it will be mailed to them.
  
- **After final denial of an in-status applicant:**
  - If someone was denied by the asylum office while in status and would like to re-apply for asylum, mail a copy of the I-589 and the decision letter directly to the SF Asylum Office and state in a cover letter that you are re-applying. However, do not expect to be rescheduled for a new interview until the director or assistant director has been contacted; the SF office deals with this so infrequently, they do not have a procedure for re-filed applications. Additionally, in the interview, the asylum officer may not understand what is going on, so the attorney may have to explain.
  - If the client prefers to go to court after a final denial, then a request for an NTA should be mailed or faxed. In that correspondence, the client should also provide proof that the applicant is no longer in status (such as an expired I-94). The SF office cannot estimate when an NTA will be produced, but anecdotal evidence suggests it usually takes many months. If it takes months, contact the director or assistant director.