

**Evaluation of the justice AmeriCorps (jAC)
Legal Services for Unaccompanied Children Program**

**ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW
For young people under 16 years of age**

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE ARE DOING

The Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) is a private nonprofit organization that does research and works with government and other organizations to improve the justice system. Vera has been asked to study the Legal Services for Unaccompanied Children Program, and the organizations that provide those legal services, such as the one where your lawyer works.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING OF YOU

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be interviewed for about 60 minutes. We will ask questions about your understanding of immigration court and what you may have learned from your lawyer about your legal case. For example, you will be asked if you have been to immigration court, and what the people in the court do. You will be asked how talking to your attorney may have helped you, and what you may have learned about ways children can win their cases and be legally allowed to remain in the U.S. You will NOT be asked about your previous migration experiences, your family, or other personal issues or about anything bad that may have happened to you.

Vera will also collect information about the legal services program from the organization that is providing you with an attorney and from court records of cases of unaccompanied children who go through immigration proceedings. The information will be put together with the information we collect from interviews with children like you who have lawyers.

KEEPING YOUR INFORMATION PRIVATE

The information Vera collects about you will be kept private. No personal identifying information, such as your name or specific details of your case, will be shared with anyone outside the evaluation team. Personal information will not be shared with the government, the immigration judge or other people at this organization. Your name will not be kept with notes from your interview. Nothing from your interview will be shared outside of team working on this project.

We may have to tell the authorities, if you say any of the following:

- 1) information about committing a crime,
- 2) you are going to harm yourself, or
- 3) you or another child is being abused.

This consent form expires one year from the date noted above. Vera staff to initial when page is completed: _____

We will NOT ask you questions about these things.

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO WITH THIS INFORMATION

We are going to speak with about 50 children and use what we learn to find ways to improve the legal services program for children. At the end of the evaluation, a report will be written and given to the funder of the program so that they can make the program better. The report will not include your name or any specific details about you. It will only cover general information from all the interviews. Information about you will be destroyed once we write the report. Vera expects this study to end by September 28, 2016.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PARTICIPATE

You do not have to talk with us. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You will continue to receive legal services no matter what you decide. Your decision to participate or not participate will not affect your legal case or result in any special benefit or loss of benefit to you. Vera will not tell anyone what you decide. If you decide to be interviewed, you may still refuse to answer any question you do not want to answer. You may also decide to stop participating at anytime.

RISKS

There are some risks that Vera tries to make sure do not happen, but you should know what they are before you agree to talk with us.

- 1) There is a small risk that some questions asked during the interview will make you feel upset or uncomfortable. Remember that you do not have to answer those questions. You can skip the questions, take a break or stop at anytime.
- 2) There is a very small chance that information about you could be accidentally disclosed to someone outside the evaluation team. However, this is unlikely to happen because Vera will take precautions to keep your information out of sight in locked cabinets and in secure computer files.
- 3) We want to talk with you in a private room, but there is a risk that what you say might be disclosed by someone else present at the interview, such as a staff person at the organization where you receive legal services. For this reason, it is important not share sensitive information that you do want repeated.

Information about you cannot be demanded (subpoenaed) by the immigration court, because the information collected in this study is protected by federal law.

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BENEFITS

You will not receive any direct benefit by participating in this study. The researchers from the Vera Institute cannot advocate on your behalf, however, what you say may help us learn how to improve the legal services available to unaccompanied immigrant children. Because we appreciate your willingness to be interviewed, you will receive a gift card in the amount of \$25 for your participation.

WHO IS PAYING US TO DO THIS

This evaluation is funded by the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in cooperation with the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS).

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid control number from the Office of Management and Budget. Under the PRA, forms and instructions are created that are accurate, can be easily understood, and which impose the least possible burden on you to provide us with information. The estimated average time to review and complete this collection is 30 minutes. If you have comments regarding this estimate, or suggestions for making this collection simpler, you can write to the Executive Office for Immigration Review, Office of the General Counsel, 5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2600, Falls Church, Virginia 20530.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you have questions at any time about this study, you may contact either of the two people below at the Vera Institute of Justice:

Laura Simich
lsimich@vera.org
212-376-3176

Annie Chen
achen@vera.org
212-376-3137 212-376-3168

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU AGREE

1. YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS.
2. YOUR NAME WILL NOT BE USED IN ANY REPORT.
3. YOU WILL RECEIVE A GIFT CARD FOR PARTICIPATING.

We will give you a copy of the information just read to you.

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW

By staying to talk with us following the reading of this information, you have assented to participate in the interview. If you do not agree and have decided you do not want to participate in the interview, you can leave now.

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