

Law Enforcement and Prosecution Best Practices: Immigrant Crime Victims, Language Access and the U Visa

**Morrow, Georgia
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Introduction

- Faculty
- Housekeeping
- Pre-training assessment

Materials Summary

- Materials
 - Agenda
 - Hard copy of PowerPoint presentation
 - Evaluations
- USB Drives – supplementary tools and resources
- <http://niwap.org/go/lawenforcement>

USB Drive Materials

- U Visa Toolkit For Law Enforcement Agencies And Prosecutors
- DHS: U and T Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide
- DHS memos and policies
- Tools for officers to promote language access
- Bluecard Tool Screening Victims for Immigration Protections

General Caveats

- Women, men and children can qualify for U Visas
- Victims of almost all violent crimes, and many other crimes are eligible to apply for U Visas
- *That said, many examples that will be used throughout this presentation will refer to female victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault*

Participant Introductions, Goals and Expectations



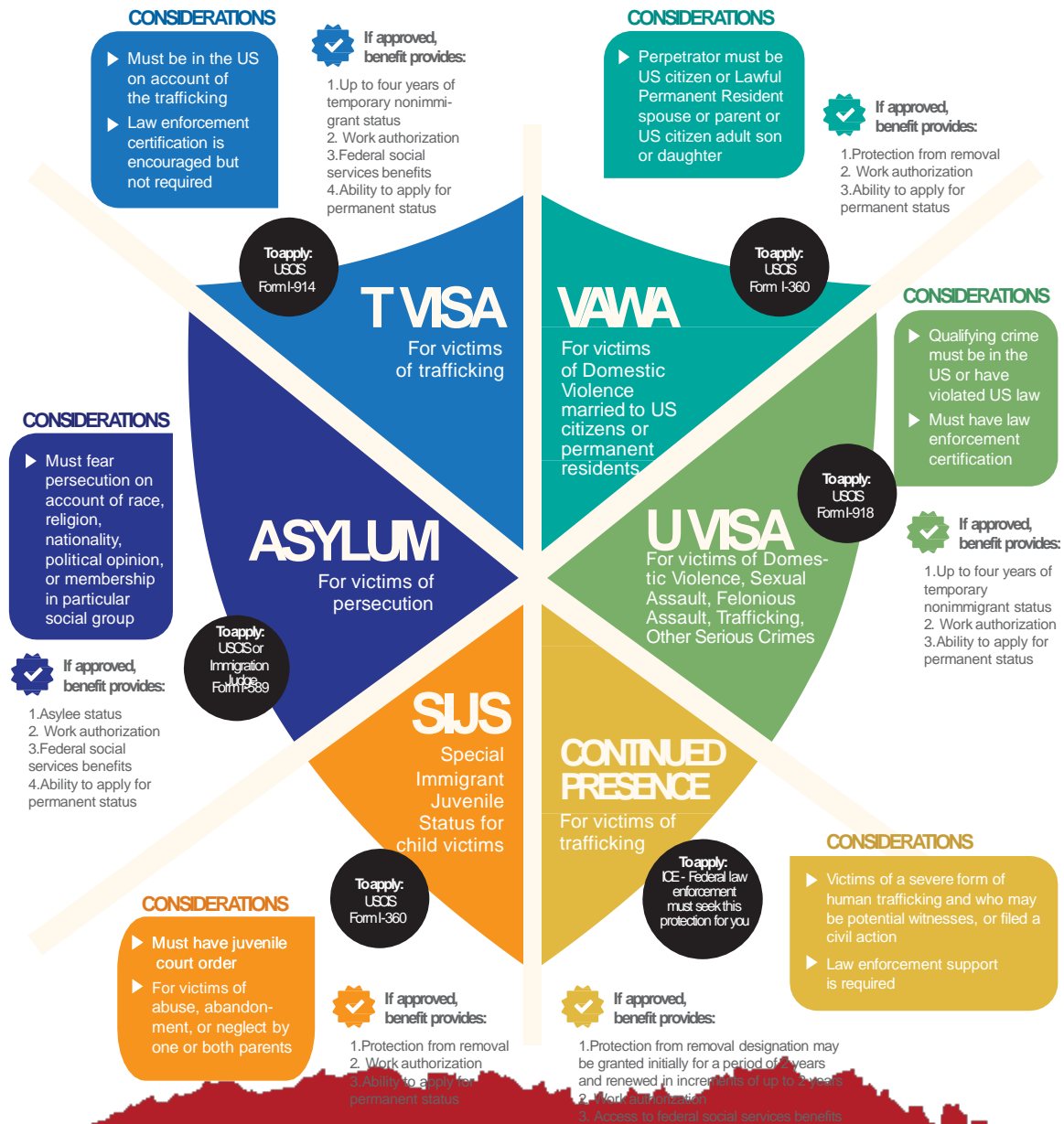
Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- Understand how investigations can be improved by using language access tools
- Hold offenders more accountable by using the U Visa certification process as a crime fighting tool
- Enhance victim safety and participation in the criminal justice system
- Enhance officer/victim/community safety using language access and certification programs

How Best Practices in Domestic Violence Investigations Promote Officer Safety

PROTECTIONS FOR IMMIGRANT VICTIMS



DYNAMICS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED BY BATTERED IMMIGRANTS



NIWAP

National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project at the American University
Washington College of Law

Department of Homeland Security



- DHS Video 1

Immigration Related Abuse

- Refusal to file immigration papers on spouse/child/parent's behalf
- Threats or taking steps to withdraw an immigration case filed on the survivor's behalf
 - Family or work based visas
- Forcing survivor to work with false documents
- Threats/attempts to have her deported
- Calls to DHS to turn her in – have her case denied

Coercive Control Over Immigration Status

- Among abusive spouses who could have filed legal immigration papers for survivors:
 - 72.3% never file immigration papers
 - The 27.7% who did file had a mean delay of **3.97 years.**
- 65% of immigrant survivors report some form of immigration related abuse (NIJ, 2003)

*Edna Erez and Nawal Ammar, Violence Against Immigrant Women and Systemic Responses: An Exploratory Study (2003)

What barriers and fears prevent immigrant victims from reporting crime?

If they report...

- They will be deported
- Offender will retaliate
 - Harm them
 - Harm family members, children
- Nothing will happen
- Cannot communicate with officers

Fears & Misconceptions

- ▶ Do not trust police/prosecutors
- ▶ Economic survival
- ▶ Pressures from both families
- ▶ Fear of abandoning the home/community
- ▶ Fear of losing children
- ▶ Religious factors
- ▶ Fear of unknown
- ▶ Victim believes that if perpetrator deported she has to go with him
- ▶ Dangers in the home country
 - ▶ Retaliation
 - ▶ Ostracism
 - ▶ Police
 - ▶ Political instability
 - ▶ Gender barriers

Major Challenges in working with Immigrant Victims of Crime

1. Fear of deportation
2. Language
3. Lack of knowledge of legal rights
4. Do not trust that police/prosecutors will help them
5. Lack of reporting and/or cooperation as the case moves forward

What countries do the victims in your jurisdiction come from?*

*These slides were produced by The National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) at American University, Washington College of Law and Legal Momentum and was supported by Grant Number 2011-TA-AX-K002 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, Office of Justice Programs, U. S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Georgia Demographics (2016)*

- ❖ Total foreign born population – 1,038,312
- ❖ 10.1% of the state's people 10 million people are foreign born
 - 41.1% naturalized citizens
 - 25% lawful permanent residents or temporary legal status
 - 33.8% undocumented immigrants
- <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/authorized-immigrant-population/state/GA>
- ❖ 79.9% rise in immigrant population from 2000-2016
- ❖ 20.7% of children in the state under age 18 have 1 or more immigrant parents
 - ❖ 87.9% of children with immigrant parents in the state are U.S. native
 - ❖ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/OR> (March 2018)

-Countries/Regions of State (2016)*

Latin America- 42.9%

Mexico (35.8%)

Central America (3.8%)

South America (2.3%)

Asia- 30.7%

China (6.8%)

India (4.6%)

Vietnam (4.6%)

Philippines (3.3%)

Korea (2.3%)

Africa- 3.1%

Canada- 4%

Europe- 16.1%

Western Europe (3.2%)

United Kingdom (2.8%)

Russia (2.2%)

Other Eastern Europe (6.7%)

Limited English Proficiency

(Speak English less than very well)

Naturalized citizens 34.7 %

Non-citizens 57.9%

Languages Spoken at Home

❖ Spanish (346,264)

❖ Mandarin or Cantonese (33,322)

❖ Vietnamese (23,109)

❖ Russian (22,725)

❖ German (14,272)

*

Language Access

Best practices to successfully investigate and prosecute cases involving non-English speaking victims

Source of Language Access Laws

- Title VI- No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial aid assistance.
- LEP Executive Order 13166 (2001)
 - Requires all agencies receiving any federal financial assistance to
 - Ensure meaningful language access
 - Develop and implement language access plans
 - “Where the denial or delay of access may have life or death or other serious implications, the importance of the full and effective delivery of LEP services is at its zenith.”

What is Meaningful Access?

- Meaningful access is defined in the US Department of Justice's own Language Access plan as:

“Language assistance that results in accurate, timely and effective communication at no cost to the LEP individual. For LEP individuals, meaningful access denotes access that is not significantly restricted, delayed or inferior, as compared to programs or activities provided to English proficient individuals”

Interpretation

The conversion of spoken language into another language verbally



Translation

- The conversion of written text from one language into the written text of another language



Use of 1st person

Officer: Sir, can you tell me what happened?

Interpreter (into the other language): Sir, can you tell me what happened?

Victim: I was hit in the face repeatedly.

Interpreter (into the other language): I was hit the face repeatedly.

No 3rd Person

Officer (to interpreter): Can you ask the victim what happened?

Interpreter (into the other language to victim): Can you ask the victim what happened?

Victim: ????????

Use of 3rd person

Interpreter to the officer: Officer, the interpreter is not familiar with the acronym R.I.C.O. Could you please explain what it stands for so that the interpreter can interpret accurately.

Interpreter to the officer: Officer, the interpreter was unable to hear the response from Mr. Speaktoolow. Could you please ask him to speak up so that I can interpret accurately.

DOJ Model Guidance

- Police provide free language access to:
 - LEP persons who request it
 - *When officer decides it is helpful* to the criminal investigation or prosecution
- Police will inform members of the public that language assistance is available free of charge
- Language access provided in persons primary language

**DOJ Sample Policy Center City Police Department
DOJ Approach to language access outline in:
Steps for Obtaining Interpreters**

First responders –
What do you do when
you arrive at a crime
scene?



First Response

- Locate and secure the scene
- Are there any weapons?
- Is anyone injured?
- Identify the people involved
 - Victim
 - Offender
 - Witnesses
- If offender is not on the scene
 - Where is the suspect?
 - Are they a continuing danger?
 - Is suspect in possession of weapon?



What do you do when the people at the scene are limited English proficient?

How can you get the information you need
to secure the scene?

DOJ and Exigent Circumstances

- Use the most reliable *temporary* interpreter available to address exigent circumstances
 - Fleeing suspect
 - Weapons
 - Life threatening to the officer /victim/or public

DOJ Requirements for Investigations & Interrogations

- “A qualified interpreter shall be used for any interrogation or taking of a formal statement where the suspect or witness’ legal rights could be adversely impacted”
 - Criminal interrogations
 - Crime witness interviews
- Vital written materials translated into primary language
 - Miranda warnings

What is a Qualified Interpreter?

- Category for languages that certification does not exist but the interpreter has:
 - completed interpreter training and
 - has experience interpreting.
- Certified by the United Nations for Conference Interpreters (28 U.S.C. §1827).



This is different than a Certified Interpreter

Using Qualified Interpreters

Benefits

- Safety
- ID offender
- Locate weapons
- Admissible statements (excited utterances)

Harms

- Mistaken ID of offender
- Arrest of victim
- Misinterpretation results in inaccurate statements
- Trauma to children

Certified Interpreter

- Has been tested through a valid and reliable testing instrument
 - Medical
 - Legal
- Sign Language Interpreters *MUST* be certified



Case Study - *Jose Lopez Meza - 2008*



- Charged with first degree murder – Charge was dropped to manslaughter
 - Baby died after Meza shook his 3 week old son so violently the child's brain began to swell, ultimately killing him
 - Detectives used a Spanish speaking officer to assist with the interview
 - Review of the tapes by court appointed certified interpreters revealed that the officer interpreting left out some of the information, misinterpreted several statements made by the suspect and the detective

Bilingual Officer v. Interpreter

- ▶ Bilingual officers
 - ▶ When they are interpreting, they are not investigating
- ▶ Biculturalism v. bilingualism
 - ▶ Different words have different meanings:
 - ▶ e.g.: Variations on the word “highway” depending on what state you’re from.
 - ▶ “500 feet” many communities don’t know what that distance looks like.



First responders –
Now that emergency is
over what are the next
steps in the investigation ?

The Investigation Begins

- Call detective
- Call fire/rescue
- Take initial statements
- Call crime scene
- Photograph
- Formal interviews at the station
- Develop probable cause
- Prepare case for prosecution

On Scene Considerations

- Separating parties
- Use of two interpreters
- Is the abuser threatening in a different language or making intimidating gestures?
- Headset and background noise
- Consider cultural differences (ex. matriarchal vs. patriarchal)
- Be aware of the perception of an implicit bias

Other Encounters With LEP Victims

- Dispatch
- Walk into station
- Referrals from other agencies
 - CPS, APS, Family Justice Center
- How would you identify the languages?

Language Resources

- Language line
- Video remote interpretation
- Video relay interpretation
- Department interpreters line developed in response to large local refugee population
- Immigrant community based organization partners
- Health care providers
- School systems
- Court systems



Tips for Working with Interpreters

- Control the interview
- Pre-session with the interpreter
 - Where are they located?
 - Establish what your rules are
 - Hand Signals
- Interpreter has to interpret everything that you say
 - Example: when you are explaining confidentiality

Relay Interpretation



Red Flags

- Can you understand the interpreter?
- Does the LEP person look confused?
- Does the interpreter appear confused?
- Is the interpreter engaging in side conversations?
- Is the interpreter summarizing?
- Is there a change in the individual's demeanor?
- Are they using English words?



Interpretation Best Practices

- Evaluation systems
- Interpreter uses a dictionary, takes notes
- Interpreter comfortable with subject matter of the case
- Address cultural experiences ahead of time
- Ensure that they do not know the parties
 - If using telephonic interpreters: first ask where they are located
- Team interpreting and interpreter breaks

U Visas as a Crime Fighting Tool

Improving the reporting,
investigation, and prosecution of
violent crime
& keeping everyone safer

**What, if anything, do you know
about U Visas?**

Overview of the U Visa

- **What is the U visa?**
- **Purpose:** Why does it exist?

U Visa Basics

- Law enforcement certification is just one part of the overall process it does not = citizenship
- Meant to promote reporting of crime
- Targets offenders who prey on most vulnerable victims
- Offender may be citizen or non-citizen
- Can be “revoked”
- Increases immigrant victim participation in criminal justice system

Purpose of Crime Victim Protections

Congress enacted VAWA self-petitioning (1994) and the U and T visas (2000) to:

- Improve community policing and community relationships
- Increase prosecution of perpetrators of crimes against immigrant victims
- Allow victims to report crimes without fear of deportation
- Enhance victim safety
- Keep communities safe

Major Forms of Relief

- VAWA self-petition
 - Abuse by US citizen or lawful permanent
 - Spouse, former spouse, parent, step-parent, over 21year old child
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
 - Immigrant children abused, abandoned or neglected by one of their parents
 - (U.S. or abroad)
- U Visa
- T Visa

Department of Homeland Security



- DHS Video 2

U Visa Requirements

- Victim of a qualifying criminal activity
- Has been, is being, or is likely to be helpful in
 - Detection, investigation, prosecution, conviction or sentencing
- Suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of the victimization
- Possesses information about the crime
- Crime occurred in the U.S. or violated U.S. law

U Visa Criminal Activities (11/2011 data)

- Domestic violence **45.9%**
- Rape, sexual assault, incest, trafficking **30.4%**
- Felonious assault, murder, manslaughter **9.9%**
- Kidnapping, being held hostage, unlawful criminal restraint, torture **8.47%**
- Blackmail, extortion, perjury, obstruction of justice, attempts, conspiracy, solicitation **5.3%**

Qualifying Criminal Activity

- Domestic violence
- Sexual assault
- Rape
- Incest
- Prostitution
- Torture
- Female genital mutilation
- Felonious assault
- Manslaughter
- Murder
- Kidnapping
- Abduction
- Trafficking
- Involuntary servitude
- Slave trade
- Being held hostage
- Peonage
- Fraud in Foreign Labor Contracting
- False Imprisonment
- Blackmail
- Extortion
- Witness tampering
- Obstruction of justice
- Perjury
- Stalking

*Attempt, conspiracy or solicitation to commit any of these crimes
any similar activity

Who can apply?

- Victims of qualifying criminal activity
- Parents and guardians can apply as an “indirect victim” if:
 - the victim is a child under 21 years of age and/or
 - is incompetent, incapacitated, or deceased due to murder or manslaughter
- Bystanders victimization – very limited
- For child victims a “next friend” can provide helpfulness

Who Can Certify?

“law enforcement” & “law enforcement agencies” =

- Federal, state, and local
 - Police, sheriffs, FBI, HSI, ATF...
 - Prosecutors
 - Judges, magistrates, Commissioners
- Departments of Labor (DOL) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
- Child and elder abuse investigators and agencies
- Other government agencies

U Visa Certification Considerations

- What criminal activity occurred?
- Identify the victim or indirect victim
 - Note injuries observed, if any
- Determine helpfulness of the victim
- Determine if any family members were implicated in the crime

Things to Know About Certifying

- “Do I believe this person was a victim of a qualifying crime?”
- “Did the person assist or willing to assist in detection, investigation, conviction, prosecution and/or sentencing?”
- Question is **NOT**:
 - Can we prosecute the crime?
 - Can I arrest the offender?
 - Do I have proof beyond a reasonable doubt?
 - Will the prosecutor’s office file charges?
 - Is this within the statute of limitations?
 - Did we get a conviction?

How will a U visa certification request come to you?

- From victim advocate or immigration attorney
- As a police officer you are the first responder
- As a prosecutor you might have continued contact with the victim and might be first to identify victim's U visa eligibility

When should you certify?

Timeline

- Certification must be included in the initial application for a U Visa
- Once the initial application is processed:
 - Victim is entered into a database and flagged as an applicant for a U Visa



- Immigration proceedings will not be initiated
- Offender can not intimidate with threats

Certifying Early

PROS

CONS

Establish trust

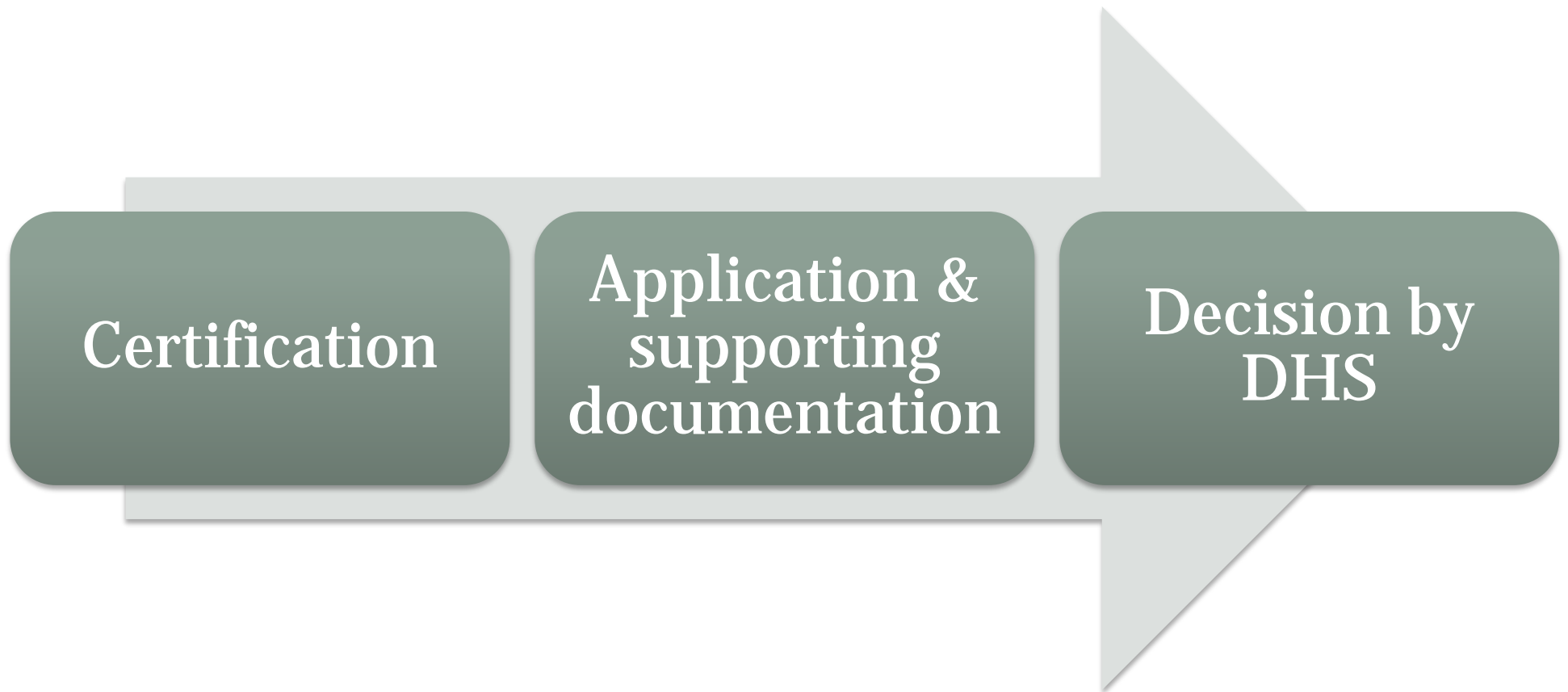
Build rapport

Protect from
offender

Protect from
deportation

Accusation that victim is
lying for immigration
benefit

The U Visa Application Process



Typical length of process = 18- 36 months

DHS Decision

- Were they a victim of a qualifying crime?
- Did they suffer substantial harm as a result of victimization?
- Assess whether the victim unreasonably did not comply with requests from law enforcement (helpfulness)
- Is the victim admissible?
 - Review of criminal history
 - Review of immigration history

U Visa Facts

- Only 10,000 U visas can be granted annually
- The U visa grants a temporary 4 year stay
- Only some U visa holders will qualify for lawful permanent residency– no guarantee
- U.S. citizenship can only be attained after lawful permanent residency for 5 years + proof of good moral character

How does law enforcement and prosecution benefit from the U visa?



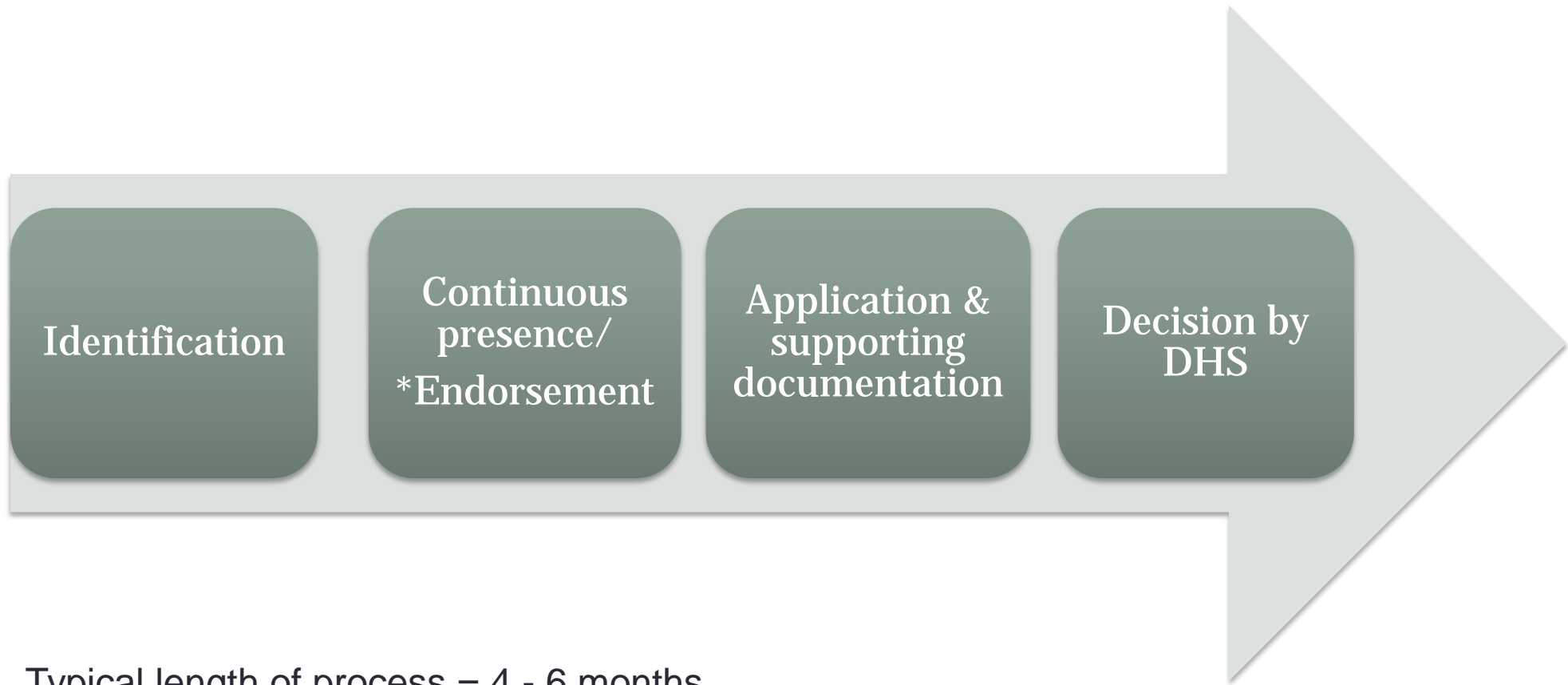
U Visa Benefits to Law Enforcement and Prosecutors

- Encourages victims to report crimes
- Improves investigation and prosecution of violent crimes
- Increases potential to convict most dangerous criminals
- Demonstrates commitment to protecting immigrant community members
- Enhanced immigrant community involvement
- Makes it easier to identify victim witnesses
- Reduces repeat calls and recanting victims
- Fosters community policing partnerships
- Enhances officer and community safety

T Visa Overview

- Non-Immigrant, 4 Year visa
 - Victim of severe form of trafficking
 - In the US or territories on account of trafficking
 - Respond to reasonable requests for collaboration with investigation and prosecution unless victim is under 18
 - Limited “trauma exception”
 - Hardship upon return to home country
- May apply for adjustment of status after investigation/prosecution is over or 3 years, what ever time is shorter

The T Visa Application Process



Typical length of process = 4 - 6 months

Human Trafficking

- Generally: use of force, fraud and/or coercion to exploit a person for profit.
- Federal statute: TVPA 2000
- Every state now has their own human trafficking statute – (labor trafficking), (sex trafficking)

Sex Trafficking

22 U.S.C. § 7102; 18 U.S.C. § 1591

Act

- **Recruits**
- **Entices**
- **Harbors**
- **Transports**
- **Provides**
- **Obtains**
- **Advertises**
- **Maintains**
- **Patronizes**
- **Solicits**
- **Benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value**

Means

- **Force**
- **Fraud**
- **Coercion**

Purpose

- **Commercial Sexual Activity**

Labor Trafficking

22 U.S.C. § 7102; 18 U.S.C. § 1590

Act

- **Recruits**
- **Harbors**
- **Transports**
- **Provides**
- **Obtains**
- **Benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value**

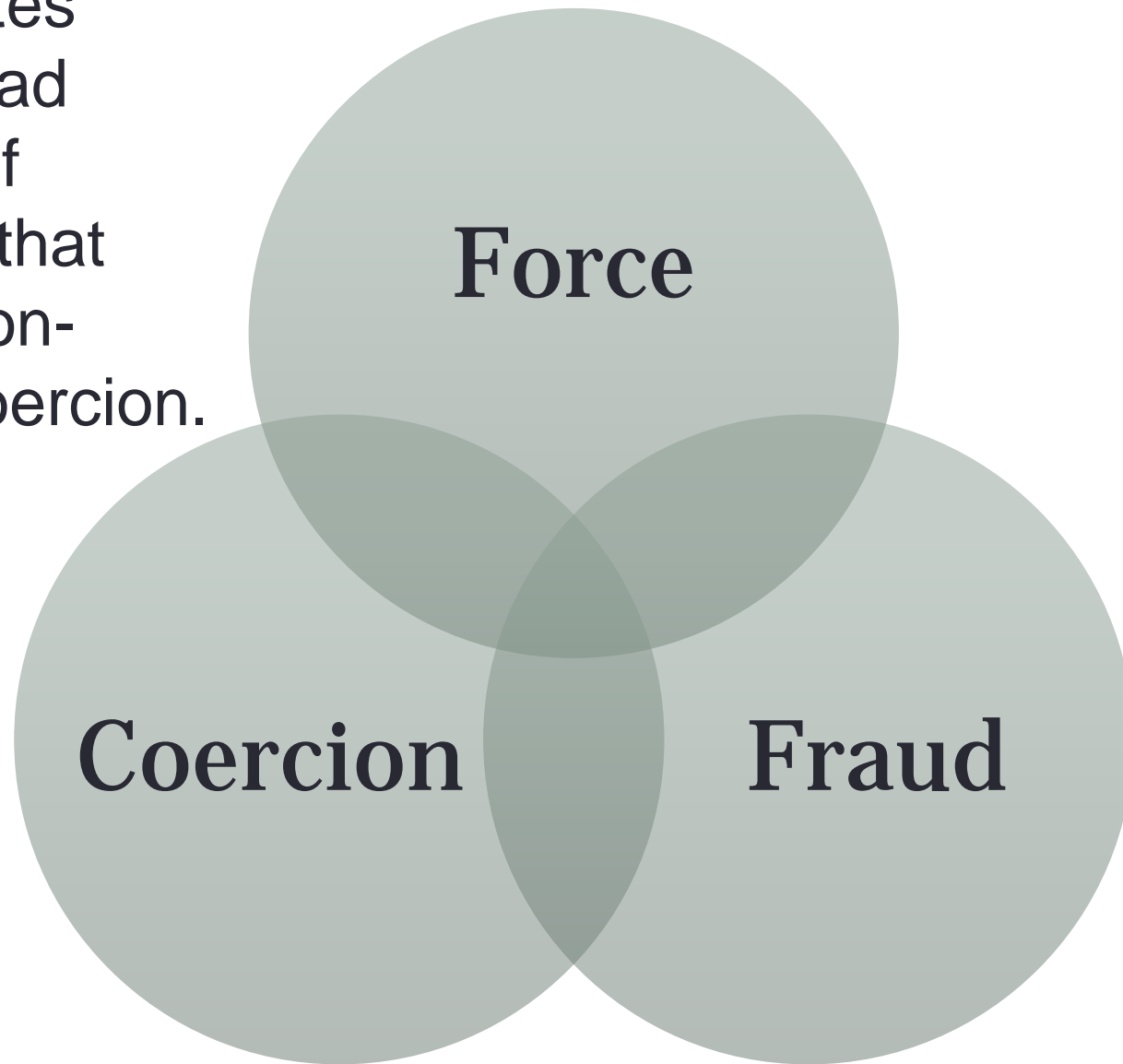
Means

- **Force**
- **Restraint**
- **Threats of harm**
- **Abuse or threatened abuse of the legal system**
- **Any scheme, plan, or pattern intended to cause the person to believe that if they did not perform labor, they would suffer serious harm or restraint**

Purpose

- **Involuntary servitude**
- **Peonage**
- **Debt Bondage**
- **Slavery**

Most statutes have a broad definition of “coercion” that includes non-physical coercion.



Trafficking

Exploitation

Smuggling

Transportation

Venues

Labor Trafficking

- Domestic servitude
- Hotels & restaurants
- Landscaping
- Construction
- Agriculture
- Massage parlors
- Criminal activity

Commercial Sexual Activity

- Prostitution
 - Online
 - Street
 - Brothels
 - Massage parlors
- Pornography
- Stripping
- Web cams

Labor Trafficking Statistics

- 47.5% Men – 52.5% Women
- 10% Minors – 90% Adults
- 46% Single – 45% Married
- 64% had children
- 33% some college or higher
- Average age = 33
- 71% of victims entered the U.S. legally

*“Understanding the Organization, Operation and Victimization of Labor Trafficking in the United States”,
Urban Institute and Northeastern University in collaboration with Freedom Network USA (2014)*

What are Severe Forms of Human Trafficking?

- **Sex Trafficking:** in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- **Labor:** The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery

(Federal Law—“Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000 can be found at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/laws/vawo2000/)

U Visa Certification Overview



Supplement B, U Nonimmigrant Status Certification

Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS
Form I-918
OMB No. 1615-0104
Expires 02/28/2019

Review the U Visa Certification Form

Located in your training packet

- **Goals:** Identify the criminal activity and the victim, then begin the certification process

Part 1. Victim Information

1. Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any)

▶ A-

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2.a. Family Name
(Last Name)

2.b. Given Name
(First Name)

2.c. Middle Name

Other Names Used (Include maiden names, nicknames, and aliases, if applicable.)

If you need extra space to provide additional names, use the space provided in **Part 7. Additional Information.**

3.a. Family Name
(Last Name)

3.b. Given Name
(First Name)

3.c. Middle Name

4. Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)

5. Gender Male Female

This is sometimes filled out by the victim's immigration attorney or advocate. (Certifier Preference)



In addition to the head of the agency, one or more certifying officials can be designated as a “Certifying Official”



Part 2. Agency Information

1. Name of Certifying Agency

Name of Certifying Official

2.a. Family Name
(Last Name)

2.b. Given Name
(First Name)

2.c. Middle Name

3. Title and Division/Office of Certifying Official

Name of Head of Certifying Agency

4.a. Family Name
(Last Name)

4.b. Given Name
(First Name)

4.c. Middle Name

Agency Address

5.a. Street Number and Name

5.b. Apt. Ste. Flr.

5.c. City or Town

5.d. State **5.f. ZIP Code**

5.g. Province

5.h. Postal Code

5.i. Country

Other Agency Information

6. Agency Type

Federal State Local

7. Case Status

On-going Completed

Other

8. Certifying Agency Category

Judge Law Enforcement Prosecutor

Other

9. Case Number

10. FBI Number or SID Number (if applicable)

Part 3. Criminal Acts

If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in **Part 7. Additional Information.**

1. The petitioner is a victim of criminal activity involving a violation of one of the following Federal, state, or local criminal offenses (or any similar activity). (Select all applicable boxes)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Manslaughter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive Sexual Contact | <input type="checkbox"/> Murder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attempt to Commit Any of the Named Crimes | <input type="checkbox"/> Obstruction of Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being Held Hostage | <input type="checkbox"/> Peonage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blackmail | <input type="checkbox"/> Perjury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conspiracy to Commit Any of the Named Crimes | <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence | <input type="checkbox"/> Rape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Assault |
| <input type="checkbox"/> False Imprisonment | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Exploitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Felonious Assault | <input type="checkbox"/> Slave Trade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female Genital Mutilation | <input type="checkbox"/> Solicitation to Commit Any of the Named Crimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fraud in Foreign Labor Contracting | <input type="checkbox"/> Stalking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Incest | <input type="checkbox"/> Torture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Involuntary Servitude | <input type="checkbox"/> Trafficking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kidnapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Unlawful Criminal Restraint |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Witness Tampering |

You can & should certify multiple offenses when present.

Dates do not have to be precise – you can use months, seasons or years.

Provide the dates on which the criminal activity occurred.

2.a. Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

2.b. Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

2.c. Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

2.d. Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

3. List the statutory citations for the criminal activity being investigated or prosecuted, or that was investigated or prosecuted.

4.a. Did the criminal activity occur in the United States (including Indian country and military installations) or the territories or possessions of the United States?

Yes No

4.b. If you answered "Yes," where did the criminal activity occur?

5.a. Did the criminal activity violate a Federal extraterritorial jurisdiction statute?

Yes No

5.b. If you answered "Yes," provide the statutory citation providing the authority for extraterritorial jurisdiction.

6. Briefly describe the criminal activity being investigated and/or prosecuted and the involvement of the petitioner named in Part 1. Attach copies of all relevant reports and findings.

Make copies of all reports and attach.

7. Provide a description of any known or documented injury to the victim. Attach copies of all relevant reports and findings.

Be as specific as possible, highlighting visible injuries observed (even if not photographed).

If you are aware of mental injury, include as well.

Part 4. Helpfulness Of The Victim

For the following questions, if the victim is under 16 years of age, incompetent or incapacitated, then a parent, guardian, or next friend may act on behalf of the victim.

1. Does the victim possess information concerning the criminal activity listed in **Part 3**? Yes No
2. Has the victim been helpful, is the victim being helpful, or is the victim likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity detailed above? Yes No
3. Since the initiation of cooperation, has the victim refused or failed to provide assistance reasonably requested in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity detailed above? Yes No

If you answer "Yes" to **Item Numbers 1. - 3.**, provide an explanation in the space below. If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in **Part 7**.

Additional Information.

4. Other. Include any additional information you would like to provide.
-

NOTE: This will be discussed in detail in the next section

Part 5. Family Members Culpable In Criminal Activity

1. Are any of the victim's family members culpable or believed to be culpable in the criminal activity of which the petitioner is a victim? Yes No

If you answered "Yes," list the family members and their criminal involvement. (If you need extra space to complete this section, use the space provided in **Part 7. Additional Information.**)

- 2.a. Family Name (Last Name)
- 2.b. Given Name (First Name)
- 2.c. Middle Name
- 2.d. Relationship
- 2.e. Involvement



Because many applications will include domestic violence, this may likely be the defendant.

Part 6. Certification

I am the head of the agency listed in **Part 2**, or I am the person in the agency who was specifically designated by the head of the agency to issue a U Nonimmigrant Status Certification on behalf of the agency. Based upon investigation of the facts, I certify, under penalty of perjury, that the individual identified in **Part 1**, is or was a victim of one or more of the crimes listed in **Part 3**. I certify that the above information is complete, true, and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that I have made and will make no promises regarding the above victim's ability to obtain a visa from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), based upon this certification. I further certify that if the victim unreasonably refuses to assist in the investigation or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity of which he or she is a victim, I will notify USCIS.

1. Signature of Certifying Official (sign in ink)



2. Date of Signature (mm/dd/yyyy)

3. Daytime Telephone Number

4. Fax Number

REMEMBER: This is merely a certification that you believe they were a victim of a crime. This does not automatically mean that the victim will be granted immigration relief.

Part 7. Additional Information

If you need extra space to complete any item within this supplement, use the space below or attach a separate sheet of paper; type or print the agency's name, petitioner's name, and the Alien Registration Number (A-Number) (if any) at the top of each sheet; indicate the **Page Number**, **Part Number**, and **Item Number** to which your answer refers; and sign and date each sheet. If you need more space than what is provided, you may also make copies of this page to complete and file with this supplement.

1. Agency Name

Petitioner's Name

2.a. Family Name (Last Name)

2.b. Given Name (First Name)

2.c. Middle Name

3. A-Number (if any)
▶ A-

4.a. Page Number 4.b. Part Number 4.c. Item Number

4.d.

5.a. Page Number 5.b. Part Number 5.c. Item Number

5.d.

6.a. Page Number 6.b. Part Number 6.c. Item Number

6.d.

Helpfulness

By the end of this segment, you will be able to:

- Understand the scope of the helpfulness standard
- Apply the helpfulness standard to U visa certifications



Hypotheticals

Small Group Activity

- Is this person eligible for a U Visa certification?
- *Stories handout*



Helpfulness in the Regulations

- Statute and DHS regulations: has been helpful, is being helpful or is likely to be helpful in the
 - Detection, or investigation, or
 - Prosecution, or conviction or
 - Sentencing
- There is no degree of helpfulness required
- Law enforcement may complete U visa certification once they assess victim's helpfulness
- The investigation or prosecution can still be ongoing

Helpfulness can be satisfied even if:

- Victim reports a crime where there's no further investigation
- Report is of past crime that the victim did not report at the time
- Perpetrator absconds or is subject to immigration removal
- The perpetrator is being prosecuted for a different crime
- Victim is not needed as a witness
- Victim is dead (indirect victim qualifies)
- Perpetrator is dead
- Victim has a criminal history or is subject to immigration enforcement
- Victim fully discloses story after better understanding rights, the U-visa and meaningful language access

3. Since the initiation of cooperation, has the victim refused or failed to provide assistance reasonably requested in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity detailed above? Yes No

What does it mean for a victim to “unreasonably refuse” to provide assistance?

**Why would a victim report a crime
and then refuse to participate in the
ensuing investigation and trial?**

Reasons for Refusing to Cooperate

- Fear of reprisal
- Continued threats or violence
- Pressure from either family
- Financial hardship
- Lesser of two evils

Evaluating Whether Victim's Refusal to Provide Assistance/Cooperation was "Unreasonable"

- Considerations:

- Totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the victimization
- Victim's fear of the abuser
- Trauma suffered
- Force, fraud or coercion

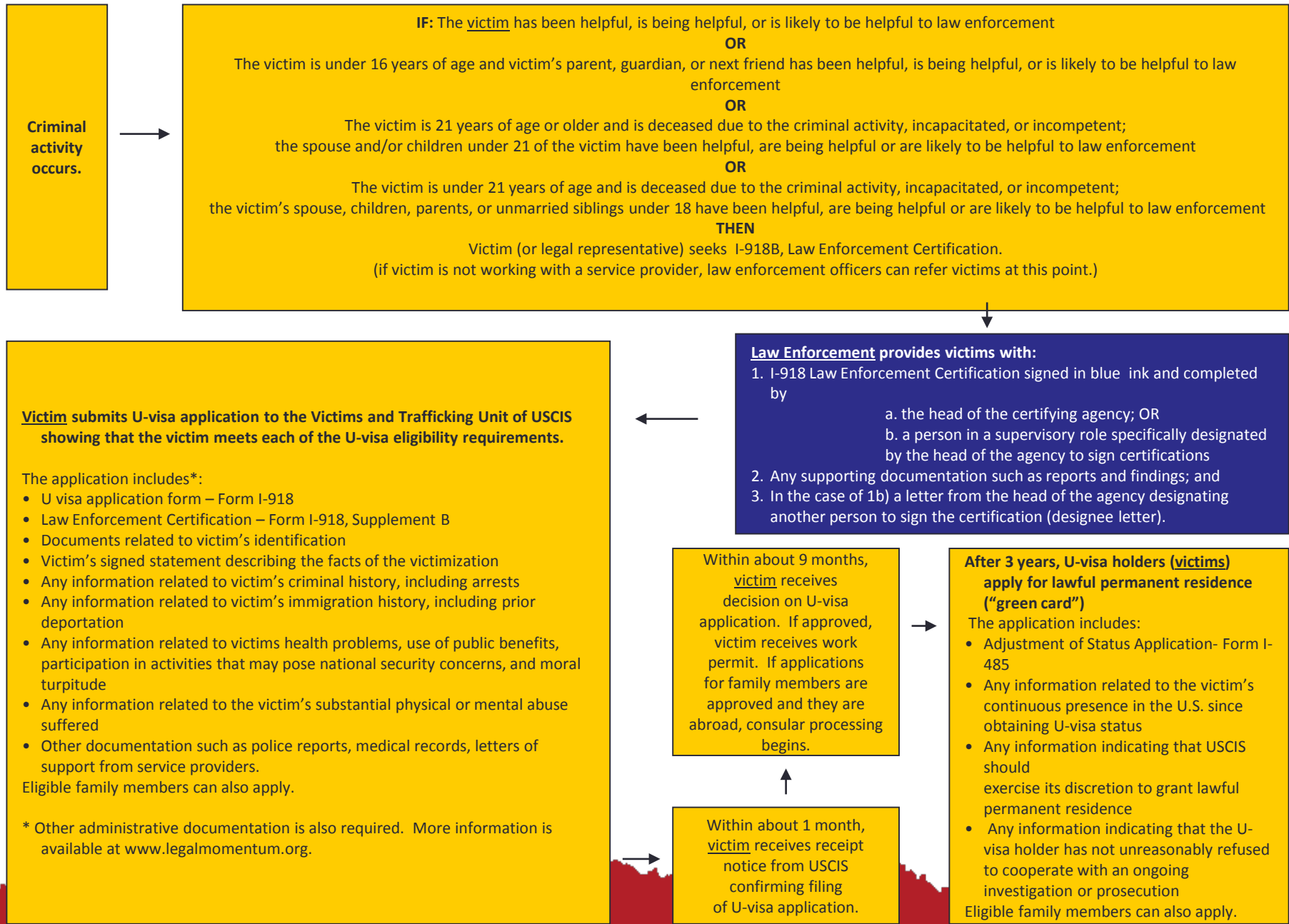
Witness Tampering

- Work with prosecutors to detect signs
 - Change in frequency of contact
 - Missed appointments
 - Recantation or minimization
- Investigate
 - Follow up with victim
 - Contact victim advocate, immigration attorney, others that had contact with victim
 - Jail calls
 - Interview friends, neighbors, and family

If you still believe the victim is unreasonably refusing...

- Note on the certification, sign, and return to victim or victim's attorney
- Burden shifts to victim to prove the refusal is not unreasonable
- DHS makes the ultimate decision

U-visa Application Victim Flow Chart



Criminal activity occurs.

IF: The victim has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful to law enforcement

OR

The victim is under 16 years of age and victim's parent, guardian, or next friend has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful to law enforcement

OR

The victim is 21 years of age or older and is deceased due to the criminal activity, incapacitated, or incompetent; the spouse and/or children under 21 of the victim have been helpful, are being helpful or are likely to be helpful to law enforcement

OR

The victim is under 21 years of age and is deceased due to the criminal activity, incapacitated, or incompetent; the victim's spouse, children, parents, or unmarried siblings under 18 have been helpful, are being helpful or are likely to be helpful to law enforcement

THEN

Victim (or legal representative) seeks I-918B, Law Enforcement Certification.
(if victim is not working with a service provider, law enforcement officers can refer victims at this point.)

Law Enforcement provides victims with:

1. I-918 Law Enforcement Certification signed in blue ink and completed by
 - a. the head of the certifying agency; OR
 - b. a person in a supervisory role specifically designated by the head of the agency to sign certifications
2. Any supporting documentation such as reports and findings; and
3. In the case of 1b) a letter from the head of the agency designating another person to sign the certification (designee letter).

Victim submits U-visa application to the Victims and Trafficking Unit of USCIS showing that the victim meets each of the U-visa eligibility requirements.

The application includes*:

- U visa application form – Form I-918
- Law Enforcement Certification – Form I-918, Supplement B
- Documents related to victim's identification
- Victim's signed statement describing the facts of the victimization
- Any information related to victim's criminal history, including arrests
- Any information related to victim's immigration history, including prior deportation
- Any information related to victims health problems, use of public benefits, participation in activities that may pose national security concerns, and moral turpitude
- Any information related to the victim's substantial physical or mental abuse suffered
- Other documentation such as police reports, medical records, letters of support from service providers.

Eligible family members can also apply.

* Other administrative documentation is also required. More information is available at www.legalmomentum.org.

Within about 9 months, victim receives decision on U-visa application. If approved, victim receives work permit. If applications for family members are approved and they are abroad, consular processing begins.

Within about 1 month, victim receives receipt notice from USCIS confirming filing of U-visa application.

After 3 years, U-visa holders (victims) apply for lawful permanent residence ("green card")
The application includes:

- Adjustment of Status Application- Form I-485
- Any information related to the victim's continuous presence in the U.S. since obtaining U-visa status
- Any information indicating that USCIS should exercise its discretion to grant lawful permanent residence
- Any information indicating that the U-visa holder has not unreasonably refused to cooperate with an ongoing investigation or prosecution

Eligible family members can also apply.

Law Enforcement provides victims with:

1. I-918 Law Enforcement Certification signed in blue ink and completed by:
 - a. the head of the certifying agency; OR
 - b. a person in a supervisory role specifically designated by the head of the agency to sign certifications
2. Any supporting documentation such as reports and findings; and
3. In the case of 1b) a letter from the head of the agency designating another person to sign the certification (designee letter).

Prosecution Strategies

Learning Objectives

- Comply with ethical requirements regarding discovery, *Brady*, and *Giglio*
- Consider case in the context of complex victim and offender dynamics, including immigration concerns
- Engage in pretrial and trial strategies to combat common defenses in cases involving immigrant victims

Certification

- Prosecutors can sign certification forms
 - Must be designee
- Any certifying agency can certify at any time they have probable cause
- Certification policies & practices should be discussed at collaborative partner meetings (e.g. CCR)
- Certifying prosecutor should consider not being the trial prosecutor

Strategies to Limit Risk

- Certify based on information the prosecutor/police have
 - Do not need and should not seek additional information or materials
- Work with local attorneys and advocates working with immigrant victims
 - Tell them you will not accept more information
 - Do not accept materials offered/sent

Discovery & Due Process Obligations

- Must provide defense with any materials within the state's control that may effect the credibility of any witness or that goes to any witnesses motive to lie or bias
 1. Is it within the state's control?
 2. Does it go to the witness' credibility, bias, or motive to lie?

Custody and Control

Within

- Certification form
- Accompanying documentation; e.g. police reports, photographs, medical records
- Communications from immigration attorney
- Attachments provided to you

Not Within

- Materials not provided to you
 - U visa application
 - VAWA application
 - T visa application
 - Attachments to application
 - Other materials submitted
- Immigration file
 - Includes existence of & actions taken in the case

Response to Motions to Compel

- Concede existence of certification
- Provide copy of certification and only accompanying documents that are in your custody and control
- Move to quash subpoena for immigration file
 - Confidentiality protections
 - Impermissible “fishing expedition”
 - Case law

#1 Concern:

Explicit or implicit accusation
that the victim is lying to stay in
the country

Voir Dire

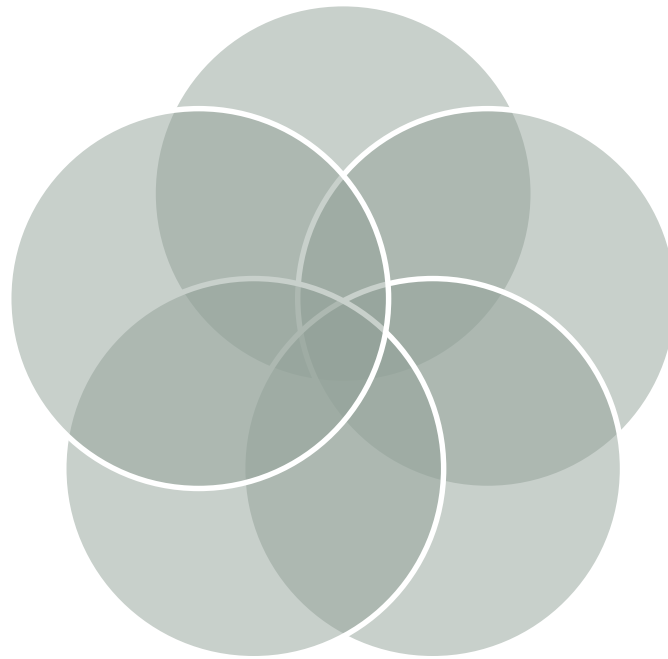
Demonstrate
Leadership

Establish
Trust

Educate

Manage
Expectations

Uncover
Biases



Cross-Examination

- Applying for or receiving an immigration benefit goes to the witness' credibility, bias, or motive to lie – they can be asked about it.
 - Prepare victim and witness
 - Take the “sting” out of the questions by addressing immigration during your case in chief
 - Listen for the defense to “open the door” to rebuttal evidence

Rebuttal Testimony

- Once the defendant has alleged that the victim has a motive to lie, the prosecution can offer rebuttal evidence in the form of “Prior Consistent Statements”
- Door to this testimony can be opened at any time, but is likely done during cross-examination
- Be prepared with legal brief and case law

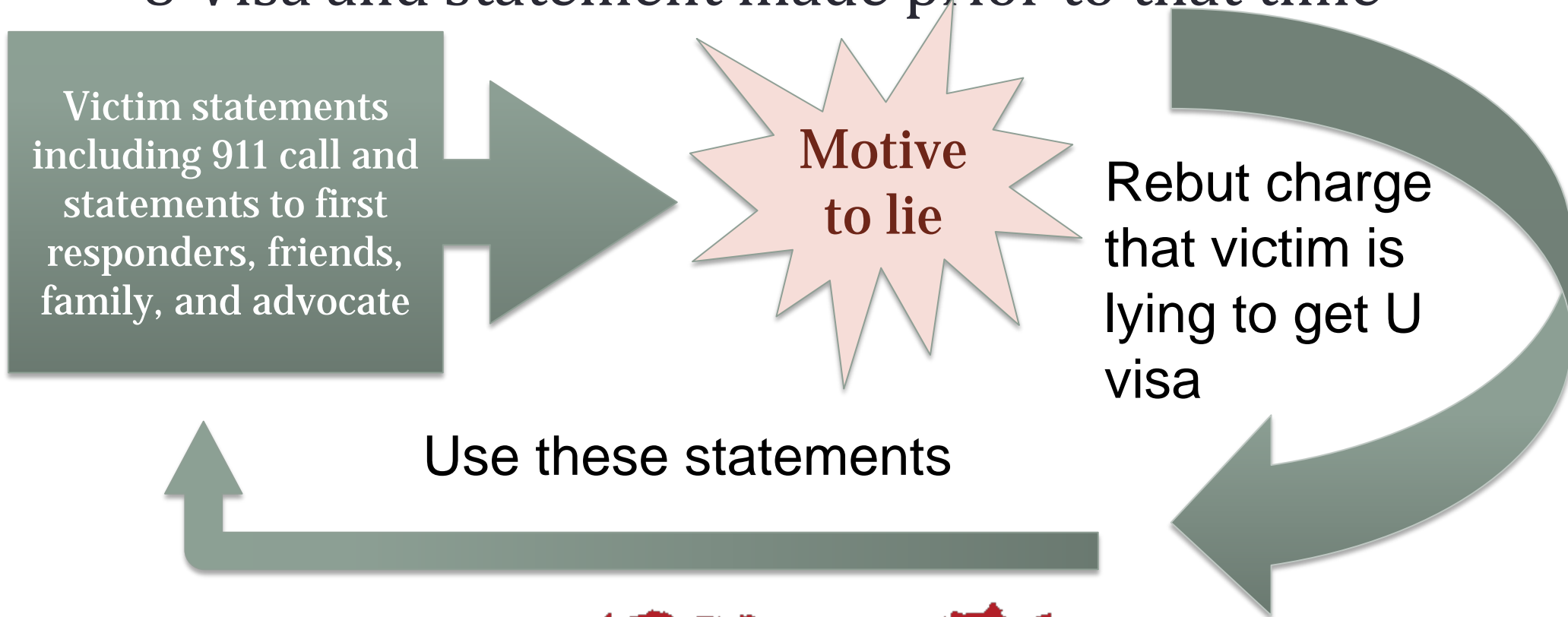
Prior Consistent Statements

F.R.E. 801(d)(B)

- Non-hearsay
- Not subject to Crawford
- Any consistent statement
 - offered to rebut an express or implied charge that the declarant recently fabricated it or acted from a recent improper influence or motive in so testifying
 - to rehabilitate the declarant's credibility as a witness when attacked on another ground

Introducing Statements

- Establish timeline of when victim was told about U Visa and statement made prior to that time



Victim Statements

- 911 call
- Statements to first responders
- Interview by detective
- Comments made to family, friends, or coworkers
- Conversation with service providers
 - Community-based v. Systems-based

Expert Witness Testimony

- Immigration abuse and relief are not topics within the common understanding of a juror
- Consider who may be an appropriate witness to discuss dynamics and legal aspects of your case
 - Victim service providers / advocates
 - Mental health professionals
 - Immigration or family law attorney
 - Legal professor
 - Others...

Certify Early

PROS

CONS

Establish trust

Build rapport

Protect from offender

Protect from deportation

~~Assess the situation
the benefits of
the process
generally~~

Going Forward

- When probable cause exists, certify early to ensure victim safety and enhance victim participation
- Focus on the offender's actions throughout the investigation and prosecution
- Litigate discovery and pretrial motions to ensure just results
- Turn challenges into strengths

Does your agency have a
U-Visa policy/procedure ?

Large Group Discussion

- City of X, Law Enforcement Certification Protocol
- Are these true or false?
 - Identify any problems with the protocol
 - Note provision numbers
 - How could the protocol be improved?
 - What is missing?
 - **MODEL POLICY in USB**

Small Group Discussion

Based on the training today, what will you take back when you return to your agency?

- What might you want to implement?
- Questions you want to ask?

DHS Resources



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

Victim Assistance Specialist

SAC Atlanta

Alia El-Sawi

Phone: 404-346-2879

alia.el-sawi@ice.dhs.gov

NIWAP

National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project at the American University
Washington College of Law

Resources

- ▶ **Technical Assistance**

- ▶ Call: 202.274.4457
- ▶ Email: niwap@wcl.american.edu

- ▶ **Materials on U visa and Immigrant Victims Legal Rights**

- ▶ Visit <http://niwaplibrary.wcl.american.edu>
- ▶ U Visa Certification Toolkit
- ▶ DHS Answers to Law Enforcement Reasons for Not Certifying
- ▶ USCIS Q & A on U Visa Certification
- ▶ Roll call training videos
- ▶ All available at: <http://niwap.org/lawenforcement>

Evaluations

- Evaluations are in your training packet
- Certificates

Thank You!

NIWAP

National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project at the American University
Washington College of Law