



O a s i s <sup>TM</sup>  
L E G A L S E R V I C E S

An overview of the services we provide

# Oasis Legal Services: An introduction

- **Our mission:** Oasis Legal Services proudly provides quality legal immigration services to under-represented low-income groups with a focus on LGBTQIA+ communities. By acknowledging, respecting, and honoring their struggles, we empower immigrants so that dignity grows and integrity blooms.

We are a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization providing comprehensive legal services to assist LGBTQIA+ immigrants:

- Screening for immigration relief
- Affirmative asylum
- VAWA
- Permanent Residency
- Naturalization
- Family petitions

# 2021 by the numbers

121 LGBTQI+ new asylum seekers  
represented

408 work authorization documents  
secured for LGBTQI+ immigrants

140 LGBTQI+ immigrants represented  
applying for permanent residency

108 permanent resident cards  
obtained for LGBTQI+ immigrants

# Our clients

Where are clients come from:

Mexico (76%)

Central and South America (21%)

Africa, Asia, Middle East, Jamaica (3%)

We can help people who are not in Immigration Court or who have not previously been in Immigration Court.

Living anywhere served by the San Francisco Asylum Office

# Legal Services we provide

Immigration screening consultations

Asylum

VAWA

Permanent Residency

Family Petitions

Naturalization

Holistic case management and wrap-around support services

We have a social worker on staff

We provide non legal case management services to our clients:

- Mental Health referrals
- Apply for public benefits
- Navigate roadblocks/challenges with DMV and Social Security Administration
- Housing referrals
- Work discrimination
- Job search
- Legal name and or gender change

# What is Asylum?

Asylum is for people who are scared to return to their country because they will be harmed based on their race, religion, national origin, political opinion, or because they are a member of a particular social group. Currently, Immigration says that LGBTQI+ people count as a particular social group and deserve protection from being sent back to a country where they will be harmed.

One of the ways in which we can show Immigration that a client has a real fear of returning to their country is if they experienced harm in the past because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The harm that a lot of our clients have experienced include bullying, discrimination, rejection and physical abuse from their families, mistreatment from the police, and sexual abuse.

# How do you apply for asylum?

## Two ways:

- If the person is already in Immigration Court because they were detained by ICE or presented themselves at the border, then they must present their asylum case before Immigration Court. Oasis Legal Services doesn't represent cases before Immigration Court, but we can help refer folks to other nonprofits or lawyers that do.
- If the person has never been placed in removal proceedings before Immigration Court, then we can file their case with San Francisco Asylum Office.



# Asylum Process

What happens after asylum application is filed?

- Applicant will receive a receipt notice and biometrics appointment within 3-4 weeks after filing
- Part of the process is going to an interview with an asylum officer who will interview applicant about they you are afraid to return to their country. Some months after the interview, you usually receive the decision. The time an applicant will have to wait for an interview to be scheduled will vary. It can take 4-5 months for recent application or years.
- Five months after applying for asylum (if an applicant has not had their asylum interview or court hearing yet) they are eligible to apply for a work permit. After a person wins asylum, they can qualify for a green card one year later and apply for naturalization 3 or 4 years after getting their green card.

# Permanent Residency

Different paths to applying for residency

Oasis assists immigrants in applying for residency through:

- Asylum
  - After a person is granted asylum, they can qualify to apply for permanent residency one year later
  - Permanent resident cards for asylum applicants are backdated one year
- Family petitions
- VAWA

LPR card renewals and replacements

# What is VAWA?

VAWA allows certain individuals who might not otherwise be eligible for immigration benefits to petition for US permanent residency on the grounds of a close relationship with a US citizen or permanent resident who has been abusing them. The following persons are eligible to benefit from the immigration provisions of VAWA:

A spouse who has been abused by a U.S. citizen or permanent resident spouse. The petition will also cover the petitioner's children under age 21.

A child abused by a U.S. citizen or permanent resident parent. The petition can be filed by an abused child or by her parent on the child's behalf.

A parent who has been abused by a U.S. citizen child who is at least 21 years old.

# Family Petitions

Who can file family petitions?

Asylee: can file Asylee petitions (I-730) for their spouses and unmarried children, who were under 21 at the time of filing asylum application. Asylees must file for their qualifying family members within 2 years of being granted asylum.

Legal Permanent Residents: can file family petitions for spouses and unmarried children.

U.S. Citizens: can file family petitions for spouses, unmarried and married children, parents, and siblings. U.S. Citizens can also file fiancé petitions if their fiancé resides outside of the U.S.

# Naturalization

You can apply for Naturalization (U.S. Citizenship) if:

- Have been a lawful permanent resident of the United States for at least 5 years
- Have been a lawful permanent resident of the United States for at least 3 years and you have been married to and living with the same U.S. citizen spouse for the last 3 years, and your spouse has been a U.S. citizen for the last 3 years at the time you filed your Form N-400
- Must demonstrate English proficiency and pass a civics exam

**Applicants exempt from this requirement are those who on the date of filing their naturalization application:**

- Have been a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) for 15 years or more and are over age of 55
  - Have been a LPR for 20 years or more and are over the age of 50
  - Have medically determined physical or mental impairment, where the impairment, affects the applicant's ability to learn English (Applicant will need to have their doctor complete Form N-648: Medical Certification for Disability Exceptions)
- You can file for citizenship 90 days before meeting the required 3-year or 5-year period of continuous residence

# Scheduling an appointment with Oasis

***We will interview thoroughly to determine immigration relief eligibility.***

- By appointment only, for time being we are not accepting walk-ins
- Call or text our office 510-666-6687
- Email [info@oasislegalservices.org](mailto:info@oasislegalservices.org)
- Office locations:
  - Berkeley (1900 Addison St. Suite 100)
  - Fresno (1252 Fulton Street)

How to get in  
touch with  
someone at  
Oasis:

To volunteer (interpretation/pro bono  
representation/mental health evaluations)

[www.oasislegalservices.org/get-involved](http://www.oasislegalservices.org/get-involved)

For resources for LGBTQI+ immigrants and  
asylum seekers

[legal@oasislegalservices.org](mailto:legal@oasislegalservices.org)

Questions?