

**AILA / CHICAGO ASYLUM OFFICE LIAISON MEETING  
OCTOBER 19, 2017 · 10:00 A.M.**

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**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 awaiting 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.*

**REASONABLE/CREDIBLE FEAR**

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

*See attached statistics.*

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

*See attached statistics.*

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

*See attached statistics.*

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

*See attached statistics.*

9. 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.*

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

*Yes, the AO has resumed normal scheduling of non-detained credible/reasonable fear interviews.*

## **ASYLUM**

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

*See attached statistics.*

12. How many grants/denials/referrals?

*See attached statistics.*

13. 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.*

14. 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.*

15. At what stage are I-863s issued for crewman and other classes of applicants who are ineligible to apply for asylum affirmatively?

*See number 16.*

16. Relatedly, what is the best way for an applicant who has entered on a visa that renders them ineligible to apply for asylum affirmatively to alert the Asylum Office that their applications should be referred to court to promote efficiency for all parties involved? Presently, chapter members file the I-589 with USCIS and the applicant spends 2-3 years waiting for the issue to be identified at the interview or issue-spotted by the AO and referred to court. Are there any steps that we can take as practitioners to help the AO identify these files?

*The AO recognizes these inefficiencies and requests chapter members' assistance. At present, the AO does not see an Applicant's file until they are scheduled for interview. Once the interview is scheduled the AO takes all possible steps to identify those applications requiring referral to EOIR to avoid further inefficiencies where possible.*

*The AO would appreciate the chapter's help in identifying these applications ahead of time by contacting the office, **in writing**, attention:*

*Edward Jeszka, Branch Chief – Affirmative Asylum  
phone: 312-849-5210*

- 17.** Chapter members have recently had issues where neither the clients nor the attorneys received receipt notices or biometrics notices after filing the asylum application. Has the Chicago Asylum Office heard anything about issues with the with the NSC issuing receipts recently?

*Receipt notices and biometrics notices are issued from different locations. Receipt notices are mailed from the AO in Chicago and biometrics notices are mailed from the service center in Nebraska. The AO is not aware of any new receipting issues at the Nebraska Service Center nor has the AO experienced any recent issues locally.*

- 18.** Can the AO provide an approximate timeline for decisions/referrals to be issued for already-interviewed cases?

*The AO considers issuing decisions a top priority and requests the chapter's patience. The AO has a present goal to deplete the backlog in issuing decisions for already-interviewed cases by the end of the fiscal year; October 1, 2018.*

- 19.** Has the AO started to reimplement the decision pick-up system previously implemented for affirmative asylum applicants?

*Yes, the Office will continue the process of pick-up of decisions. Not all cases are scheduled for pick up depending on the circumstances.*

## **NACARA**

- 20.** How many NACARA applications are currently pending with the Chicago Asylum Office?

*See attached statistics.*

- 21.** How many grants/denials?

*See attached statistics.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

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

*The AO has been actively hiring and is currently staffed with 52 officers. A supervisory list for the Chicago Asylum Office is provided with these meeting minutes.*

*The AO is extremely proud to have five (5) staff members assisting FEMA with recovery efforts in Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico as part of the USCIS Surge Capacity Force and continues to assist sister jurisdictions affected by these disasters.*

**The next AILA Asylum Office Liaison Meeting will be held on Thursday January 11, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. at the Chicago Asylum Office. The meeting is open to all Chicago Chapter AILA members. All questions must be submitted to Amanda Crews Slezak by email to ACrews@heartlandalliance.org by Friday, January 5, 2018 no later than 3:00 p.m.**