Victims are not required to be in legal immigration status, but they must:

- Be a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons,
- Be physically present in the United States on account of the trafficking,
- Comply with any reasonable requests for assistance in the investigation or prosecution (or be under the age of 18), and
- Suffer extreme hardship involving unusual and severe harm if removed from the United States.

To apply for a T nonimmigrant status, applicants must file Form I-914, Application for T Nonimmigrant Status. Qualifying family members may also be eligible to apply for benefits.

Many immigrants are fearful of admitting that they have been a victim of a crime in part because they believe they will be removed (deported) from the United States if they report the crime. Officials such as police officers, healthcare providers, judges, and prosecutors are often the first to see the signs of violence and are therefore in a unique position to provide information and assistance to those who have been victims. This brochure is designed to assist front-line workers in this endeavor.

U.S. law provides several protections for legal and undocumented immigrants who have been victims of a crime. Often victims are unaware of such protections, thus frontline workers serve as a critical link for immigrant victims. There are specific protections for victims of domestic violence, victims of certain crimes, and victims of human trafficking.

All agencies within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), including USCIS, are legally prohibited from disclosing that a victim has applied for VAWA, T, or U immigration benefits.

Visit the “Humanitarian” section of the USCIS website
www.uscis.gov

Law Enforcement Officials and Representatives of Record contact USCIS at 1 802 527 4888
All others should call 1 800 375 5283
Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Self-Petitioners

Some immigrants may be afraid to report acts of domestic violence to the police or to seek other forms of assistance. Such fear causes many immigrants to remain in abusive relationships.

Victims of domestic violence who are the child, parent, or current/former spouse of a United States citizen or a permanent resident (green card holder) and are abused by the citizen or permanent resident may be eligible to apply for a green card themselves without needing the abuser to file for immigration benefits on their behalf. This provision of the law was created under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Victims are not required to be in legal immigration status, but they must:
• Have or had a qualifying relationship with the abuser spouse, or, are the parent or child of the abuser,
• Reside or resided with the abuser,
• Have good moral character, and
• Have been victims of battery or extreme cruelty.

To apply for U nonimmigrant status, the victim must file Form I-918, Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status. Law enforcement officials must certify Form I-918, Supplement B. Qualifying family members may also be eligible to apply for benefits.

Visit the “Humanitarian” section of the USCIS website www.uscis.gov

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