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## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

### **Please read carefully before completing and submitting your Form EOIR-31**

#### **A. When to submit a Form EOIR-31:**

##### **New Recognition**

- Organizations must use this form (Form EOIR-31) when requesting recognition as a non-profit religious, charitable, social service, or similar organization approved to designate a representative or representatives to provide immigration legal services on behalf of its clients before the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and/or the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), which includes the immigration courts and the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).
- An organization must include with this request, a completed Form EOIR-31A for the accreditation of at least one representative. The period of accreditation runs concurrently with the organization's period of recognition and must be renewed at the same time as the organization's recognition. A separate request for accreditation (Form EOIR-31A) must be used for each proposed representative. An organization may file multiple requests for accreditation with this request, or it may file for accreditation of additional representatives any time after the approval of recognition and at least one accredited representative. Organizations with only attorneys on staff and who are not seeking accreditation of a representative are not eligible for recognition.

##### **Renewal of Recognition**

- Recognized organizations must use this form (Form EOIR-31) to renew their recognition.
- An organization seeking renewal of recognition must also request – using a Form EOIR-31A – accreditation or renewal of accreditation of at least one representative at the time that it seeks renewal of recognition. Recognition and accreditations for which an organization timely seeks renewal remain valid pending a determination on the renewal requests. Recognition and/or accreditations that are not renewed will expire and the names of the recognized organization and/or accredited representative(s) not renewed will be removed from the roster.

##### **Extension of Recognition**

- Organizations must use this form (Form EOIR-31) when seeking to extend their recognition or renew the extension of their recognition to additional office(s) or location(s) where the organization regularly offers immigration legal services. A request to extend recognition to additional offices may be made when requesting recognition or at any time after recognition is approved. The name and address of the additional sites will be included on the roster of recognized organizations after the extension is approved. Representatives accredited at the organization's headquarters or designated office location may serve clients at any of the other approved offices or locations.

#### **B. How to request new recognition, renewal of recognition, or extension of recognition:**

For more information about requesting recognition,  
visit the EOIR website at: <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/ra.htm>

## **Part 1. Organization Seeking Recognition (Headquarters or designated office for recognition purposes)**

- Provide your organization's contact information and complete name, including any names under which it is doing business or previously used to request recognition or accreditation. The organization's street address must be provided; a post office box number is not acceptable.

## **Part 2. Type of Recognition Sought**

Indicate the type of recognition sought with this form (select one option):

- New Recognition: Check this box if your organization: (1) has never requested recognition; (2) previously requested recognition and the request was denied; or (3) was previously approved for recognition, but had its recognition terminated. If your organization was previously denied recognition or had its recognition terminated, please provide the date of the denial or termination.
- Renewal of Recognition: Check this box if your organization seeks to renew its current recognition. The period of recognition is generally valid for 3 years unless the organization has been conditionally recognized for a period of 2 years. Recognition may remain valid during the pendency of the renewal request, provided that the renewal request is filed on or before the expiration date. (The expiration date can be found on the letter approving recognition of your organization.) An organization seeking renewal with an extended office or location must complete Parts 3 and 4 of this form. An organization seeking renewal that has had no changes to the information provided in Parts 5 through 8 of this form since the last date of approval of recognition or extension may skip those parts and continue to Part 9.
- Extension of Recognition: Check this box if your organization is currently recognized and you solely seek to extend recognition to another office or location.

## **Part 3. Request to Extend Recognition**

- Check "yes" if you seek to extend your organization's recognition from its headquarters or designated office to another office or location where the organization regularly provides or intends to provide immigration legal services. Provide the number of locations to which you seek to extend recognition and continue to Part 4.
- Check "no" if you do not seek to extend your organization's recognition to another office or location. Skip Part 4 and continue to Part 5.

## **Part 4. Information about Other Offices or Locations Seeking Extension of Recognition**

- For offices or locations seeking extension of recognition: provide the name (if known in the community by a different name from the applicant organization) and contact information for the individual offices or locations. The extended office(s) or location(s) of an organization must have a street address for contact purposes; a post office box number is not acceptable.
  - Check the appropriate box to indicate whether the extension request is for a new extension of recognition or a renewal of an extension of recognition. Also, indicate whether you are attaching additional relevant information about this office or location, such as additional contact information, or a fee schedule or supervisory structure different than the organization's headquarters or designated office. Attached additional sheets of paper for additional offices as needed.
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- If your organization is currently recognized and you are solely submitting this form to extend recognition to a new location, complete Part 5 and Part 6 *only* if there have been changes affecting the

organization since the last approval of recognition, which were not previously reported to the Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP). Otherwise, continue to Part 7.

### **Part 5. Proof of Non-profit, Religious, Charitable, Social Service or Similar Organization**

- Check the box(es) to indicate the proof you are submitting to show that the applicant organization is established as a non-profit religious, charitable, social service, or similar organization in the United States. A mission statement or statement of purpose by the organization must be included with this application. Additional proof may include the organization's constitution, charter, by-laws, articles of incorporation, state non-profit status, or other documentation.

### **Part 6. Federal Tax-exempt Status**

- Check the box to indicate your organization's federal tax-exempt status. If the organization has obtained federal tax-exempt status, indicate the section of the Internal Revenue Code under which the organization has tax-exempt status, and provide the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax determination letter and the first page of the organization's most recent Federal tax return. If you are unable to provide the first page of the organization's most recent Federal tax return, explain why an IRS tax return is not required. If your organization is in the process of obtaining federal tax-exempt status, attach documentation of your organization's pending application.

### **Part 7. Knowledge of Immigration Law and Procedures**

- Submit an organizational chart identifying the names and titles of immigration legal staff and supervisors at your organization's headquarters or designated office and any offices or locations seeking extension of recognition.
- Indicate whether your organization's staff includes attorneys who are eligible to practice law and who are members in good standing of the bar of any state, possession, territory, or commonwealth of the United States, or of the District of Columbia. If the staff includes attorneys, attach their resumes, which should include information regarding bar admissions, legal experience, and immigration legal training.
- Indicate the number of accreditation requests (Forms EOIR-31A) accompanying this request and the name(s) of the proposed representative(s). Note that all requests for new recognition or renewal of recognition must be accompanied by at least one request for accreditation. A request for extension of recognition may also be accompanied by a request for accreditation, but is not required for extension. Attach resumes for each accredited representative on staff, which should include information regarding practical legal experience and immigration legal training. For individuals seeking accreditation, provide their resumes with the Form EOIR-31A.
- Indicate whether your organization has entered into agreements or made other arrangements to consult with or receive technical support or assistance from private counsel or another recognized organization with knowledge and experience in immigration law. Provide documentation regarding the agreements or other arrangements.
- Provide a description of the immigration legal services provided by your organization and the qualifications of your organization's immigration legal staff to provide such services.

### **Part 8. List of Print and Electronic Legal Resources**

- List the print and electronic legal resources available to the organization and its representatives.

### **Part 9. Immigration Legal Services Budget and Funding**

- Indicate whether the organization's annual immigration legal services budget demonstrates that a substantial amount of the budget derives, or will derive, from sources other than immigration client fees,

For more information about requesting recognition,  
visit the EOIR website at: <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/ra.htm>

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immigration client membership dues, or immigration client donations. Attach copies of the current annual budget and the prior year's budget, if available. If a current budget is not available, provide the projected budget for the coming year. The annual budget should include sources and amounts of revenue and expenses, and a description of how the organization is funded.

- If a substantial amount of the organization's legal services budget is dependent on immigration client fees, dues, or donations, the organization may request a waiver of this requirement. Such requests are granted only in limited circumstances. If you seek a waiver, explain the reasons for the waiver request and provide supporting documentation.

#### **Part 10. Fees and Fee Waivers for Low-Income and Indigent Clients**

- Indicate whether the organization charges or imposes fees or membership dues on its immigration clients, and whether the organization has fee waiver and fee-reduction policies for its immigration clients. Attach current immigration fee schedules, lists of membership dues charged to immigration clients, and fee waiver and fee-reduction policies for immigration clients for each location seeking recognition.

#### **Part 11. Renewal of Recognition**

- To renew recognition, an organization must maintain the requirements for recognition and complete the necessary parts of this form to show any changes since the last approval of recognition, or extension of recognition, as applicable.
- Submit an annual report for each year since the last approval of recognition. The annual report should include: the types and numbers of immigration cases and applications for which it provided immigration legal services, the accredited representatives who worked on those matters (if any), and the nature of the services provided; the number of clients to which the organization provided services at no cost; the amount of fees, donations, and membership dues, if any, charged or requested of immigration clients; and the offices or locations where immigration legal services were provided.
- Extension(s) of recognition must be renewed when the organization seeks renewal of recognition, otherwise, the approval of extension of recognition will expire. Include all requests to renew extension of recognition under Part 4 of this form.

#### **Part 12. Declaration of Authorized Officer**

- An authorized officer of the requesting organization, such as the President, Executive Director or an officer of the organization who has been designated to act on behalf of the organization in recognition and accreditation matters, must verify the contents of the Form EOIR-31. By signing the form under penalty of perjury, the authorized officer affirms that the form and its attachments are true, correct, and complete. The authorized officer must also attest that the organization provides immigration legal services primarily to low-income and indigent clients.

#### **Part 13. Mailing Address and Proof of Service**

##### **Mailing**

- Submit the completed, signed and dated Form EOIR-31, and all attachments, to:

R&A Coordinator

For more information about requesting recognition,  
visit the EOIR website at: <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/ra.htm>

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### **Proof of Service**

- An exact copy of the completed Form EOIR-31 and all supporting documents must be served on the District Director of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) (1) in the jurisdiction where the organization's headquarters or designated office for recognition purposes is located, and (2) in the jurisdiction where each extended office or location is located, if outside of the jurisdiction where the organization's headquarters or designated office for recognition purposes is located.
- For a request for renewal of recognition, an exact copy of the form and its attachments must also be served on the USCIS District Director in the jurisdiction where the organization's accredited representatives regularly represent clients, if the District Director has not already been served pursuant to the above instruction.
- Complete and sign the "proof of service." The proof of service is the organization's formal guarantee that copies of this form and its attachments have been sent to the appropriate USCIS office(s). Every filing – whether the recognition or accreditation request, additional supporting documents, or any other submission to OLAP – must clearly contain a proof of service to the District Director of USCIS in the jurisdiction where the organization is located and, if the organization is offering immigration legal services in a different USCIS district, to that appropriate USCIS office. To identify the appropriate USCIS office(s) for service, consult the USCIS website (<http://www.uscis.gov/about-us/find-uscis-office>) or a local DHS office.

### **C. Paperwork Reduction Act.**

- Under the Paperwork Reduction Act, a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. In accordance with the Act, we try to create forms and instructions 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 the form, gather necessary materials, and assemble the attachments is 2 hours for an initial application and 3 hours (one hour for each year) for renewal of recognition. If you have comments regarding the accuracy of this estimate, or suggestions for making this form simpler, you can write to the Executive Office for Immigration Review, Office of the General Counsel, 5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2600, Falls Church, Virginia 22041.

### **D. Privacy Act Notice.**

- The collection of this information is authorized by 8 U.S.C. §§ 1103, 1229a, 1362 and 8 C.F.R. §§ 1292.11-19 in order to request recognition of a non-profit religious, charitable, social service or similar organization. The information you provide is voluntary and will be used by EOIR employees to assess your organization's eligibility for recognition; however, failure to provide the requested information may preclude consideration of your request. Pursuant to the Privacy Act, EOIR may share the information provided with this form with others in accordance with approved routine uses. Furthermore, the submission of this form acknowledges that an approved applicant will be subject to the disciplinary rules and procedures at 8 C.F.R. 1003.101*et seq.*, including, pursuant to 8 C.F.R. §§ 292.3(h)(3), 1003.108(c), publication of the approved applicant's name and findings of misconduct by EOIR should the applicant be subject to public discipline by EOIR.

**Part 1. Organization Seeking Recognition (Headquarters or designated office for recognition purposes)**

Name of organization \_\_\_\_\_  
DBA \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) previously applied under (if any) \_\_\_\_\_  
Number and Street \_\_\_\_\_ Suite \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Website \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2. Type of Recognition Sought (check one)**

- ☐ New recognition. Provide date of any prior denial or termination of recognition \_\_\_\_\_ (MM/DD/YYYY).  
☐ Renewal of recognition. Provide date of last approval or renewal \_\_\_\_\_ (MM/DD/YYYY).  
☐ Extension of recognition. Provide approval date of current recognition \_\_\_\_\_ (MM/DD/YYYY).

**Part 3. Request to Extend Recognition to Other Offices or Locations**

- ☐ Yes. Number of additional offices or locations seeking new or renewal of recognition: \_\_\_\_\_. *Go to Part 4.*  
☐ No. *Skip Part 4 and Go to Part 5.*

**Part 4. Information about Other Offices or Locations Seeking Extension of Recognition  
(attach additional sheets of paper for additional sites as needed)**

Name of organization _____	Name of organization _____
Address _____	Address _____
Suite _____ City _____	Suite _____ City _____
State/Zip Code _____	State/Zip Code _____
Telephone _____ Fax _____	Telephone _____ Fax _____
Email _____	Email _____
<input type="checkbox"/> New extension	<input type="checkbox"/> New extension
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of extension	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of extension
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if additional information attached for this location ( <i>see instructions</i> )	<input type="checkbox"/> Check if additional information attached for this location ( <i>see instructions</i> )

**Part 5. Proof of Non-profit, Religious, Charitable, Social Service or Similar Organization**

Indicate the documentary evidence provided with this application (*see instructions and check all applicable boxes*):

- ☐ Mission statement ☐ Constitution ☐ Charter ☐ Bylaws ☐ Articles of Incorporation ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 6. Federal Tax-exempt Status (check applicable boxes)**

- ☐ Organization has federal tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) or section \_\_\_\_\_ of the Internal Revenue Code. (Attach an IRS tax determination letter and the first page of the last annual Federal tax return. Otherwise provide an explanation as to why a Federal tax return is not required).
- ☐ Federal tax-exempt status applied for and a determination is pending (attach supporting documentation).

## Part 7. Knowledge of Immigration Law and Procedures

- a. Submit organizational chart identifying names and titles of legal staff and supervisors at all locations.
- b. Attorney(s) licensed in the United States and in good standing on staff: ☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, attach resume(s).)
- c. Accredited representative(s) on staff: ☐ Yes ☐ No, organization is applying for accreditation for the following:
- Number of accreditation applications (Form EOIR-31A) submitted with this recognition application: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Name(s) of applicant(s) for accreditation: \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Arrangements to consult with and/or receive technical support from qualified immigration practitioners:
- Private counsel: ☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, attach agreements with name(s) of private counsel and bar admission(s).)
  - Another recognized organization: ☐ No ☐ Yes (If yes, attach agreements with other recognized organization(s).)
- e. Attach a description of the immigration legal services offered by your organization and the qualifications of immigration legal staff to provide such services. Attach supporting documentation such as resumes, formal training certificates, letters of recommendation, or other similar information.

## Part 8. List of Print and Electronic Legal Resources

Print resources: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Electronic resources: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Extended locations have access to ☐ same sources ☐ other resources: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 9. Immigration Legal Services Budget and Funding

A substantial amount of the Immigration legal services budget derives/will derive from sources other than client fees:

☐ Yes ☐ No If "no," explain the reasons for seeking a waiver of the substantial amount requirement (attach additional sheets of paper, if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Attach copies of the organization's budget for this year and last year, if available, itemizing sources and amount of funding. If current and/or past budget are not available, provide a projected budget for upcoming year.

## Part 10. Fees and Fee Waivers for Low-income and Indigent Clients

- a. Fees charged for immigration legal services No ☐ Yes ☐ If yes, attach detailed fee schedules for all locations.
- b. Membership dues charged No ☐ Yes ☐ If yes, attach list of dues charged at all locations.

- c. Waiver of immigration legal fees policy    No ☐ Yes ☐ If yes, attach fee waiver policy for all locations.
- d. Reduction of immigration legal fees policy    No ☐ Yes ☐ If yes, attach fee reduction policy for all locations.

### Part 11. Additional Requirements for Renewal of Recognition.

- a. Complete Parts 5 through 8 of this form and provide the supporting documentation requested in those parts only if there have been changes to this information since the last approval or renewal of recognition.
- b. Annual reports. Submit an annual report for each year since the last date of recognition or renewal (*see instructions for details to be provided in each annual report*).

Indicate which years are attached: \_\_\_\_\_ (Year) \_\_\_\_\_ (Year) \_\_\_\_\_ (Year)

### Part 12. Declaration of Authorized Officer

Under penalty of perjury, I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) declare that I am the authorized officer of \_\_\_\_\_ (organization), that I have examined this form, including accompanying attachments, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete. I also attest that the organization (and the offices or locations to which recognition is to be extended) will provide immigration legal services primarily to low-income and indigent clients, that the organization will supervise its accredited representatives, and that the organization will conduct regular inspections of extended offices or locations. I consent to publication of the organization's name and findings of misconduct by EOIR, should the organization become subject to any public discipline by EOIR.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of authorized officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Part 13. Proof of Service on USCIS District Director(s)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ (organization),  
☐ mailed or ☐ delivered a copy of this Form EOIR-31 and its attachments to the District Director(s) for USCIS of DHS  
on \_\_\_\_\_ (Day/Month/Year) at the following location(s):

- |     |                   |       |       |          |
|-----|-------------------|-------|-------|----------|
| (1) | _____             | _____ | _____ | _____    |
|     | Number and Street | City  | State | Zip Code |
| (2) | _____             | _____ | _____ | _____    |
|     | Number and Street | City  | State | Zip Code |
| (3) | _____             | _____ | _____ | _____    |
|     | Number and Street | City  | State | Zip Code |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature