

PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES

Less than half of the people facing deportation cases in Florida have legal representation. Because undocumented immigration is not a crime, immigrants, even children, do not have a right to an attorney. Local governments can partner with legal aid foundations and law firms to ensure immigrants have the legal advice necessary to navigate our incredibly complex immigration system.

BEST PRACTICES

- » Establish an Immigrant Legal Aid Program to provide legal counsel to local community members navigating the immigration system.
- » Establish an Immigrant Legal Aid Fund to help fund legal aid services for local immigrants.

WHY?

- » According to the Vera Institute of Justice, a staggering 77 percent of immigration court cases in 2019 had no legal representation.
- » Studies have shown that immigrants with legal representation are up to 10 times more likely to establish their right to remain in the United States than those without representation.

BUT WHAT ABOUT...

Cost

- » Public-private partnerships can offset the cost. The local economic impact of immigrants being ensnared in the system outweighs this cost.

TRAILBLAZERS

Broward County and West Palm Beach provide funding for local legal aid societies to provide legal counsel to people subject to immigration detainers or those in detention.