



Public Counsel is a nonprofit public interest law firm dedicated to advancing civil rights and racial and economic justice, as well as to amplifying the power of our clients through comprehensive legal advocacy. Founded on and strengthened by a pro bono legal service model, our staff and volunteers seek justice through direct legal services, promote healthy and resilient communities through education and outreach, and support community-led efforts to transform unjust systems through litigation and policy advocacy in and beyond Los Angeles.

IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS

The Immigrants' Rights team (IRP) at Public Counsel is an interdisciplinary team of attorneys, social workers, and advocates that provides holistic services to underserved immigrant communities, including immigrant children, detained immigrants, asylum seekers, and survivors of serious crime and human trafficking. We also engage in strategic litigation and policy advocacy to uplift and defend the rights of immigrants. Our summer interns may gain hands-on experience in both direct service and policy advocacy.

PRO BONO ASYLUM TEAM

IRP's Pro Bono Asylum Team (PBA) represents individuals and families from around the world who have experienced or fear persecution on account of their nationality, race, religion, political opinion or membership in a particular social group—including claims based on domestic violence, gang violence, and anti-LGBTQ+ harm. In partnership with a large team of *pro bono* attorneys, PBA assists clients seeking immigration relief before the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), local Immigration Courts, the Board of Immigration Appeals, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. We also engage in policy advocacy and community education to protect the rights of asylum seekers.

SURVIVOR TEAM

IRP's Survivor Team specializes in serving immigrant survivors of serious crime and human trafficking in their applications for humanitarian immigration relief, including the U Visa, T Visa, protection under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and lawful permanent residence based on those forms of relief. We strive to provide holistic, trauma-informed services to our clients and address their social service needs, such as access to housing, public benefits, and mental health resources, to help our clients live healthy, stable lives. We engage in coalition building to promote policies and practices that best serve immigrant survivors and engage in community education to promote the rights of immigrants.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN TEAM

IRP's Unaccompanied Children (UC) Team represents children who have come without parents to the United States, often after fleeing extreme violence. We defend our clients from deportation and represent them in immigration court, state court, and before the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS). We also empower the children we serve by assessing their non-legal needs and helping them access essential services, including education and health care. The vast majority of our clients are eligible for and secure asylum or special immigrant juvenile status.



(SIJS), and ultimately become lawful permanent residents, placing them on the path to U.S. citizenship.

ANTI-DETENTION TEAM

IRP's Anti-Detention Team provides representation to individuals in detention and upon release in their removal and bond proceedings. The Anti-Detention Team's mission is to fight for the collective liberation of people harmed by U.S. immigration detention and deportation machines through client-centered legal advocacy. Our team values providing excellent representation that is client-centered, collaborative, creative, and trauma-informed. We strive to work collaboratively with our clients and their families to ensure that they are informed and empowered to make decisions about their case.

POLICY AND STRATEGIC LITIGATION TEAM

In addition to our direct service work, IRP is engaged in strategic litigation and local, state and national policy advocacy to promote the rights of immigrants. Public Counsel is co-counsel on *Vasquez-Perdomo vs. Noem*, which seeks to halt ICE's use of racial profiling and roving patrols to unlawfully arrest immigrants. IRP has successfully litigated and secured legal protections for immigrant children and separated families. We have led efforts to establish local and state funding to support universal representation for immigrants and led a campaign to combat the devastating impact of notario fraud on the communities we serve. We have succeeded in freeing our clients from life-threatening ICE detention and have collaborated with partners working nationally to demand protection for thousands of immigrants detained by ICE in facilities where conditions are life-threatening. IRP continues to work in coalition with our community partners to protect immigrant communities from abusive ICE practices and ensure that they are afforded access to legal representation and due process.

What do student interns do in IRP?

Students who intern with IRP are trained on how to conduct client interviews and identify forms of immigration relief, with a focus on Asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), U Visa, T Visa, and VAWA. Students may also assist attorneys on preparing applications for relief, conducting research on legal issues, appearing in court, and helping to draft advocacy materials. Students may also conduct community outreach and education, as well as engage in policy advocacy and litigation to promote and defend the rights of immigrants.
