

Immigration Relief for Victims of Crime

Many abused immigrants are qualified for protection from deportation, legal status, and employment authorization, *including immigrants who currently have no lawful status.*

What does LSVAP do?

Lone Star Victims Advocacy Project **educates, advocates** for, and provides free legal services to **empower** abused immigrants in rural Texas. We work with immigrant victims to help them get the right to be and work legally in the U.S. We also provide free trainings on working with immigrants and technical assistance to law enforcement and advocate to make resources available for all victims of crime.

RESOURCES

National Domestic Violence
Hotline: 800-799-7233
Language Line: 800-752-6096
Telephone Access to Justice
Hotline: 888-988-9966
TX Legal Services Center
Hotline: 800-622-2520
TX State Bar Referral: 800-
252-9690
Crime Victims Compensation:
800-983-9933
U.S. Dept. of Homeland
Security Law Enforcement
Liaison: 202-272-1470

Contact LSVAP
(512) 715-4831
www.lsvap.org



Immigrant Victims of Crime

*A Pocket Guide for
Law Enforcement*



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Best Practices for Working with Immigrants

1. Use Bilingual Staff or Professional Interpreters to Communicate: Using children or friends and family members leads to victims withholding information, and will traumatize any children used to interpret.

2. Be Clear About Your Role: Many immigrants do not understand the responsibilities and distinctions between local, federal and state enforcement agencies. Many immigrants may assume you are there to deport them, even if they have the right to be here. Make sure the immigrants know what you are there to talk about, and what your job is, and what your job is not.

3. Be Mindful About Cultural Differences: many immigrants may come from countries where police were corrupt, abusive or violent. They may not understand that you are here to help, and may require encouragement and support.

Immigration Status is **legally irrelevant** to obtaining:

- Police Assistance
- Protective Orders
- Emergency Shelter
- Emergency Medical Care
- Custody

Immigrants may not be aware that domestic violence is a crime, or may believe that they do not have the right to speak with law enforcement because they are not citizens.

Forms of Abuse Specific to Immigrants

1. Threats of Deportation: Deportation to an immigrant's home country may mean exposure to gender based and gang violence for victim and children, or separation from children who are U.S. Citizens.

2. Failing to File Papers to Legalize Immigration Status: Many immigrant victims qualify for legal status; by preventing them from accessing that status abusers continue control them.

3. Lying About Immigrant's Legal Status: Abusers lie to both immigrants and law enforcement about victims' status.

4. Not Permitting Immigrant to Learn English: Preventing immigrants from speaking for themselves with those around them is a tactic of power and control and profoundly isolating.

5. Hiding or Destroying Immigrant's I.D.: Many abusers control passports, green cards or work permits.