

Supporting Clients in Navigating Immigration Processes: An Introduction to Immigration Law and Systems for MA Service Providers

Virtual Training

Fall 2026 (October 6-November 23, 2026)

- All sessions will be held via Zoom. The link will be distributed the week prior to the start of the course.
- Please note that the course does not follow a regular schedule. Rather the 15 sessions (each 1 or 2 hours long) are scheduled to take place twice a week at various times. This schedule is meant to make the course more accessible by avoiding any standing conflicts.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to equip non-legal service providers in Massachusetts with the knowledge needed to support immigrants as they navigate our immigration systems. Participants will gain a solid understanding of our immigration systems and processes, and be introduced to various types of immigration statuses and forms of relief. This training is appropriate for any non-legal professional interacting with immigrants and seeking to offer more support, including social workers and case managers, those working in healthcare, schools, shelters, and community based organizations, and those providing accompaniment as volunteers.

Topics covered will include:

- an introduction to immigration law and common pathways to status ;
- identifying common immigration documents;
- best practices for supporting immigrants as they navigate family based and humanitarian pathways to status, the citizenship process, and immigration court;
- access to public benefits.

Course participants will receive access to curated resources, as well as a copy of the slides and recording to the training sessions (available for 3 months following conclusion of the course).

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Certificates of completion will be provided at the conclusion of the course. In order to receive a certificate of completion, course participants must:

- Have attended a minimum of 65% of the course time
- Have participated actively in course activities (including exercises and small group discussions)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, October 6 1:00-2:00pm	Unit 1: Introduction: role of a service provider and foundations of immigration law (1 hr)
Thursday, October 8 10:00am-12:00pm	Unit 2: Introduction to immigration law (2 hrs)
Tuesday, October 13 1:00-2:00pm	Unit 3: Overview of immigration agencies (1 hr)
Friday, October 16 10:00-11:00am	Unit 4: Identifying and organizing important immigration documents (1 hr)
Monday, October 19 1:00-2:00pm	Unit 5: What an advocate can do: family-based immigration (1 hr)
Thursday, October 22 10:00-11:00am	Unit 6: What an advocate can do: protections for victims (1 hr)
Tuesday, October 27 1:00-2:00pm	Unit 7: What an advocate can do: Asylum (1 hr)
Friday, October 30 10:00-11:00am	Unit 8: What an advocate can do: Naturalization (1 hr)
Monday, November 2 10:00-11:00am	Unit 9: What an advocate can do: Family preparedness (1 hr)
Thursday, November 5 2:00-3:00pm	Unit 10: Navigating a case with USCIS (1 hr)
Tuesday, November 10 1:00-3:00pm	Unit 11: Navigating a case in immigration court (2 hrs)
Thursday, November 12 10:00-11:00am	Unit 12: Navigating a case with ICE (1 hr)
Monday, November 16 10:00-11:00am	Unit 13: Understanding the legal and non-legal services landscape (1 hr)
Wednesday, November 18 1:00-3:00pm	Unit 14: Access to public benefits (2 hrs)
Monday, November 23 1:00-2:00pm	Unit 15: Best practices and common pitfalls (1 hr)