



Family Law Attorneys Advocating for Immigrant Survivors: A Community of Practice Overview

NIWAP



What is our Family Law Attorneys Community of Practice?

This Community of Practice (COP), funded by the Office of Violence against Women, convened by the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP), is designed to facilitate learning between family law practitioners with diverse experiences and national experts to address common and recurring problems faced by immigrant survivors and their children in family court. Family law practitioners and expert faculty will engage in joint discussions and activities that will include sharing stories, tools, resources, experiences, strategies, problem solving and best practices; building relationships that enable participants with varying levels of expertise to learn from each other how to better represent immigrant survivors in family court cases. This COP is designed to develop and sustain ongoing learning opportunities to gain insights and feedback, access tools and resources, and build relationships with colleagues in similar roles across the country.

We will cover a range of topics as defined by the needs of the group. Example topics are likely to include: Issues that arise in immigrant survivors' custody cases; Safety planning and family court case strategy for immigrant survivors who qualify for VAWA self-petitioning and U visas; Including evidence of DHS victim protection and parent protection from removal policies in family court cases; VAWA Confidentiality and family court discovery; DHS policies and limitations against courthouse enforcement by DHS agents; Economic relief for immigrant survivors; How understanding legal rights to public benefits improves family court representation of immigrant survivors; and Special issues in protection order cases involving immigrant survivors.

Why Be Involved in a Community of Practice?

As a member of this COP, you can expect:

- Monthly 90 minute conference call conversations with peers that are tailored to your area of practice and relevant to your daily work that address your questions and interests.
- Opportunities to build relationships with family law colleagues and experts nationwide who really understand your work, and can provide peer-to-peer mentoring on a variety of topics.
- On-going interactions in-between calls with access to experts and family law nationwide through a private invitation only listserv that will be an online community forum that contains information on COP events; summary notes on all community calls and events; resources, tools, and descriptions of innovative solutions shared by family law colleagues and faculty experts; and discussion threads on pressing questions and topics.
- Information from guest speakers and subject matter with expertise in family law issues and opportunities.

What else does the COP include?

- 24/7 access to NIWAP's extensive resource web library, ability to request creation of additional materials that will benefit your practice, contact lists for COP members from across the country, discussion forums, invitations to webinars, and opportunities to meet other COP members who are OVW grantees at in person trainings.
- Regular check-ins with knowledgeable, trained facilitators and staff who want to know what's on your mind, where you are strong, and where you could use help.
- Up to an hour of work per month in preparation for or as a follow-up to our monthly conference calls.



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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON
COLLEGE OF LAW

Who Manages this Community of Practice?

This community of practice is made available through an Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) grant, to support and enhance the ability of OVW grantees and potential grantees to help immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, human trafficking, child abuse and elder abuse. NIWAP manages this project as part of their mission to promote the development, implementation, and use of laws, policies, and practices that benefit immigrant survivors, women and children. To learn more about NIWAP visit our web library at <http://niwaplibrary.wcl.american.edu/>



NIWAP's Director, **Leslye E. Orloff**, is an Adjunct Professor and Director of the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) at American University Washington College of Law. NIWAP advocates for laws, policies and practices that enhance legal options for immigrant women and immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. Leslye's 32-year career includes working collaboratively with experts across the country to develop and implement immigration relief, public benefits access and family law protections for immigrant women, children and survivors. She was involved in drafting the Protection for Immigrant Victims of Violence Against Women of the Violence Against Women Acts of 1994, 2000, 2005, and 2013, the Trafficking Victims Protection Acts of 2000 and 2008, legal services access for battered immigrants in 1997 and 2005, and welfare access for battered immigrants in 1996. She was a co-founder and co-chair of the National Network to End Violence Against Immigrant Women (1992-2011) and has edited story collections bringing immigrant women's voices to national policy makers. Leslye has published numerous law and social science journal articles, curricula, and training materials; she also conducts trainings nationally for attorneys, advocates, law enforcement, judges and other professionals on legal rights and services options for immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes. During her 17-year litigation career, she founded and directed the domestic violence program at Ayuda, a legal services agency that served the interrelated legal and social service needs of battered immigrant women and children.



Rocío Molina, Associate Director for National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project at American University's Washington College of Law, will lead the convening of this Community of Practice. Rocío is an immigration attorney who worked with the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence for seven years, where she represented hundreds of immigrants victims in immigration and family court proceedings. At NIWAP, Rocío provides legal counsel, research, technical assistance, training, and authors publications on the legal rights of immigrant victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking under immigration, family and public benefits laws.

To learn more about this community, contact Rocío Molina at molina@wcl.american.edu.

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