

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 remotely with immigrant victims to help them get the right to be and work legally in the U.S. We provide free trainings on working with immigrants 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
TLSC's CPS Helpline: 844-
888-6565
National Stalking Resource
Center: 202-467-8700

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



Immigrant Victims of Crime

*A Pocket Guide for
Shelter Advocates*



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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: Make sure the immigrants know what you are there to talk about, and what your job is, and what your job is not. Set clear expectations and boundaries around what you can, will and cannot do on behalf of the client. Collaborating with ally organizations across multiple expertise areas is the best way to provide holistic services to immigrants.

3. Understand that Immigrant Survivors Have Long Term Needs: the immigration legal process takes a long time, in some cases years. Be aware that immigrant survivors will need ongoing support and may be re-traumatized by the civil legal processes they must go through to obtain protection from deportation.

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

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

Immigrants may not be aware that they have been abused, or that the abuse they have lived through is a crime. By asking follow up questions, you can screen for serious abuse that immigrants may not think to disclose.

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.