

**AILA / CHICAGO ASYLUM OFFICE LIAISON MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2018**

TVPRA

1. How many TVPRA asylum applicants have you interviewed since October 1, 2017?

See attached statistics.

2. How many TVPRA asylum cases have you adjudicated since October 1, 2017?

See attached statistics.

3. How many TVPRA asylum cases are currently pending a decision?

See attached statistics.

4. Are there any procedural changes in light of the new Executive Orders or due to new Headquarter directives with regard to TVPRA cases that you can share with the chapter?

No, there are no procedural changes due to either new Executive Orders or HQ directives to report to the chapter.

5. Has new guidance been issued related to when the Chicago Asylum Office will terminate UAC status for purposes of having initial jurisdiction over the asylum application? For example, an attorney received a Notice of Lack of Jurisdiction (Non-UAC) almost a year after the applicant was interviewed by the Chicago Asylum Office which indicated that the UAC status had been terminated before the asylum application was filed, but no issue of UAC status had been raised at the interview.

No new guidance has been issued to the AO regarding initial jurisdiction over cases where UAC status has been terminated. The decision to terminate UAC status is not made by the AO but once communicated to the AO will result in a notice of lack of jurisdiction. The timing of action in the present case example will be reviewed.

6. What is the best way for attorneys to raise an issue when they believe a mistake has been made regarding the Asylum Office's determination of lack of jurisdiction?

Chapter members should contact Director Kenneth Madsen or Deputy Director Lisa Flannigan directly to raise an issue when they believe a mistake was made regarding the AO's determination of lack of jurisdiction.

REASONABLE/CREDIBLE FEAR

7. How many credible fear interviews have you conducted since October 1, 2017?

See attached statistics.

8. How many reasonable fear interviews have you conducted since October 1, 2017?

See attached statistics.

9. How many individuals are currently waiting to receive a credible/reasonable fear interview?

See attached statistics.

10. How many individuals are currently waiting to receive a credible/reasonable fear decision?

See attached statistics.

11. Are there any procedural changes in light of the new Executive Orders or due to new Headquarter directives?

No, there are no procedural changes due to either new Executive Orders or HQ directives to report to the chapter.

12. Has the Asylum Office resumed normal scheduling of non-detained credible/reasonable fear interviews?

Yes, the AO has resumed scheduling of non-detained credible/reasonable fear interviews recently dedicating resources to these interviews most being conducted in the circuit ride areas of their jurisdiction.

ASYLUM

13. How many asylum cases have you adjudicated since October 1, 2017?

See attached statistics.

14. How many grants/denials/referrals?

See attached statistics.

15. Any new trends in asylum cases? Has the asylum office seen an influx of cases from any particular region of the world?

See attached statistics.

16. Are there any procedural changes in light of the new Executive Orders or due to new Headquarter directives?

No, there are no procedural changes due to either new Executive Orders or HQ directives to report to the chapter.

17. On November 3, 2017, USCIS held its quarterly Asylum Division Stakeholder Engagement meeting. During that call, Asylum Division Chief John Lafferty mentioned that USCIS is seriously considering going to a “last in, first out” approach to interviews to try and address the backlog.

- a. Is the Chicago Asylum Office currently considering a “last in, first out” approach to interviews? If so, can you clarify why it is believed that this approach would better address the backlog than a “first in, first out” approach?

Currently, there are no changes. The AO is expecting guidance from HQ on this issue and will communicate any new guidance to the chapter if and when received.

- b. Would unaccompanied children’s cases remain a priority for adjudication?

The AO is expecting guidance from HQ on this issue and will communicate any new guidance to the chapter if and when received.

- c. Has the Chicago Asylum Office received any guidance from headquarters regarding such a change in the approach to interviews?

The AO is expecting guidance from HQ on this issue and will communicate any new guidance to the chapter if and when received.

18. Attorneys have reported multiple instances in which an applicant retained new counsel after an asylum interview, new counsel filed a G28 with the asylum office, but subsequent correspondence – including the asylum decision – were sent to prior counsel. This creates significant concerns regarding confidentiality and applicant privacy, as well as due process concerns if the attorney of record does not receive notice. What steps does the Chicago Asylum Office take to ensure that new G28s are connected with an applicant’s file and that the correspondence is mailed to the attorney with the most recently filed G28?

The AO is actively addressing the need for better screening of G-28 changes to ensure this information is properly uploaded into their computer system. Chapter members should send case examples in writing to the AO directly or to the chapter liaison co-chairs.

NACARA

19. How many NACARA applications are currently pending with the Chicago Asylum Office?

See attached statistics.

20. How many grants/denials?

See attached statistics.

MISCELLANEOUS

21. Can you provide an update on any new staff and supervisory positions?

The AO is currently undergoing construction to more effectively make use of office space already leased. Current construction has not affected the interviewing officer areas and is due to be complete in one month. Upon completion, the Chicago AO anticipates being able to utilize the 60 assigned officers. Hiring is underway with additional rounds of hiring expected in the future. Anyone who may be interested should apply through USAJOBS.com when the job announcement opens.