



Partial to Full Accreditation Initiative 2024 Project Timeline and Summary of Steps

Summary: The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), is pleased to offer this court skills training opportunity for partially accredited representatives who want to qualify and apply for full accreditation to represent clients in immigration court. This initiative will guide participants through activities, webinars, and readings and will culminate in a three-day court skills training during which the participants will perform direct examinations, objections, re-direct examinations, and closing arguments in small groups. It will teach participants the skills needed to successfully apply for full accreditation and represent clients in immigration court.

CLINIC Goals for Initiative:

1. Identify partially accredited representatives working in a CLINIC Affiliate or other non-profit organization providing charitable immigration legal services and equip them to become fully accredited representatives;
2. Equip each partially accredited representative with competencies required to represent a noncitizen during removal proceedings;
3. Support the partially accredited representative in applying for full accreditation;
4. Ensure that the fully accredited representative accepts representation of a client in removal proceedings by executing a legal services agreement shortly after gaining full accreditation; and
5. Allow participating Affiliates to expand removal defense representation while maintaining their program's viability.

Important Dates

July 19, 2024 (2 p.m. ET): Informational webinar
Aug. 9: Deadline to submit online application
Aug. 28: Receive notification of selection status
Sept. 6: Deadline to verbally agree to participate in the training
Sept. 13: Registration deadline
Sept. 16: Last day to receive refund for registration fee, less \$70 processing fee
Sept. 20 (2 p.m. ET): Orientation webinar
Jan. 10, 2025: Deadline to finish watching the recorded webinars
Jan. 17: Deadline for case assessment exercise
Feb. 3: Post written court observation reflection
Feb. 4-6: Court skills training in Walnut Creek, California
March 3: Deadline for legal writing assignment
Aug. 29: Deadline to submit full accreditation application to DOJ Office of Legal Access Programs

*Schedule **

July 2024

- **July 19 (2 p.m. ET)** - Attend the **informational webinar**, which will discuss the application process for the Partial to Full Accreditation Initiative; CLINIC's selection criteria for accepting applicants to the training program; the registration process; and information about the training requirements, time commitment and expectations.

August 2024

- **Aug. 9** - Deadline to submit online application.
- **Aug. 28** - Receive notification of selection status.

September 2024

- **Sept. 6** - Deadline for participants to provide confirmation of their participation in the training.
- **Sept. 13** - Deadline to complete the registration process which includes a registration payment of \$545 for Affiliates or \$650 for Non-Affiliates and submission of the Agreement signed by participant and participant's supervisor.
- **Sept. 16** - Last day to receive refund for registration fee, less \$70 processing fee, if participant decides not to continue with the course.
- **Sept. 16** - Course website opens. Participants will receive an email with information about how to access the course website.

- **Sept. 20 (2 p.m. ET)** – Attend the orientation webinar, in which trainers will discuss expectations, review the schedule, and answer questions.

Assignments:

- Watch recorded webinar: **Anatomy of Removal Hearing**. This webinar will discuss what happens during a removal proceeding and who the key players are in this proceeding.
- Watch recorded webinar (optional): **Applying for Full Accreditation**. This webinar will discuss the eligibility requirements for full accreditation and how it differs from partial, the process of preparing for full accreditation with training and mentoring, elements of a strong application, the adjudication process, and next steps after approval.
- Read assigned reading materials.

Immigration Court Experience:

- Identify an in-house/local attorney or fully accredited representative mentor and make arrangements to obtain hands-on immigration court experience as soon as possible.
- Work with your mentor to develop a plan for you to obtain immigration court experience for the next several months. This includes:
 - Observing master calendar or individual hearings in immigration court. As part of the court skills training, participants are asked to post written court observation reflections by **Feb. 3, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET**. In addition, you will want to provide a log of your immigration court observations, which should be submitted with your full accreditation application. A sample can be found in the Step-by-Step guide on pg. 52.
 - Assisting on cases where you will have the opportunity to develop your legal research and writing skills, such as drafting briefs, motions, pleadings, declarations, etc., preferably for immigration court cases. For the full accreditation application, you will need to submit two legal writing samples to demonstrate written trial and appellate advocacy skills.

Tip: If you are not sure about how to arrange a visit to immigration court, check with your colleagues who practice in immigration court or call your local immigration court. You can also find information about attending immigration court hearings remotely via Webex on the EOIR website [here](#). Scroll down to your local court and find specific instructions in that court's section of the page.

October 2024

- Watch recorded webinars:
 - **Asylum Law Fundamentals** - This webinar will describe the statutory requirements for an applicant to be granted asylum. It will explain

concepts such as persecution, well-founded fear, nexus, the five protected grounds and the bars to asylum.

- **Case Assessment Exercise** - This webinar will describe how to effectively complete a case assessment and how this case assessment can aid you in your representation of clients in immigration court.
- Read assigned reading materials including the case file that will be used during the court skills training and for the case assessment exercise.

Tip: Ensure you are familiar with the posted client case file and all of the facts of the case. After you review the case file, you will need to prepare a case assessment using either one of the sample charts posted on the course website. Make sure you listen to the webinars on case assessment and asylum fundamentals first so that you understand the assignment. In order to do the case assessment, please also review the supporting legal materials that are posted along with the case file. These include practice advisories on asylum and helpful case law.

- Attend office hours (optional). These sessions are intended for participants to ask questions regarding course content and assignment. More information will be posted on the course website closer to the dates.
- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.

November 2024

- Watch recorded webinars:
 - **Evidence in Immigration Court**- This webinar will describe the Federal Rules of Evidence and their applicability in immigration court. While the Federal Rules of Evidence are not binding in immigration court, understanding them can still aid representatives in effectively advocating for clients in court.
 - **EOIR Practice Rules** -This webinar will outline the rules for practicing in immigration court, with a focus on filings as described in EOIR's Immigration Court Practice Manual.
- Read assigned reading materials.
- Attend office hours (optional)
- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.

December 2024

- Listen to recorded webinars:
 - **Ethics** - This webinar will discuss ethical considerations for practitioners in immigration courts.
 - **Legal Writing Fundamentals** - This webinar will discuss the basic skills and best practices for effective legal writing in immigration court.
- Read assigned reading materials.

- Attend office hours (optional).
- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.

January 2025

- **Jan. 10 (by 11:59 p.m. ET)** - Deadline to finish listening to all the recorded webinars.
- **Jan. 17 (by 11:59 p.m. ET)** - Deadline to submit case assessment chart.
- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.

February 2025

- **Feb. 4-6** – Attend the court skills training held at *The Embassy Suites in Walnut Hills, California*. The training schedule will be posted on the course website by Jan. 30, 2025. Your registration fee will cover your hotel room (includes breakfast) and lunches for the 3-day training. Participants will be responsible for dinner and all other travel-related expenses. Attendance for all 3 days of the training is required to obtain a certificate of completion.
- Submit court skills training survey.
- Work on legal writing assignment.
- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.

March 2025

- **March 3 (by 11:59 p.m. ET)** - Deadline to submit legal writing assignment. The short legal writing assignment is to help participants build their application materials for full accreditation. Trainers will review submissions and provide feedback.
- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.
- Sign up for consultations (optional). These one-on-one meetings provide participants an opportunity to ask questions regarding their full accreditation application. More information will be posted on the course website closer to the dates. CLINIC Affiliates can also submit their questions on the [Affiliate Support Form](#).

Preparing your full accreditation application:

- Creating and/or updating your resume. Make sure to emphasize your immigration court experience. (Refer to the [Step-by-Step Guide](#), Pg. 49, for a sample resume for full accreditation.)

April 2025

- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.
- Sign up for consultations (optional).
- Continue to work on your resume.

- Request letters of recommendation. You should submit two letters of recommendation for your full accreditation application. (Refer to the [Step-by-Step Guide](#) pg. 57 for a sample letter of recommendation.)
 - The first letter should come from your mentor who can attest to your knowledge and experience in observing and working on immigration court cases, as well as your character and fitness to practice law. In the letter of recommendation, the mentor should describe his/her background and qualifications in immigration law.
 - The second letter could come from an attorney, fully accredited representative, or supervisor who can attest to your knowledge and experience with immigration court cases.

May 2025

- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.
- Sign up for consultations (optional).
- Draft a brief cover letter for your application. Make sure to indicate your date of birth on the cover letter. (Refer to the [Step-by-Step Guide](#), Pg. 33, for a sample cover letter.)
- Fill out the [EOIR-31A form](#). We recommend you use the previous version (Jan. 2017) until this version is no longer accepted by DOJ Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP).

June 2025

- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.
- Sign up for consultations (optional).
- Finalize any remaining documents for your full accreditation application. Your final application should contain the following:
 1. Cover letter.
 2. Form EOIR-31A.
 3. Resume.
 4. Copies of certificate of completions or other proof of recent trainings attended in the last three years.
 5. Include a brief description for each training listed in your resume or include the training agendas, if available.
 6. Two redacted legal writing samples.
 7. Log of experiences and observations at the Immigration Court.
 8. Two letters of recommendation.

July 2025

- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience.
- Sign up for consultations (optional).
- Assemble your application with all required documents.
- Submit your final draft to CLINIC for review. CLINIC Affiliates can submit their applications through the [Affiliate Support Form](#).

August 2025

- Finalize your full accreditation application with CLINIC's feedback and submit your application to OLAP and a copy of your application to USCIS District Director of your jurisdiction. You can find instructions on where and how to send your application on OLAP's website.
- Submit your final application to CLINIC by uploading it to the course website.
- **Aug. 29, 2025 (by 11:59 p.m. ET)** - Deadline to submit your full accreditation application to OLAP.

After August 2025

- Continue to work with your mentor to obtain immigration court experience while your application is pending.
- Within a month of receiving full accreditation from OLAP (even if the date falls after Aug. 29, 2025), submit a final report to CLINIC that explains how this in-depth training and full accreditation status impacted you professionally and your organization's capacity to serve your local immigrant communities.
- Alternatively, if you do not obtain full accreditation status, your report should explain why you were unable to complete this requirement.

** This schedule provides a suggested timeline to help participants prepare and submit their full accreditation application to OLAP by August 2025. Participants are always encouraged to file their full accreditation application as soon as it is ready.*

Questions?

- Questions or concerns about course content or required activities? Use the "Got a Question" forum on the course website to communicate with your course instructors.
- Questions about the course website or listening to a recording? Use the "Got a Problem?" forum on the course website to communicate with your e-course coordinator.
- Questions about the full accreditation application? For CLINIC Affiliates, submit them on the Affiliate Support Form.