

# 2019 ADMINISTRATIVE ADVOCACY PRIORITIES



CATHOLIC LEGAL  
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# ABOUT

CLINIC's Administrative Advocacy Priorities serve as a guide for CLINIC's work as a leading advocacy agency. Our Administrative Advocacy Priorities for 2019 focus on two broad areas that align with CLINIC's mission of promoting the dignity and protecting the rights of immigrants by advocating for: (1) policies and practices that preserve family unity among immigrants and mixed immigration status families; and (2) policies and procedures that promote justice for hard-working and vulnerable immigrants and advance access to counsel.

CLINIC's advocacy efforts are informed by our approximately 330 network agencies and the more than 2,000 legal representatives they employ and seek to honor the experiences of their clients. Our status as a lead trainer on immigration law and non-profit program management is enhanced by our ability to effectively and productively communicate with representatives from government agencies. Above all, our work is guided by our Catholic identity and the values of Catholic social teaching, as it relates to the treatment of immigrants. Our administrative advocacy efforts take many forms and occur in a variety of settings. We may choose to engage directly with the government. We may build, lead, or join coalitions to accomplish our work. The strategies we develop and tactics we employ depend upon the issue area and theory of change.

In 2018, the administration introduced dozens of proposals for new agency regulations and policies that would harm immigrants. We have responded in opposition and have built campaigns to amplify our voice. Based upon our analysis of the administration's immigration framework and the executive orders on immigration, we anticipate 2019 will present additional opportunities to weigh in on proposed regulations, to voice our recommendations for change, and shape the way new regulations and policies are implemented through various advocacy methods. By doing so, we also look for legal or procedural issues that may be ripe for oversight work or litigation.

# IN 2019 CLINIC WILL ADVOCATE FOR:

## Policies and practices that preserve family unity among immigrants and mixed immigration status families

U.S. immigration policy reflects the importance of family reunification. Similarly, the sanctity of the family is a dominant element of Catholic social teaching and a high priority of the Catholic Church. Accordingly, CLINIC supports immigration policies and procedures that promote and facilitate family unity. In furtherance of these principals, CLINIC will:

- **Fight for the restoration of temporary humanitarian immigration programs such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Deferred Enforced Departure, and Temporary Protected Status while supporting efforts to ensure a pathway to residency and citizenship is provided to all who wish to remain in the U.S.**
  - Pope Benedict XVI called on Americans “to continue to welcome the immigrants who join your ranks today, to share their joys and hopes, to support them in their sorrow and trials, and to help them flourish in their new home.”
- **Work to advance an asylum system that honors U.S. legal and moral obligations while addressing the root causes that drive migration. Advocating for an asylum system that provides protection for migrants and protects the rights and dignity of individuals, as contemplated in the founding convention and protocols and 1980 Refugee Act.**
  - “The exercise of the right to asylum ... should be recognized everywhere and not obstructed with deterrent and punitive measures.” (#13) and “No person must be sent back to a country where he or she fears discriminatory action or serious life-threatening situations.” (#14) - Pontifical Council “Cor Unum” and Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, “Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity” (1992).
- **Lead efforts to encourage long-time residents to apply for naturalization, identify and address barriers to naturalization, defend U.S. citizenship as a Constitutionally-protected birthright, and monitor the use of denaturalization to ensure that it is used in a way that is just and fair.**
  - Pope John XXIII wrote in “Pacem in Terris” (1963), “Now among the rights of a human person there must be included that by which a man may enter a political community where he hopes he can more fittingly provide a future for himself and his dependents. Wherefore, as far as the common good rightly understood permits, it is the duty of that state to accept such immigrants and to help to integrate them into itself as new members.”
- **Protect and defend the family-based immigration system, which is facing unprecedented rhetorical, administrative, and legislative threats.**
  - Pope Pius XII wrote “according to the teachings of *Rerum Novarum*, the right of the family to a life worthy of human dignity is recognized. When this happens, migration attains its natural scope....”

- **Continue to advocate for policies and practices that protect the basic human rights of family unity and challenge government interference with the ability of individuals to freely exercise such rights. CLINIC will push back against government implementation of far-reaching, dehumanizing immigrant enforcement and removal policies that weaken the strongest foundation of our society - the family.**
  - In his speech to the General Assembly of the International Catholic Migration Commission (July 1990), Saint Pope John Paul II said, “Everyone must have a conversation of heart and there must be a conversation among communities as well. This conversation will be real when people understand that service to one’s brothers and sisters is not merely a secondary ‘good deed,’ but that it is strictly tied to the personal relationship of the Christian with his or her Lord, the Good Shepherd who lays down His life that there may be one flock.”
- **Fight for fair and just immigration policies that acknowledge the inherent dignity and value of all people by opposing policies that would unnecessarily perpetuate poverty by continuing to combat changes to the definition of public charge and other administrative changes that disadvantage hard-working immigrants.**
  - Saint Pope John Paul II wrote in “*Centisimus Annus*” (1991), “Love for others, and in the first place love for the poor, in whom the Church sees Christ himself, is made concrete in the promotion of justice. Justice will never be fully attained unless people see in the poor person, who is asking for help in order to survive, not an annoyance or a burden, but an opportunity for showing kindness and a chance for greater enrichment.”
  - Pope Benedict XVI on America’s history of immigration: “From the beginning, they have opened their doors to the tired, the poor, the ‘huddled masses yearning to breathe free.’ These are the people whom America has made her own.”

## **Policies and procedures that promote justice for hard-working and vulnerable immigrants and that advance access to care and counsel**

Rapid and unprecedented changes in immigration laws and procedures have vastly increased the demand for legal and other services, particularly representation in immigration court. CLINIC is committed to safeguarding the rights of individuals and communities by:

- **Building capacity by providing advocacy, training, and technical support to assist agencies within and beyond our network to ensure they are better equipped to meet higher demands for services.**
  - “Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them”[399]. Encyclical ‘Quadragesimo Anno’
- **Leading efforts that promote access to justice through a generously administered, trustworthy, and transparent recognition and accreditation (R&A) credentialing program.**
  - Pope Francis: “Migrants trust that they will encounter acceptance, solidarity, and help, that they will meet people who will sympathize with the distress and tragedy experienced by others, recognize the values and resources the latter have to offer, and are open to sharing humanly and materially with the needy and disadvantaged.”
- **Reinforcing the mission of faith communities that engage foreign religious workers to enhance their ministries by advocating for fair, efficient, and consistent application processing while also advocating for a permanent extension of the Special Immigrant Religious Worker program.**
  - “This is the Church’s missionary path: to go to meet women and men of every race, tongue and nation with friendship and love, sharing their conditions in an evangelical spirit, to break the bread of truth and charity for them.. Is the apostolic style which shines through the missionary experience of the first Christian communities....” Message of Saint Pope John Paul II for World Migration Day, 1996-1997: “Faith Works Through Charity” (Aug. 21, 1996).
- **Holding the government accountable for the proper implementation of immigration-related programs by tracking, analyzing, and recording action or inaction that would conflict with program intention or the law. Maintain and utilize relationships with key officials to recommend and effectuate change.**
  - Pope Francis, on the challenge of welcoming vulnerable migrants, “(the challenge) must be addressed in an intelligent and creative way, so that the rights and needs of all are respected and upheld...If misunderstanding and fear prevail, something of ourselves dies, our cultures, history and traditions are weakened, and our own peace is compromised.” Address, Presentation of Letters of Credence, May 19, 2016.
- **Empowering and supporting network agencies to zealously advocate for their clients at higher levels of government when processing issues and backlogs retard case progress in an effort to achieve individual case results, while helping CLINIC ferret out and address systemic issues.**

- Saint Pope John Paul II said in “*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*” (1987) “Solidarity...is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”
- **Collaborating with state and local partners to promote initiatives that improve the lives of immigrants and refugees and enable individuals to contribute to the growth and prosperity of their communities. In addition, assist partners in their efforts to combat anti-immigrant policies that limit immigrant integration and full participation in society by providing legal analysis, technical support, and educational materials.**
  - Pope Pius XI wrote, “The subsidiarity is a most weighty principle, which cannot be set aside or changed, remains fixed and unshaken in social philosophy. Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, it is also an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do.”
- **Raising awareness of the importance of high-quality immigration legal services, educating newcomers of their legal rights, alerting all to the dangers of immigration services fraud, and strengthening protections for immigrants through public education and partnerships with key government and community stakeholders.**
  - Pope Francis, in his Message for the 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees (Sept. 2013), said, “We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not represent a problem to be solved, but they are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected, and loved. They are an occasion Providence gives us to help build a more just society, a more perfect democracy, a more unified country, a more fraternal works, and more open evangelical Christian community.”
- **Contributing to efforts to end the inhumane practices of family separation and family detention by working to recruit allies in key roles, including health care, education, and government who may help highlight the negative effects these practices have on individuals and public health and safety.**
  - In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus instructs us to welcome the stranger: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me” (Mt. 25-35).
- **Promoting justice and due process in immigration proceedings by challenging practices that erode judicial independence and promoting immigration legal defense funds to expand access to affordable immigration legal services.**
  - Pope Francis stated: “We must not be taken aback by their [migrants’] numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal.”



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