

Complexities of Immigration Law

By K. Dean Kantaras and Brittany Mohamed Trapnell

Immigration laws change with every new presidential administration, since the federal government is responsible for the immigration laws of the United States, with Congress having the authority to create, modify and alter immigration laws. In addition, there are many federal agencies involved in immigration to further complicate the situation. The Department of Homeland Security is responsible for enforcing immigration laws. The Department of Justice is responsible for enforcing immigration laws within the immigration court system. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services is responsible for administering benefits and services. The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which in and of itself has numerous sub-agencies, is responsible for targeting public safety threats, such as convicted criminal undocumented individuals and gang members.

With so many agencies involved, it is important to consult with a law firm that understands the importance of monitoring changes and how those changes may affect current clients and their pending cases. There is a seemingly endless list of ways an individual can apply for a permanent resident card, commonly known as a green card. However, the application process can be complex due to the eligibility rules and procedures involved. There are numerous paths, and each option requires different steps for the application process. Seek a professional with knowledge of family-based immigration, deportation or removal defense, victim advocacy through the Violence Against Women Act, and U-Visas.

A battered spouse, child, or parent of a United States citizen may file an immigrant visa petition under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), as amended by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). An individual may obtain residence through a job, where an employer has the option of obtaining a labor certification, followed



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by a green card petition on their behalf. Or they may qualify to self-petition under the employment-based regulations if they are pursuing an endeavor that has substantial merit and national importance and they are well-positioned to advance that endeavor. Another option is the U-Visa, which allows an individual who has suffered substantial mental or physical abuse and is willing to assist law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity to apply for residence.

As immigration laws continue to evolve, having a knowledgeable advocate by your side is more crucial than ever. The complexities of immigration law can be overwhelming, especially with the continuous introduction of new policies, shifting enforcement practices, and a legal system that can be difficult to navigate on your own. Whether you are seeking a green card through family based or employment-based petitions, pursuing relief from

removal or deportation proceedings, or exploring humanitarian options, find a team to guide you through these intricate processes with care and expertise.

Immigration decisions often impact not only your future but also the well-being of your loved ones. That's why you want professional representation with a personalized, client-centered approach, ensuring your specific needs and concerns are addressed at every step. From advising on eligibility criteria to gathering the necessary documentation, preparing for interviews or court hearings, and ensuring you meet deadlines, a professional firm provides comprehensive support tailored to your case.

It is important to stay informed on the latest changes in federal regulations, executive orders, and case law so that you receive the most accurate and timely advice. Immigration laws can change rapidly, and staying ahead of these shifts is essential for ensuring a smooth process. By working with a well-prepared professional, you can feel confident that your case is being handled with the utmost attention and that you are making informed decisions about your future. ♦

EDITOR'S NOTE: K. Dean Kantaras is the managing partner of K. Dean Kantaras, P.A., a firm handling cases in family law and immigration. Mr. Kantaras is board certified in marital and family law by the Florida Bar. He has been practicing for over 30 years and is "AV" rated by Martindale-Hubbell. Brittany Mohamed Trapnell is lead immigration attorney at the firm and a graduate of the University of Central Florida and the West Virginia University College of Law, where she was president of the Student Bar Association. Their offices are located at 3531 Alternate 19, Palm Harbor, 34683, (727) 781-0000; 1930 East Bay Drive, Largo, 33771; and 111 S. Albany Ave., Suite 200, Tampa, 33606, kantaraslaw.com.