

**AILA / CHICAGO ASYLUM OFFICE LIAISON MEETING
MARCH 17, 2016**

TVPRA

1. How many TVPRA asylum applicants have you interviewed since October 1, 2015?

See attached statistics.

2. How many TVPRA asylum cases have you adjudicated since October 1, 2015?

See attached statistics.

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

See attached statistics.

REASONABLE/CREDIBLE FEAR

1. How many credible fear interviews have you conducted since October 1, 2015?

See attached statistics.

2. How many reasonable fear interviews have you conducted since October 1, 2015?

See attached statistics.

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

See attached statistics.

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

See attached statistics.

5. How many individuals have requested reconsideration of a negative credible fear determination since October 1, 2015?

The Chicago AO does not keep these statistics.

6. How many individuals have been granted reconsideration of a negative credible fear determination since October 1, 2015?

The Chicago AO does not keep these statistics.

7. If the immigration judge vacates a negative credible fear determination, does the asylum office receive notice?

No, the AO does not receive notice if an IJ vacates a negative credible fear determination.

The AO conducted follow-up training with officers to address chapter concerns with the types of questions asked during credible fear interviews to ensure that the record is fully developed.

8. If the asylum office or immigration judge vacates a negative credible/reasonable fear determination, does the Asylum Office take any other steps aside from placing the applicant in removal proceedings?

The AO is not notified of an IJ's decision to vacate a negative credible/reasonable fear finding. If the AO, upon re-examination of the file, determines that a reconsideration of the negative finding is warranted, they will issue an NTA.

9. Members have reported filing G-28s on behalf of clients with RFI/CFI interviews, but not receiving subsequent correspondence from the Asylum Office, including notice of interviews, notice of the rendering of decisions, or the actual decisions. What is the best procedure to ensure that attorneys receive notice of all interviews and decisions?

Chapter members should send their G-28s by email to chicago.asylum@uscis.dhs.gov and/or fax to 312-849-5207. AO supervisors will discuss this issue with office staff to ensure this problem does not persist.

ASYLUM

1. How many asylum cases have you adjudicated since October 1, 2015?

See attached statistics.

2. How many grants/denials/referrals?

See attached statistics.

3. What is the average time from when a category three non-priority interview has been conducted and a decision has been issued?

The AO is not able to provide this statistic at this time. The backlog continues to grow due to staffing issues and training requirements. The office has eight new officers who just completed training. Once completed with the basic training course, additional hands-on training continues. For example, all new officers are required to go on circuit rides and must be paired with a more senior officer as a mentor greatly reducing

available officers to conduct interviews at the AO. The AO requests the chapter's understanding and will be expanding as detailed in the response to question 9, below.

4. Which cases are currently receiving decisions?

Please see response to question 3, above.

5. 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.

6. Members report that the Asylum Office has been responsive to requests to expedite interviews when the applicant is able to show compelling humanitarian reasons. Once an expedited case has been interviewed, does the case remain on the expedited track for a decision? If so, what is the average waiting time for a decision?

The AO makes every effort to try to prioritize decisions on these cases. Once interviewed the file is not flagged in any way and therefore may be placed in the officer's backlog. Should a chapter member make a status inquiry regarding one of these cases the officer will be alerted to the urgency of the matter and make every effort to issue their decision and move it on for supervisory review.

Chapter members should be aware that for expedited interview cases the AO will not issue a confirmation letter of receipt of the request for status post-interview. Instead the file will be placed in the queue for prompt action.

*If chapter members have cases in which they were granted an expedited interview based upon humanitarian concerns and have been waiting for a decision for **more than 60** days, please contact KiKi Mosley at kiki@kikislaw.com or Diana Tafur at dtafur@heartlandalliance.org.*

NACARA

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

See attached statistics.

8. How many grants/denials?

See attached statistics.

MISCELLANEOUS

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

The AO is fully staffed at 35 officers and approved for expansion to hire an additional seven (7) officers. Construction meetings have been scheduled. At the time of the liaison meeting 50% of the staff was untrained but fully engaged. Eight (8) officers were at training and six (6) officers were scheduled for the next training class.

The next AILA Asylum Office Liaison Meeting will be held on Thursday June 17, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at the Chicago Asylum Office. The meeting is open to all Chicago Chapter AILA members, but all questions must be submitted to Diana Tafur at dtafur@heartlandalliance.org by Friday, June 10, 2016.