

VISITOR VISA EXTENSIONS – NUTS AND BOLTS

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Mothers

Seniors &
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workers

Students &
children
receiving
medical care

Small
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DREAM Charter
School

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Children's Hospitals

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VOLS Immigration Project

Trainings for schools, colleges & community organizations

Immigration advice for young people & their families

Representation on humanitarian & family-based options

"Know Your Rights" workshops

Nonimmigrant Visa Categories

- ☐ **A** Diplomats
- ☐ **B** Visitors (business/pleasure)
- ☐ **C** Transit
- ☐ **D** Crewman
- ☐ **E** Treaty trader/investors
- ☐ **F** Academic students
- ☐ **G** International Organization
- ☐ **H** Temporary workers
- ☐ **I** Journalists/Media
- ☐ **J** Exchange visitors
- ☐ **K** Fiances/fiancées of US citizens
- ☐ **L** Intracompany
- ☐ **N** Parents or children of special immigrants
- ☐ **O** Persons of extraordinary ability
- ☐ **P** Athletes or entertainers
- ☐ **Q** International cultural exchange visitors
- ☐ **R** Religious workers
- ☐ **S** Federal witnesses (sneaky snitches)
- ☐ **T** Trafficking of persons victims
- ☐ **TN** NAFTA professionals (Mexico and Canada)
- ☐ **U** Certain crime victims
- ☐ **V** Certain spouses/children waiting for green cards

Applying for Visitor Visa at US Consulate

- ❑ Submit DS-160 electronically resulting in visa appointment at post.
- ❑ Foreign nationals traveling of countries eligible for the Visa Waiver Program have to register under Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA).
- ❑ If ESTA rejects, the prospective visitor must apply for visa at post.

Selected Red Flags During Visa Processing

- ❑ DS-160 asks detailed questions about previous stays, violations or criminal arrests and convictions, relatives in the US.
- ❑ Overstaying one's visa for more than a day results in the automatic voidance of the multiple entry visa on the passport under INA 222(g).
- ❑ Overstaying the visa for more than 6 months leads to a 3 year bar against re-entry. INA 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(I).
- ❑ Overstaying the visa for more than one year leads to a 10 year bar against re-entry. INA 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II).
- ❑ There's also a permanent bar for one who was unlawfully present for >1 year or was ordered removed, and enters or attempts to enter the US without being admitted. INA 212(a)(9)(C)(i).

3 and 10 Year Bars

❑ ALIENS UNLAWFULLY PRESENT. INA 212(a)(9)(B)(i).

(i) In general.-Any alien (other than an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence) who-

(I) was unlawfully present in the United States for a period of more than 180 days but less than 1 year, voluntarily departed the United States (whether or not pursuant to section [244\(e\)](#)) prior to the commencement of proceedings under section [235\(b\)\(1\)](#) or section [240](#), and again seeks admission within 3 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal, or

(II) has been unlawfully present in the United States for one year or more, and who again seeks admission within 10 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal from the United States, is inadmissible.

(ii) Construction of unlawful presence.-For purposes of this paragraph, an alien is deemed to be unlawfully present in the United States if the alien is present in the United States after the expiration of the period of stay authorized by the Attorney General or is present in the United States without being admitted or paroled.

Permanent Bar

❑ INA 212(a)(9)(C)(i)

Any alien who has been unlawfully present in the United States for an aggregate period of more than 1 year, or has been ordered removed and who enters or attempts to reenter the United States without being admitted is inadmissible.

INA Section 222(g)

(1) In the case of an alien who has been admitted on the basis of a nonimmigrant visa and remained in the United States beyond the period of stay authorized by the Attorney General, such visa shall be void beginning after the conclusion of such period of stay.

(2) An alien described in paragraph (1) shall be ineligible to be readmitted to the United States as a nonimmigrant, except-

(A) on the basis of a visa (other than the visa described in paragraph (1) issued in a consular office located in the country of the alien's nationality (or, if there is no office in such country, in such other consular office as the Secretary of State shall specify); or

(B) where extraordinary circumstances are found by the Secretary of State to exist.

Nonimmigrant Visas

- ❑ Nonimmigrant visas are issued to persons who wish to enter the US for a specific purpose and for temporary periods of time.
- ❑ The most common nonimmigrant visas are the B-2 tourist visa or the B-1 business visa.
- ❑ Other commonly utilized visas are the student F visa, the J visa for exchange visitors and foreign medical graduates and the H-1B visa for persons who are employed by companies in the US for professional positions.

Nonimmigrant Visas

- ❑ INA 214(b) allows a consular officer to determine that every applicant for a nonimmigrant visa is presumed to be an immigrant unless he or she can establish otherwise.
- ❑ Most nonimmigrants must show that they have no intention of abandoning their foreign residence during their stay in the US.

Nonimmigrant Visas

- Thus, it is important to show ties to the home country such as employment, history of past travel, and realistic/credible plans of travel.
- Some visas such as the H-1B/L allow for “dual intent” and do not require a showing of ties to the home country. O visa too by regulation, although there is inherent dual intent in all nonimmigrant visas. Matter of Hosseinpour, 15 I&N Dec. 191 (BIA 1975).

Inconsistent Conduct Within 90 Days of Admission

- ❑ Will result in a presumption of fraud or misrepresentation, where foreign national:
 - Engages in unauthorized employment
 - Enrolling in course of academic study where it is not authorized under visa classification
 - A nonimmigrant in B marrying a US citizen or LPR and taking up residence in the US

Inconsistent Conduct within 90 Days of Admission

- Undertaking any other activity for which a change of status or an adjustment of status would be required, without the benefit of such a change or adjustment
- See **9 FAM 302.9-4(B)(3)(g)**

Business Visas

- ❑ Business visitors enter on a B-1 visa holders to conduct business, marketing, negotiating purchases and contracts. They must not be engaged in productive employment in the US either for a US employer or on an independent basis. Any work done in the US must be performed on behalf of a foreign employer and paid for by the foreign employer. The work should also be related to international commerce or trade.

Appropriate Activities on a B-1 Visa

- ❑ Employees of a US company's foreign office coming to the US to consult with the US company.
- ❑ An employee of a foreign company coming to the US to handle sales transactions and purchases and to negotiate and service contracts.
- ❑ Coming to the US to conduct business or market research.
- ❑ Coming to the US to interview for a professional position in order to gain experience to help in finding a position in one's home country.
- ❑ Attending business conferences, seminars, or conventions.
- ❑ An investor coming to set up an investment in the US or to open a US office.

B-1 in lieu of an H-1B Visa

- ☐ The applicant needs to qualify for an H-1B visa.
- ☐ Must continue to be paid by the foreign company.
- ☐ Must continue to have a nonimmigrant intent.

Birth Tourism Rule – 22 CFR 41.31(b)(2)

- ❑ (2)(i) The term pleasure, as used in INA 101(a)(15)(B) for the purpose of visa issuance, refers to legitimate activities of a recreational character, including tourism, amusement, visits with friends or relatives, rest, medical treatment, and activities of a fraternal, social, or service nature, and does not include obtaining a visa for the primary purpose of obtaining U.S. citizenship for a child by giving birth in the United States.

- ❑ (ii) Any visa applicant who seeks medical treatment in the United States under this provision shall be denied a visa under INA section 214(b) if unable to establish, to the satisfaction of a consular officer, a legitimate reason why he or she wishes to travel to the United States for medical treatment, that a medical practitioner or facility in the United States has agreed to provide treatment, and that the applicant has reasonably estimated the duration of the visit and all associated costs. The applicant also shall be denied a visa under INA section 214(b) if unable to establish to the satisfaction of the consular officer that he or she has the means derived from lawful sources and intent to pay for the medical treatment and all incidental expenses, including transportation and living expenses, either independently or with the pre-arranged assistance of others.

Birth Tourism Rule – 22 CFR 41.31(b)(2)

- ❑ (iii) Any B nonimmigrant visa applicant who a consular officer has reason to believe will give birth during her stay in the United States is presumed to be traveling for the primary purpose of obtaining U.S. citizenship for the child.

B-2 Status in the US

- ❑ Admission in B-2 status is granted by Customs and Border protection at a US port of entry
- ❑ The status is governed by the I-94 document and not by the visa stamp. Admission to the US is usually limited to six months.
- ❑ Visa waiver entrants are admitted for 90 days.

Extending Visitor Status

- ❑ A request to extend status must be made while the applicant is still maintaining B-2 status on Form I-539. 8 CFR 214.1(c)(4)(iv).
- ❑ A visa waiver entrant cannot extend status, but may ask for a 30 day extension under Satisfactory Departure. Another 30 day SD can also be granted.

Mechanics for Filing I-539

- ❑ I-539 may be filed electronically or may be a paper based application.
- ❑ Must be accompanied by evidence that the reason for the extension is consistent with the visitor purpose and the applicant continues to maintain a residence in the home country as well as ties with that country.

Evidence supporting Form I-539

- ☐ Include statement clearly indicating purpose of extension, and emphasizing ties with the home country and an intention to depart timely.
- ☐ Include I-94 printout.
- ☐ Other evidence of financial sufficiency/support. May include Form I-134, Affidavit of Support.
- ☐ Also maintain passport validity.

Excusing Untimely Extension Request – 8 CFR 214.1(c)(4)

(4) *Timely filing and maintenance of status.* An extension of stay may not be approved for an applicant who failed to maintain the previously accorded status or where such status expired before the application or petition was filed, except that failure to file before the period of previously authorized status expired may be excused in the discretion of the Service and without separate application, with any extension granted from the date the previously authorized stay expired, where it is demonstrated at the time of filing that:

- ❑ **(i)** The delay was due to extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner, and the Service finds the delay commensurate with the circumstances;
- ❑ **(ii)** The alien has not otherwise violated his or her nonimmigrant status;
- ❑ **(iii)** The alien remains a bona fide nonimmigrant;
- ❑ **(iv)** The alien is not the subject of deportation proceedings under section 242 of the Act (prior to April 1, 1997) or removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act.

Public Charge Concerns

- ❑ New public charge rule applies to applicants seeking extension of stay or change of status.
- ❑ USCIS will consider receipt of public benefits since obtaining the status for more than 12 months in total in any 36-month period (such that, for instance, the receipt of two benefits in one month counts as two months).

Prohibited Benefits

- ❑ Supplemental Security Income;
- ❑ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families;
- ❑ Any federal, state, local, or tribal cash benefit programs for income maintenance (often called general assistance in the state context, but which may exist under other names);
- ❑ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly called food stamps);
- ❑ Section 8 Housing Assistance under the Housing Choice Voucher Program;
- ❑ Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (including Moderate Rehabilitation);
- ❑ Public Housing (under the Housing Act of 1937, 42 U.S.C. 1437 et seq.); and
- ❑ Federally funded Medicaid (unless there is emergency medical condition or funded by IDEA).

Medicaid for Emergency Medical Condition – 42 CFR 440.255

The alien has, after sudden onset, a medical condition (including [emergency labor](#) and delivery) manifesting itself by acute symptoms of sufficient severity (including severe pain) such that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected to result in:

- (i) Placing the [patient](#)'s health in serious jeopardy;
- (ii) Serious impairment to bodily functions; or
- (iii) Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part....

USCIS will not consider Medicaid benefits received “By pregnant women and by women within the 60-day period beginning on the last day of the pregnancy.”

Post-filing I-539

- ❑ USCIS may approve or deny. Usually an RFE or NOID is issued prior to denial.
- ❑ If I-539 is not approved before validity period, “bridge” I-539 must be filed.
- ❑ If I-539 is denied, no appeal but motion to reopen or reconsider can be filed.

Interviewing New Immigration Clients

We do not expect you to be experts in immigration law!

Send completed VOLS intake form and scanned documents & we'll talk through possible options

Immigration policies change often – we are happy to provide updates

DECLARATION

Jane Roe on oath duly declares:

1. I was born on August 15, 1947. I am a citizen of India. My current visit to the United States is as a tourist. I am presently staying with my daughter, Janet Doe who is married to John Doe. They reside at 500 Pleasantville Drive, Houston, TX. No immigrant visa petition has been filed on my behalf.
2. I entered the United States on February 1, 2018. I have been authorized to remain in B-2 status until August 1, 2018. The main purpose of my visit was to spend quality time with my daughter and my son-in-law.
3. My son-in-law has unfortunately and suddenly become very seriously ill and is now hospitalized in the intensive care unit at Mount Rushmore hospital in Houston. Documentation verifying his condition from the hospital where he has been admitted is enclosed with my application.
4. As can be imagined, this is all extremely stressful for my daughter and our entire family. I want to remain present to emotionally support my daughter and my son-in-law during this very trying time. I have therefore decided to remain in the US to lend support to Janet and John and I am filing this Form I-539 application in order to be able to do that.
5. I will continue to stay at the home of my daughter and son in law and they will provide me with room and board and take care of all incidental expenses. I also have adequate funds in India which could be recalled for my use.
6. In India, I reside at 75 Oak Road, Mumbai, India.
7. I have no intention of abandoning my residence in India. I have a valid return ticket and adequate funds to see me through my extended period of stay. I also have a residence in India that I do not intend to abandon.
8. My sole purpose of requesting this extension is to remain with my daughter and son in law for some more time and to help them through my son-in-law's serious illness. I therefore request an extension of stay for an additional period of 6 months, i.e. until January 31, 2019.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Jane Roe

Executed on _____

AFFIDAVIT

I, **Campbell Doe**, execute this affidavit in support of my Form I-539, application to extend non-immigrant B-2 status.

1. I was born on August 22, 1955 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and am a citizen of Malaysia. I am presently a permanent resident of Australia and reside there. I am a Foreign Exchange Analyst and work as a consultant with ABC Corp, in Sydney, Australia. My current visit to the United States is as a tourist. I am presently staying with my sister, Janice Smith, and her husband, John Smith, at 750 Birch Road, Stamford, CT. Both Janice and John are lawful permanent residents of the US. At this time no immigrant visa petition has been filed on my behalf.

2. I entered the United States on May 22, 2013. My I-94 is valid until November 19, 2013. The main purpose of my visit was to provide emotional support to my sister as her husband, John, was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma on May 10, 2013. After being informed about her husband's diagnosis, Janice was understandably very distraught and devastated by the news. Her stress was more accentuated as she was also helping her daughter, Alice Miles, a US citizen, who just had a baby a month before John's cancer was diagnosed.

3. John is being treated at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. He is scheduled to undergo a bone marrow transplant soon. Due to the complexity of recovery from this treatment, his immune system will be severely compromised following this procedure. Once John is discharged from the hospital he will require full-time 24-hour care. It will be emotionally and physically very hard on Janice to do this alone. John's doctors have recommended that it would be best if I stayed with Janice and John during this crucial recovery period. Enclosed is a copy of the letter from Dr. Mary Jane of Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, who is John's treating physician.

4. John's doctors anticipate that after a successful bone marrow transplant he will need about 5-6 months more for his recovery. I would like to be with my sister during this critical period.

5. During my extended stay in the US, I will continue to stay with my sister who will provide me with room and board and take care of all my incidental expenses. I have a valid return airline ticket to Sydney, Australia on Qantas Airlines, which I will extend as soon as my request for extension is approved.

6. In Australia I reside at 83 Apple Street, Sydney, Australia, a property that I own. My wife and son continue to live at this residence in Australia, and they are not with me in the US. I have no intention of abandoning my residence in Australia. I continue to pay my taxes in Australia. I also have an active bank account and a “family superfund” investment account with Rich Bank in Australia. I have no intention of closing this account. I continue to pay charges to Telstra for my phone services in Australia.

7. As I have already stated, I have a valid return ticket and adequate funds to see me through my extended period of stay. I also have a residence in Australia that I do not intend to abandon. In addition, I also have a job in Australia, which I will continue even though I extend my stay in the US. My main purpose of requesting this extension is to remain with my sister for some more time and to help her through her emotional trauma that she may experience while coping with the caregiving of her husband.

8. I , therefore, request an extension of stay in non-immigrant B-2 status for an additional period of 6 months, i.e. until May 19, 2014. As I have done on multiple occasions in the past, I plan to return to Australia at the end of my visit.

Campbell Doe

Signed before me on this

_____ day of _____, 2013

NOTARY

DECLARATION

Suneeta Doe on oath duly deposes and states:

1. I was born on June 17, 1950. I am a citizen of India. My current visit to the United States is as a visitor. I am presently staying with my daughter, Jane Doe, who is married to John Doe. Both of them are U.S. lawful permanent residents (LPRs). They reside at 225 Pleasantville Boulevard, New Brunswick, NJ. No immigrant visa petition has been filed on my behalf.
2. I entered the United States on December 20, 2019, and have been admitted in B-2 status through June 19, 2020. The main purpose of my visit was to spend quality time with Jane and John. I have previously entered the U.S. as a visitor on several occasions and have always left well within the period of my authorized stay in the United States. On this trip, I was also fortunate to welcome the birth of my grandchild, Aysswarya Doe, who was born on January 30, 2020, and to share the joy of the new arrival in the family with her proud and happy parents.
3. I had purchased a return flight to India that was scheduled to depart the United States on May 27, 2020, but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was not foreseen at the time of my entry in December 2019, India has restricted all international flights. My original flight was canceled, and I am now unable to return to India before my visa status expires. I was able to rebook a new return flight to India, departing November 11, 2020. Given that I am 70 years old, I do not wish to take any risks for contracting the Corona virus on a 16 hour international flight while the rate of infection is still high in the United States, and is rising rapidly in India. Therefore, I feel safer departing the United States on November 11, 2020, which is well within the 6 months of my requested extended stay.
4. I wish, therefore, to remain in the United States until I believe it is safe for me to return to India, and I am filing this Form I-539 application in order to be able to do that.
5. I will continue to stay at the home of Jane and John and they will provide me with room and board and take care of all travel and incidental expenses. John is a well-placed Equity Analyst at a leading New York hedge fund, High Frequency Trading LLC, and has more than the necessary income and funds to support me. Please note that I have not taken any public benefits during this or any of my prior stays in the United States, and I do not intend to take any such benefits even in the future.
6. In India, I permanently reside at 5001 Gandhi Boulevard, New Delhi.
7. I have no intention of abandoning my residence in India. I have a valid return ticket and adequate funds to see me through my extended period of stay. I also have a residence in India that I do not intend to abandon. My husband in India is eagerly waiting to have me back, and I also have two adult children and four grandchildren in India. Additionally, I am in the process of constructing a new

- home in India on my own land, and am eagerly looking forward to returning to oversee the finishing touches and living in that home when it is all done.
8. My sole purpose of requesting this extension is to remain in the United States until I am able to return to India and the Covid-19 crisis subsides. I therefore request an extension of stay for an additional period of 6 months, i.e. until December 18, 2020.
 9. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Suneeta Doe

Executed on the ____ day of June 2020

Troubleshooting Pro Bono Relationships with Low-Income Clients

Thank you for taking on a pro bono matter on behalf of a low-income New Yorker! Most volunteers report that their pro bono work is among the most meaningful of their career. We certainly hope that is true for you as well. Any new client relationship presents challenges for both the attorney and the client. Pro bono cases are no different. We hope that by identifying some common pitfalls you can avoid some of these situations and enhance the experience for both you and the client.

Our clients are by definition low-income. What does low-income mean? In 2016, the federal poverty line is less than \$12,000 for an individual. Most of our clients are at or below 200% of the poverty line. There are approximately 1.7 million New Yorkers at or below the federal poverty line, and three million New Yorkers at or below 200% of the poverty line. That's one-third of the population of New York City.

Surviving on ten or twenty thousand dollars a year in New York City is extremely difficult, and sometimes creates challenges when accessing and utilizing legal services. Those challenges can sometimes lead to misunderstandings between counsel and client. Some common ones are described below, along with tips on how to deal with them.

Whatever challenges you face, remember this golden rule: reach out to the referring public interest organization for help anytime you are having issues with a client. It is a vital part of our role in any pro bono case; never hesitate or worry that you are troubling us.

1. Responsiveness

Low-income clients frequently have phones that require prior purchase of minutes. Without sufficient funds, clients may borrow phones or computers to contact you. That may mean that it takes some time to get back to you, or that communication comes from different numbers or sources, or that a client doesn't always get your messages. Conversely, clients may call you hoping for immediate help when an issue is an emergency.

Tips:

- Be persistent. Call the client again if they haven't called you back.
- Don't take it personally, and don't assume it means the client is not taking the case seriously.
- Give a client multiple ways to reach you—by phone, email, and letter.
- Similarly, try to obtain multiple ways to reach the client when you first meet and find out which methods the client prefers.
- Ask the client to try to let you know if your usual way of contacting them will be temporarily unavailable so that you can reach them through an alternative medium if necessary.
- Be flexible, and respond when the client asks for help.
- Get in touch with us and your pro bono counsel if you are having problems. Don't let the problem fester—the faster we know about the problem, the faster we can help.

2. Appointments

Sometimes clients are late or miss appointments. That might be because another crisis has erupted in their lives. Or it could be because they couldn't figure out how to get to your office, or didn't have money for the subway. \$5.50 for a round-trip is a significant burden for many of our clients. Many clients have low-wage jobs that do not permit them to take time off for appointments, or do not pay them for time that they miss at work. Others fear asking for time off, in part because they may not feel comfortable explaining the reason.

Tips:

- Offer to pay for a Metrocard or car service if the train is not an option.
- Take special care to explain how to get into your building, and if they will need an ID. If they don't have an ID, figure out a plan with your building security to get them in.
- Consider meeting the client in the building lobby. It can be intimidating to try to get into office buildings; having someone come downstairs to welcome the client in—and help deal with security—can make a huge difference.
- If the client is transgender, make sure security and others will address the client appropriately.
- Meet your client early for court appearances.
- Have food and refreshments in the conference room you meet in, just as you might for any client.
- Consider meeting your client somewhere more convenient for them than your office.
- Make the most out of every in-person appointment. For example, if a document is ready to be notarized, bring the document to a legal secretary or other notary in your office immediately.
- Ask about a client's work schedule, and offer to accommodate that schedule as best you can.
- Explain in advance that there may be times when a client will have no choice but to miss work—for example, for a deposition or court date. It is better to set expectations up front so that a client is not surprised later.

3. Disabilities

Many of our clients are people with physical, developmental, or emotional disabilities. Sometimes those disabilities are undiagnosed. Some of these clients may present in a chaotic manner, or have trouble processing information.

Tips:

- Consider whether to make accommodations to address a disability.
- If you know about a disability, ask the client about the accommodations that they prefer. It is better to be direct than to make assumptions.
- Talk through travel that the client may need for the case, and give any support you can.
- If your client has difficulty processing information, take particular care to communicate clearly, give the client time to ask follow up questions, and repeat information as needed.
- If using a sign language interpreter, be sure to make eye contact with and direct your comments to the client, not the interpreter.
- Remember: clients with emotional and developmental disabilities are intelligent and deserve respect; make sure to treat them that way, even as you make any necessary accommodations.

4. Communication

Many clients are not familiar with the legal system, or have not had much schooling, or English is not their first language. Others are elderly or disabled. That's part of why your help is so important: you can help them navigate a byzantine and often unfriendly system.

Tips:

- Make sure you explain your role and the legal proceedings carefully and clearly.
- Be prepared to explain the concepts in a simple and clear fashion, perhaps several times. Try to assess your client's ability to understand the proceedings.
- Meet face-to-face early in the engagement to build trust and make sure that the client understands the engagement letter.
- When setting up appointment times, ask the client about his or her work or school schedule and try to accommodate it if possible. A client may not initially feel comfortable telling you that it is difficult to get a day off work, or miss class.
- If your client's primary language is a language other than English, an interpreter and translator are required. Be sure you have one for every communication. Confirm at the outset with the client that they understand the dialect used by an interpreter. A professional interpreter/translator is strongly recommended, especially for communication integral to the representation. Do not expect the client to bring a family member or friend to interpret—and never use children as interpreters. Direct conversation toward and make eye contact with your client, not the translator.
- When working with youth, remember that this may be the first time they are encountering the legal system. Try to get an early read on the young client's relationship with parents or caregivers and decide together how involved those individuals will be in the representation.

5. Other crises

The matter you have taken on for the client may be just one of several critical things going on in his or her life: their housing or public benefits may be in jeopardy, they may be dealing with creditors, or even be facing threats and violence.

Tips:

- Be patient and understand that clients may suddenly have other priorities that take precedence over their case.
- But don't feel that you need to solve every problem a client has. It is important and helpful to set consistent boundaries, and to reinforce them.
- If a client has a problem that is beyond the scope of your engagement, please immediately contact us and your pro bono counsel.

6. Empathy and respect

Keep in mind that it can be intimidating or embarrassing for clients to try to get help. They may feel intimidated by you as an attorney, or nervous about coming to a big office building. They might be embarrassed to note that they don't have the money to travel to meet you, or feel reticent to tell you about abuse or other challenging problems that they may face. They may also feel suspicion or mistrust based on prior bad experiences.

Tips:

- Convey respect, just as you would with any client.
- Answer emails, phone messages, and other outreach in the same timely manner as you normally would.
- Offer meeting space and refreshments as you normally would.
- Make clear that you work for the client.
- Listen carefully to the client and encourage questions.
- Think through small costs that might feel very large to someone without money: paying a notary, paying a hospital for copies of medical records, etc. Ask your firm if it will absorb these minor costs. It can make a huge difference. You may want to consult with your pro bono counsel about your firm's policies on these costs.
- Respect, empathy, responsiveness, and kindness will strengthen the bond with your client.

Who we are

PIPBA is an association of pro bono professionals overseeing pro bono programs at nonprofit and public interest law organizations in the New York City metropolitan area. We are committed to supporting a range of pro bono legal services that promote civil rights, human rights and access to justice, strengthen the nonprofit sector, and otherwise improve life for low-income and disadvantaged communities and populations. Our goal is to foster a supportive community where resources are shared, best practices are established, and standards are set to ensure the highest quality pro bono legal services.