



Denver Immigrant Legal Defense Fund

1. What is the Denver Immigrant Legal Services Fund?

The fund awards grants to nonprofit organizations to provide direct legal representation for qualified individuals threatened with or in removal proceedings or seeking affirmative relief (including DACA). The fund will also award grants to build capacity to expand the network of pro bono and “low-bono” attorneys serving Denver’s immigration clients, including law school clinics.

2. Why do we need the Immigrant Legal Services Fund?

Our democracy and the rule of law guarantee due process for everyone in this country. At its core, providing legal services to immigrants is not about who deserves to stay or be deported, it is about ensuring immigrants have access to legal representation to safeguard due process.

- Immigrants are over 10 times more likely to be able to stay in the country when they have representation
- Legal defense should not be for only those who can afford it
- Deportation proceedings are the only legal proceedings in the United States where people are detained without access to legal representation

3. What’s at stake in Denver?

Since its founding, immigrants and refugees have helped to make Denver a thriving economic and social standard bearer. Today, about 15% of Denver residents are foreign born which is approximately over 100,000 residents. (New American Economy)

The federal government’s latest immigration orders have created disruption in our community. Mass deportations cost our community valuable resources – we lose vital tax revenue, local industries are disrupted, schools become crisis centers and children who are separated from their parents end up in foster care.

In 2014, Immigrants paid \$652.5 million in taxes in Denver and possessed \$2.1 billion in purchasing power. (New American Economy)

4. Who qualifies to receive legal defense services?

Qualified individuals include those seeking direct legal services who are:

- Subject to actual or potential immigration removal proceedings and/or who are subject to a final order of removal; or
- Seeking affirmative relief including DACA or DREAM Act-related relief, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), asylum, U visas and T visas, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and naturalization.

Individuals eligible to receive services **must** present with viable claims for affirmative relief or defenses from removal, be Denver residents, and have a household income of 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

5. Who will select the nonprofits that will receive grants to perform this work?

The Denver Foundation and an advisory committee will award grants to nonprofit organizations. The nonprofit grant recipients will provide direct services to individuals.

6. Who is funding the initiative?

Anyone can now donate to the fund, which will consist of both public and private dollars. The fund has received \$385,000 in contributions from the City, the City of Denver Community Support Fund, the Vera Institute of Justice SAFE Cities Network, The Denver Foundation, and the Rose Community Foundation.

7. What is the timeline for the fund?

The fund has been established and contributions are being accepted now. Nonprofits will be able to apply for grants later this year. Individuals will apply to those nonprofit grant recipients for direct legal services.

8. Why should the city use taxpayer money for this purpose?

In Denver, we stand for the ideals of inclusion, acceptance and opportunity. Our community is safest when all our neighbors trust their officials and institutions and know they will be treated justly and with dignity.

Denver's immigrants contribute greatly to the economic and cultural makeup of Denver's community. Denver loses economic and cultural contributions when an immigrant is deported. Denver also bears the costs of social services that may be required to support the families of the deported individual. The fairest and most efficient way to bring order to these complex legal proceedings is to ensure legal representation for those whose future may well depend on it.

9. Where can I find more information?

Please visit the Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs website at

www.denvergov.org/immigrantrefugeeaffairs and

The Denver Foundation website at <http://www.denverfoundation.org/Nonprofits/Grants-What-We-Fund/Other-Grant-Programs/Immigrant-Legal-Services-Fund> for additional information. Dace West, Vice President of Community Impact at The Denver Foundation, is also available to answer questions and may be reached at dwest@denverfoundation.org. Please direct all media inquiries to Laura Bond, Senior Communication Officer at The Denver Foundation, lbond@denverfoundation.org.

10. How can I contribute?

Donations of any amount are welcome. Please either visit The Denver Foundation web portal

(<http://www.denverfoundation.org/Nonprofits/Grants-What-We-Fund/Other-Grant-Programs/Immigrant-Legal-Services-Fund>) or send a check made out to Denver Immigrant Legal Services

Fund and mail to the following address:



THE DENVER FOUNDATION

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