

CHAPTER 7



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**LEGAL
SERVICES**

LEGAL SERVICES

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This chapter provides an overview of challenges that arise when representing torture survivors and strategies to ensure these challenges do not act as a barrier to effective legal representation.

Attorneys encounter torture survivors with a variety of legal needs. Frequently, however, the survivor's initial and most pressing legal problem involves immigration matters, such as asylum, family reunification, or defense from removal (deportation). Because safety is crucial to the survivor's ability to engage fully in torture treatment services, the asylum process is integral to rehabilitation.

Other related immigration legal services, including family reunification and obtaining lawful permanent resident status, may also be vital to the survivor's steps toward rehabilitation. Survivors with a variety of immigration statuses may find themselves in need of representation in these matters.

When feasible, torture treatment centers and immigration legal services professionals work in cooperation. Lawyers, however, are rarely trained to work with survivors of torture and may be overwhelmed by many challenges presented during representation.

The goal of legal representation is deceptively straightforward: to provide sound legal advice that enables the client to make an informed choice of action, and to represent the client in achieving his or her legal objective. Realizing that goal can be far from simple, especially when the lawyer represents a client who has survived the trauma of torture.



Most survivors of torture are newcomers to the United States. They share with other newcomers the challenges of unfamiliarity with the United States legal system and lack of fluency in the English language.

Survivors often face specific trauma-related challenges—depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and fear of authority, including lawyers and the judicial system. The client's relationship with an attorney, prosecutor, or judge may be problematic if legal professionals participated in the client's torture or persecution.

Without a lawyer's careful attention, these issues may interfere substantially with clients' ability to participate in their representation.

In these situations, attorneys must diligently practice the basics of good lawyering: building a solid attorney-client relationship, communicating effectively with the client throughout representation, and, at all times, treating the client with dignity and respect.

LIFE EXPERIENCES AND RESETTLEMENT ISSUES

A survivor's life experiences and issues unique to resettlement in a new country may create obstacles to the effective delivery of

legal services. The client, lawyer, and other service providers may need to address these experiences and issues before representation can move forward.

AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

The lawyer cannot assume a torture survivor is familiar with basic U.S. legal concepts, which are often learned by those who grow up in this country through high school civics classes and television courtroom dramas. While the lawyer must clarify the attorney-client relationship with all clients, it is especially important when representing torture survivors that the attorney avoids making assumptions and takes time to start at the beginning.

Concepts like the adversarial process and the independence of the judiciary may be unfamiliar. Confidentiality of communications and attorney-client privilege — the foundation of the relationship — must be carefully explained.

Attorneys working with torture survivors, whether providing free legal services or working for a fee, must take care to draft clear retainer agreements specifying the legal fees, the costs for which the client will be responsible, and the scope of the legal work to be undertaken. The attorney must explain these agreements to the client at the outset to ensure the client understands the services.

While some clients may not know the U.S. legal system, it is a mistake to assume clients are unfamiliar with legal concepts or lack sophistication or education. Clients come from all backgrounds and may be attorneys, judges, physicians, government officials, scientists, professors, journalists, or business owners. In

short, it is critical that the attorney take time to ask questions about the client's background, explain basic concepts, and remain open to the client's questions throughout the process.

DEALING WITH IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Torture survivors deal with complicated and emotionally stressful resettlement concerns. Unfortunately, many legal issues arise during one of the most stressful periods in the client's life.

Often clients will turn to their attorneys to solve the many problems they are facing, including lack of adequate housing, unemployment, isolation, medical problems, or lack of transportation. Some of these issues—such as obtaining employment or petitioning to bring family members to the United States—may not be solvable until asylum is granted, making it particularly important that the attorney act promptly to establish realistic expectations for time frames and the likelihood of success. Other issues, most obviously medical problems, should be referred to the appropriate professionals.

Still other issues may require effort, attention, and creativity on the attorney's part. For example, if the client cannot travel to the attorney's office, the attorney may need to consider meeting in a location nearer the client's home, conducting some business by telephone, and coordinating meetings with other appointments the client has in order to minimize transportation problems.

For asylum seekers, many other issues, in addition to securing legal immigration status, hinge on obtaining asylum: release from detention, employment authorization, and eligibility for government assistance, housing

**BALANCING NEEDS:
LEGAL DEADLINES VS.
IMMINENT NEEDS**

SCHEDULE REGULAR, periodic meetings with the client. This allows the client to schedule regular transportation and coordinate the visit with the lawyer with other appointments. Most importantly, this keeps the preparation of the case on schedule even when some meetings are less productive due to the client's attention to immediate concerns.

programs, job-training services, and the ability to reunite with family members.

REUNIFICATION WITH FAMILY

Concerns for the safety of family members left behind and efforts to be reunited with them are of critical importance to the asylum seeker. Attorneys working with asylum seekers should explain realistic time frames to avoid giving false expectations. Deadlines, such as for filing a petition for refugee or asylee family members, should be clearly explained.

Lawyers should also think about how to minimize delays. For example, in order for an asylee to petition to bring his or her spouse and children to the United States, the asylee must submit proof of the relationship (such as the birth certificate or marriage certificate) and a photograph of each family member. These documents may take months to obtain. Asylum seekers can begin gathering this documentation while waiting for their asylum decisions, so they can file petitions for the family members immediately upon obtaining asylum.

Similarly, attorneys or other legal workers helping refugees reunify with family members abroad should take care to lay out necessary steps and convey accurate information about deadlines and expected adjudication times. Torture survivors applying for lawful permanent resident status or naturalization may be relying on that status to petition to immigrate other family members, including adult sons and daughters, siblings, and parents, to the United States.

Other survivors may be unaware of the benefits of lawful permanent residence or of citizenship. Careful advice from immigration attorneys helps survivors make sound choices

that will benefit their families.

Refugees entering the United States through the refugee resettlement system face enormous stress in the refugee camps, long waits for permission to enter the United States, and a lack of access to sound legal advice while in the refugee camps. Attorneys working with refugees need to be aware of the contents of their clients' refugee files.

Attorneys must pay particular attention to refugees who enter the United States as derivative beneficiaries of a parent's refugee application before filing other applications or petitions. In some cases, the child, called the derivative refugee, may not be the biological child of the parent, or principal refugee.

Immigration authorities often discover this when the child applies for naturalization and a request is made for a change of name to the child's true name, which was concealed at the time of refugee processing. Because this relationship was misrepresented, the child's refugee status may be terminated and removal proceedings initiated. While there is little corrective action that can be taken once the misrepresentation happens, it is crucial that the attorney discuss these possibilities with the refugee before filing petitions for relatives or applications for adjustment of status or naturalization.

**BALANCING LEGAL DEADLINES AND
CLIENTS' IMMEDIATE NEEDS**

Dealing with legal realities in an empathetic and productive way is essential. The client needs to know the attorney cares, while understanding that the attorney may be unable to solve all problems and that there are boundaries to the attorney-client relationship.

When the client is working with profession-

als at a torture treatment center, their care team may include a social worker skilled in helping the client find solutions to immediate needs. If the client does not have access to such comprehensive services, the attorney should make, when possible, appropriate referrals to other service providers. The unfortunate fact, however, is that services may not be readily available to clients without immigration status.

Ideally, the client's immediate needs are met before they must deal with legal problems. In reality, the lawyer must balance legal deadlines and the need to prepare the case with the client's desire to focus on immediate, day-to-day concerns.

Clients may be in such distress over housing, financial, or medical concerns that they are unable to concentrate on legal issues. In such situations, preparing the case will take more time. The lawyer must keep case deadlines clearly in the client's mind while remaining aware of other important issues facing the client.

COMPREHENDING TORTURE

Inherent in the asylum process is the telling and retelling of the client's story of torture, trauma, and persecution. While obtaining the story, the attorney must avoid re-traumatizing the client. The client must confront issues of loss—especially the loss of family, home, work, and community—during the asylum process in order to present the case to the adjudicator (asylum officer or judge). An attorney's ability to address these complex issues while assisting the client with his or her legal needs is critical to effective representation.

An attorney needs to be aware that the client's trauma is not confined to the torture

itself. The Triple Trauma Paradigm, identifies trauma the client has likely experienced at different phases: pre-flight, flight, and post-flight. In each stage, clients will experience fears and losses that influence their ability to participate in legal proceedings.

THE TORTURE SURVIVOR'S RESPONSE TO THE LEGAL SYSTEM

In some instances, members of the home country's legal system were involved in the repression and torture survived by the asylum seeker. Understandably, this may create an immediate barrier to developing a trusting relationship between the client and the attorney. Clear explanations of the role and duties of the lawyer in the United States legal system may alleviate this concern.

Traumatized clients may be reluctant to work on the details of their asylum claims, which involve recalling and recounting extremely painful events. They may deflect these discussions by focusing on other issues.

Fear of authority figures, including the client's own attorney, immigration officials, and judges may interfere with the attorney-client relationship or with the client's ability to go forward with the legal case.

The response of the United States government to asylum seekers exacerbates the client's fears. Many asylum seekers, including torture survivors, are detained in U.S. jails, prisons, and immigration detention centers throughout their cases. Often conditions of detention mir-



A uniformed police officer passed by David and his attorney in the law office building. The attorney's response was one of mild curiosity about where the officer was going. David, who is a torture survivor, on the other hand, became silent and began sweating. His assumption, based on his experience, was that someone — perhaps he — would be taken away by the police without charge or explanation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Triple Trauma Paradigm, see **CHAPTER 3**.





Birana, a medical doctor from Nepal, developed what seemed to be a good rapport with her volunteer attorney, who was working with a torture survivor for the first time. They enjoyed lively discussions about Birana's profession and observations about the U.S. medical system. When the attorney's questions turned to the client's incarceration in her home country, however, Birana grew unresponsive. Applying traditional credibility indicators, the attorney became concerned Birana was fabricating her claim. After a meeting at the referring legal services organization, the volunteer attorney concluded Birana's trauma was probably severe and referred her to the local torture treatment center. Birana received treatment while the volunteer attorney continued working with her. After learning the extent of Birana's suffering, the attorney described her as the bravest individual she knew. Eventually asylum was granted.

ror those the asylum seeker fled.

Lawyers working with detained torture survivors need to establish that they do not work for the government and that communications with clients will remain confidential. Attorneys may be the only contact clients have with the outside world. They must be alert to the clients' medical and psychological needs, advocating for clients with detention facilities or immigration authorities to ensure clients are receiving appropriate care.

GATHERING FORENSIC DOCUMENTATION

The attorney will need to coordinate the gathering of forensic documentation related to the client's asylum case, including medical and psychological assessments. Procedures governing the client's access to outside medical and psychological personnel may be difficult to navigate, and will vary depending on his or her location. Often the attorney will be called upon to obtain documentary evidence from the client's home country. Efforts must be made to ensure the detained client is able to carry the burden of proof in the asylum case.

DEVELOPING THE CASE: AVOIDING RE-TRAUMATIZATION WHILE GETTING THE FACTS

A successful asylum case depends upon the client's accurate written and oral testimony about the experiences leading to flight from the country of persecution. Cases hinge on two interdependent items: first, the consistent, complete, and accurate retelling of the client's story, both in the written application and in person; and, second, the client's credibility as indicated by demeanor, specificity, detail, and consistency while retelling the story.

Asylum seekers are held to an extremely high standard. They must recount every material detail of their case, including dates, times, places, and people. They must recount their stories in a coherent manner, enabling the adjudicator to understand what took place and why. They must answer questions about why the persecution or torture took place, why they were targeted, and why they were able to escape to safety.

The client's account of events must be detailed, consistent, and complete from the outset. Once the written claim is filed, adding information later remembered or shared with the lawyer may be seen as embellishment and lead to a finding that the client is not credible.

At the same time, asylum seekers must file their claims within one year of arrival in the United States. Few exceptions apply to the one-year deadline and claims that the client was too traumatized to immediately pursue the case often will be rejected. If asylum seekers are in removal proceedings, their applications and evidence must be filed in accordance with court filing deadlines.

Developing the torture survivor's asylum case cannot be completed in one sitting. Lawyers must plan to work with the client closely throughout the available time to best develop the case. The client and attorney must build sufficient rapport and trust for the client to be able to reveal all aspects of the story, including embarrassing or humiliating details. Frequently relevant information is revealed only after the attorney and client have been working together for an extensive period.

To present the case persuasively, the attorney must become familiar with the client's

own story and the context in which the events unfolded, in addition to gathering documentary and forensic evidence.

Rushed preparation of the case risks leaving important elements undeveloped. Because so much hinges on the grant of asylum, the client may be understandably anxious for the case to proceed quickly. While the attorney needs to avoid unnecessary delays, he or she also must keep the bigger picture of case development and evidence production in mind.

Symptoms suffered by survivors, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder, may interfere with clients' ability to participate in their cases. Clients may have difficulty remembering details of events. Their emotional reactions when recounting traumatic events may seem inappropriate.

They may avoid discussing the torture or other traumatic events or begin missing appointments with the attorney when they anticipate the discussion will be too painful. Clients may not recount torture events in a linear fashion; they may jump from one event to the next or omit details. This may be particularly true for individuals who have endured multiple arrests or for whom torture started at an early age.

Traditional indicators of credibility in U.S. courts—demeanor, eye contact, consistent recall of events—may not be valid indicators in the client's culture or may be affected by shame surrounding the torture itself. Both attorneys and adjudicators may jump to the conclusion that a torture sur-

vivor is lying. Counsel for the asylum seeker must understand the sequelae, or aftereffects, that result from torture. The attorney also must develop evidence to present to the adjudicator that offsets a negative credibility finding.

COORDINATING CARE: WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH TORTURE TREATMENT PROFESSIONALS

As discussed earlier, the effects of torture can interfere with the client's full participation in the legal case. There is no substitute for a care team trained in working with torture survivors to help meet the client's medical, psychological, and social needs. Where such expertise is not available, attorneys need to research providers who have sufficient training to assist their clients.

All members of the care team will better serve the needs of the client when they work together. For example, the attorney may benefit from understanding the effects of torture as they relate to the client's memory of the event. The psychologist may benefit from knowing about an upcoming asylum hearing that may be causing the client anxiety. The social worker, trying to arrange housing, may need to know the status of the client's immigration case to determine eligibility for programs. Regular communication among team members facilitates care.

In addition, medical and psychological assessments by experts may provide documentation in support of the asylum claim. Asylum seekers have the burden of producing all reasonably available evi-

dence in support of their claims. Evidence of physical injury and psychological condition, together with an expert opinion regarding the likely cause, may be persuasive. Obtaining evaluations in advance of the asylum interview or removal hearing enters this information into the record. Professionals preparing these evaluations may be called upon to serve as expert witnesses at trial.

Attorneys should never assume that the client's treating physician or therapist will provide an evaluation or serve as an expert witness. Practice will vary depending on the torture treatment center's policies and on the needs of the individual client.

At the onset of representation, the attorney and members of the client's care team should discuss whether the provider will be able to serve as an expert witness in support of the asylum case or whether an outside assessment will be required. Also, the attorney must develop a plan and timeline for developing expert assessments and witnesses.

BUILDING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Cultural competence is ever-developing and is a critical tool to building a sound, productive, and ethical attorney-client relationship. Cultural experiences affect many aspects of this interaction. These include building trusting relationships, evaluating credibility, developing client-centered case strategies and solutions, and gathering information. Cultural competence is largely a matter



When sought as a witness in a criminal investigation, Beatrice, an asylum seeker, and her attorney met with the criminal defense attorney. The defense attorney carefully laid out Beatrice's options: to talk to the police without assurances the conversation would not be used against her in later criminal charges, to seek assurances the conversation would not be used against her later, or to refuse to talk to the police. When Beatrice asked what would happen if she refused to speak to the police, the attorney replied "the government might try to make things difficult." Beatrice, a survivor of torture, went pale, believing the attorney meant she would face the same torture she had suffered in her home country. The immigration attorney, aware of the torture, explained she would absolutely not be tortured or otherwise physically harmed by the police for exercising her constitutional right against self-incrimination. The defense attorney then detailed what sort of pressure the police might bring against her in that situation. Had the miscommunication not been discovered, Beatrice would have been unnecessarily frightened and would have been unable to make an informed decision because she would have based her decision on a critical misunderstanding.

of common sense, awareness, and willingness to learn new information.

DEVELOPING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Communicating effectively with a person from another culture is challenging. Body language, gestures, gender roles, communication, and story-telling styles may vary dramatically.

Building cultural competence involves learning about differences that can stand in the way of clear understanding. For example, gestures such as nodding may convey a different meaning than that assumed by the listener. Paying close attention to the client's eye contact, tone of voice and manner of answering questions provides cues as to the client's comfort with the relationship and the process of obtaining legal services.

As Professor Angela McCaffrey discusses in her article, "Don't Get Lost in Translation: Teaching Students to Work With Interpreters," (2000) taking time to learn the basics of the home country's legal system and the client's social and political background helps avoid misunderstandings, saves time and frustration, and more accurately conveys the client's story.

Make sure that lawyer and client are using the same definition of a term. For example, a client maintained he had been

arrested three times, but in the course of discussion with the attorney preparing his asylum application, he mentioned many other times when he was held by the police. Eventually the client explained that when the attorney asked about "arrests," he thought only of the three times he was held in prison for extended periods of time. The dozens of other times he was stopped by the police and detained for a few hours or days he regarded as "routine" and not worthy of mention.

Basic understanding of the client's home country can greatly facilitate communication. For example, interviewing clients from Ethiopia can be challenging if the attorney does not know the Ethiopian calendar is approximately seven years and eight months behind the Julian calendar commonly used by the rest of the world.

DEFINING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Cross-cultural communication skills are never more relevant than when the attorney and client are discussing family relationships for immigration purposes. Attorneys working in the field of immigration understand the precise, technical definitions given to various family relationships under the Immigration and Nationality Act. Definitions of "spouse," "parent," and "child" all may be found at 8 U.S.C., Section 1101. These definitions are substantially different from those used in standard American English, and may be radically different from the definition commonly understood in the client's culture.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on cultural competence, see **CHAPTER 3**.



Unfortunately, misunderstandings or inaccurate descriptions of the family relationship described by the immigrant client may have grave consequences: negative credibility findings, denial of family reunification petitions, and revocation of status and removal from the United States.

There simply is no room for error in identifying the family relationship on immigration forms. Misrepresentations, whether intentional or not, made by torture survivors on their immigration forms may come back to haunt them years later when immigration authorities demand authenticated birth certificates or paternity testing.

Because of the potentially tragic consequences of inaccuracies when listing family members on immigration forms, attorneys working with torture survivors must elicit accurate descriptions of the relationship between the client and the family members. Simply asking the client to list their children, for example, without explaining the definition of the term child and without questioning the client about the precise parentage of their children may yield an inaccurate or incomplete list.

Clients asked about their children may think broadly, applying the practical definition of child used in their country, and include the children of relatives or neighbors left in their care at the outbreak of war or the disappearance of a child's biological parents. On the other hand, clients may think very narrowly, assuming the attorney is asking only for those children living in the client's household.

Avoid assumptions about family relationships. Ask questions about the relationship rather than relying on the descriptor of uncle or sister to make assumptions. Draw family trees to understand all the relevant characters in the client's story.

It is particularly important for the attorney to apply the basic concepts of cultural communication skills in this area. The attorney must recognize that not all cultures define family relationships in the same way. Without this recognition, the attorney may fail to adequately question the client about the relationships and may not elicit sufficient information to accurately analyze the relationship under the relevant legal definition.

Equally important, the attorney must remain nonjudgmental when the client describes family relationships that are not commonly recognized in the United States. For example, a male client may indicate that he has more than one wife. While the practice of polygamy is not permitted in the United States and the client may be unable to obtain immigration status on behalf of his entire family because of this, it is critical that the attorney learns this information in order to represent the client effectively.

EFFECTIVE LEGAL REPRESENTATION WITH AN INTERPRETER

Effective legal representation depends on clear and accurate communication. For those not fluent in American English, interpreting is essential. If interpreting is necessary, a competent interpreter must

be used throughout the preparation and presentation of the case. Failure to use competent and impartial interpreters risks errors, omissions, and inaccuracy that later may be insurmountable.

Nowhere is accurate interpretation more crucial than in the asylum case. The asylum seeker's credibility will be judged on the consistency of specific, and often minute, details of the case.

Asylum seekers in the United States must provide their own interpreters at their Asylum Office interviews. Interpreters at asylum interviews are rarely certified, professional interpreters and are often friends, family, or community members.

Asylum seekers and others appearing in the U.S. Immigration Court are provided with a court interpreter, who is either an employee of the court or under contract to provide interpreting services. While many Immigration Court interpreters provide excellent interpretations, failure to detect and correct errors threatens the non-English-speaker's access to the justice system.

THE CHALLENGE OF INTERPRETING

Interpreting and translation are difficult tasks, requiring interpreters and translators to be competent in both languages. In addition, they must be familiar with the cultural backgrounds of the client and attorney, the particular dialects used, and any required technical language.

In one case cited by McCaffrey, the Spanish sentence “!Hombre, ni tengo diez



An attorney prepared an asylum application using the interpreter who initially accompanied the client to his office. The client spoke and read no English and the case was prepared entirely through the same interpreter. The asylum case was not called for interview for several years. During that time, the interpreter died. When finally scheduled, the client brought a new interpreter to prepare for the interview. It was discovered that many of the incidents included in the asylum application never happened to the client, but rather were inserted by the interpreter to bolster the case.

kilos!” was interpreted by the court interpreter as “Man, I don’t even have 10 kilos [of drugs],” rather than “Man, I don’t even have ten cents.” The mistranslation of one word *kilos*, led to a mistaken drug conviction of a Cuban man.

Interpreting is even more complex if legal or other specialized language is used. When working with torture victims seeking asylum or in any immigration matter, the interpreter needs to be familiar with specialized terminology, including technical legal language explaining the asylum and immigration laws, place names from the home country, and terms for torture techniques.

STEPS FOR SELECTING AN INTERPRETER

First determine whether the client needs an interpreter. If an interpreter is needed, then determine in what situations.

The client may be able to speak sufficient English to schedule appointments by telephone but be unable to understand questions or convey important information. Be alert for clients who seem to latch onto nouns in a sentence but who are unable to distinguish more complex concepts, such as time or direction. The client may be able to speak English, but not read or write important documents, so providing either translated documents or making an interpreter available to read the documents in the client’s language is required.

Partial knowledge of a new or second language is limiting when emotionally sensitive

and complicated personal experiences of a traumatic nature are discussed. Discuss with clients whether they would feel better able to convey their thoughts at a hearing in their first language.

Next, it is important to select an interpreter who will be effective in the particular situation. While there is no set rule for which interpreter will be best, certain considerations should be taken into account. For example, if the interpreter will be called upon to appear at an interview with the Asylum Office, it is important to work with an interpreter who is both unrelated to the asylum applicant and who has lawful immigration status in the United States.

It is important to find a neutral, qualified interpreter rather than a family member or friend. Immediate family members may not be permitted to interpret at official immigration interviews, such as the asylum interview. Interpreting by family or friends may inhibit open communication between the attorney and the client.

For example, a woman who was raped in prison is unlikely to discuss this with the attorney if her husband is interpreting for her and does not know of the incident. Or, the husband may leave out this information, not wanting to share his wife’s rape with the attorney. Such omissions obviously may have profound consequences on the asylum claim.

A shared cultural background between the client and the interpreter may assist in effective communication. But in some cases, the value of that shared cultural background may be outweighed by other considerations.

Some clients fear discussing their case in

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more on overcoming challenges of language interpreting, see **CHAPTERS 3 and 5.**



front of a person from their own country. They fear the interpreter will not maintain confidentiality of the information and that others in the community will learn embarrassing, humiliating or simply private information. Other clients may fear that the interpreter will convey information about their political activities to the government of the home country.

When political, ethnic, and clan disputes from the home country continue to be problematic in immigrant communities in the United States, an interpreter from another faction may be perceived by the torture survivor as someone with a bias against them. The value of a shared cultural background is lost, and an interpreter from outside the client's immediate community is more appropriate. Work with the client to find an interpreter who will, in that particular situation, provide the best means of open communication.

Finally, the cost of interpreting should not be overlooked. It is customary for attorneys in private practice to bill interpreter costs to clients. Clients and attorneys should clearly understand who is to bear the cost of hiring an interpreter. Responsibility for such costs should be specified in the retainer agreement. While the use of competent interpreters is essential, the use of paid professional interpreters may not be. Attorneys should explore options for volunteers when possible.

CONCLUSION

Legal work on behalf of torture survivors provides both enormous professional satisfaction and great challenges. The basic tenets of professional responsibility will help build a successful working relationship with clients who have survived torture. In addition, by tailoring legal representation programs for torture survivors, structural barriers can be reduced to provide survivors with the greatest access to legal services. For those attorneys providing even occasional services to torture survivors, careful consideration of the particular needs of the survivor can enhance attorney-client communication, strengthen the record, and ultimately contribute to the success of the case. ■

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.humanrightsfirst.org

Human Rights First (formerly Lawyer's Committee for Human Rights)

www.lirs.org/What/programs/torturesurvivor.htm

The Detained Torture Survivor Legal Support Network is a nationwide network of legal service hubs for torture survivors held in immigration detention. They have produced Pocket Knowledge, a 40-page booklet with practical information for individuals released from immigration detention. Available online in French, English, Spanish, and Arabic.

www.aila.org

www.aifl.org

The American Immigration Lawyers Association and the American Immigration Law Foundation provide excellent resources to attorneys practicing in the area of immigration law, including practice advisories and litigation support.

www.asylumlaw.org

Free Web site run by an international consortium of agencies that help asylum seekers in Australia, Canada, the United States, and several countries in Europe. Provides links to legal and human rights resources, experts, and other information valuable for asylum seekers.

www.ilrc.org

The Immigrant Legal Resource Center provides technical support and publications designed for nonprofits working in the area of immigration law.

www.uscis.gov

Web site for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. This site has location and filing information for immigration benefits, including asylum. Free immigration forms may be downloaded or filed from this site. Case status information for cases pending with USCIS may be obtained.

www.usdoj.gov/eoir

The U.S. Immigration Court system and the Board of Immigration Appeals. This site has court and BIA location and filing information, a Virtual Law Library, and information about free immigration legal services around the United States.