

2025 AILA Annual Conference and Webcast

June 18 – 21, cope2025
Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2025

FUNDAMENTALS

(Aurora B-D, Level 2)

9:30 am–10:30 am

Overview of Family-Based Immigration: Fighting for Families in the New Trump Era (Fundamentals)

Family cases currently dominate immigrant visa filings each year. As a result, experts predict that this area of law is particularly susceptible to changes in immigration policy that the new administration might try to impose. Therefore, it is crucial for attorneys to master the intricacies of family-based practice. Although it may appear to be a straightforward process, family-based immigration can present several challenges, not least of which is the long wait times for visas. Panelists on this session will arm new practitioners with key concepts and timelines in family-based practice.

- What are the immediate relative categories?
- What are the preference-based categories? How long does it take to get a visa?
- How does one prove a marriage is valid for immigration purposes?
- Overview of public charge inadmissibility
- How to deal with changes in the family relationship (e.g., death, divorce, and age-outs)

Ana Maria Schwartz (DL), AILA Annual Conference Family Track Chair, Houston, TX

Christopher Michael Casazza, Philadelphia, PA

Mohammad Syed, Bethesda, MD

Celestial Roman, Tempe, AZ

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Introduction to PERM: Sponsoring the Foreign Worker Through a Labor Market Test (Fundamentals)

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Unless a foreign employee can qualify for the relatively difficult EB-1 or EB-2 national interest waiver visas, the majority of U.S. employers are required to sponsor workers through the PERM system. Our expert panelists will provide an overview of the intimidating and arduous PERM process, starting from the initial intake call through the awarding of a Green Card.

- What is the labor certification process, how long does it take, and what steps are involved?
- Establishing minimum requirements and the prevailing wage
- The attorney's role in advising employers on good faith recruitment efforts given competing interests
- Proceeding with the I-140 petition and ability to pay
- 2023 form changes and new adjudication trends

*Jerome G. Grzeca (DL), Milwaukee, WI
Matthew I. Hirsch, Wayne, PA
Ellen Freeman, Pittsburgh, PA*

12:00 pm–1:00 pm
Networking Break

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

Intro to Asylum Law: Meeting the Need for More Practitioners in the New Trump Era (Fundamentals)

Asylum law already is one of the most dynamic and often-changing practices under the immigration umbrella. With the new administration promising even more restrictive border enforcement measures, however, lawyers specializing in asylum will be needed more than ever. Panelists will introduce the asylum process, educating novice practitioners on key terms, restrictions, and other basics. They also will discuss key differences between affirmative asylum (applying with USCIS), applying at the border, and defensive asylum (applying as relief from removal). Panelists will conclude the session with an overview of the key asylum developments in the new presidential administration.

- What are the five basic grounds of asylum?
- How to apply for asylum affirmatively and defensively; interplay between credible fear interviews and asylum applications
- Key timelines and asylum-related employment authorization
- What is a particular social group and how can it be defined?
- How are some clients ineligible or barred from asylum?

*Sarah B. Pitney (DL), Washington, DC
Lina Baroudi, San Jose, CA*

*(DL) = Discussion Leader
* = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Gianna Borroto, Bethesda, MD
Eliza Rhine, Newark, NJ

2:00 pm–2:30 pm
Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm

Waivers of Inadmissibility and Removability (Fundamentals)

If the first Trump administration is any indication of what the next will bring, inadmissibility and removability will become even more prominent issues in immigration law than they already are. Panelists will provide an overview of immigration and criminal violations that can give rise to a finding of inadmissibility and removability and how to cure them. Focusing more on the waiver aspect, our experts will discuss key concepts and eligibility requirements, as well as detailed tips on filing and successful adjudication.

- What is the difference between admissibility and removability?
- How to prepare and file nonimmigrant waiver applications and adjudication timelines
- The immigrant visa waivers and Forms I-601 and I-601A
- Documenting hardship and finding qualifying relatives when applicable
- The role of discretion in the waiver process

Katelyn M. Karahan (DL), Philadelphia, PA
Jeremy L. McKinney, AILA Past President, Greensboro, NC
Maria E. Andrade, Boise, ID
George Rodriguez, Dallas, TX

3:30 pm–4:00 pm
Networking Break

TECHNOLOGY
Crest, Level 2

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

50 Tech Tips in 50 Minutes

Tips are little nuggets of information that can become the germ of a big idea or solution to a perennial problem. When they are short, practical, and quick, we don't have to invest much time to learn new ideas. However, if several of the ones discussed in this session resonate for your practice, then your time attending will have been well spent!

- New ideas for practice automation
- Email productivity management tools and techniques

(DL) = Discussion Leader
* = invited, not confirmed

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- The latest in artificial intelligence
- Tips and tricks for popular products, including Microsoft 365, Google, advertising technology, and API technology

*Reid Trautz (DL), AILA Senior Director, Practice & Professionalism Center,
Washington, D.C.*

*Jeffrey A. Devore, Palm Beach Gardens, FL
Nadine Navarro, Orlando, FL*

2:00 pm–2:30 pm

Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm

Protecting Your Data, Protecting Your Firm (Cybersecurity)

Panelists will address the growing concerns around data privacy and artificial intelligence (AI). AI can infer personal behaviors and preferences, without the individual's consent or knowledge. Panelists also will provide attendees effective tools to evolve and protect data in a world emerging with AI.

- How does AI affect data privacy?
- The privacy minefield of generative AI, including protection against PI dissemination
- Considering custom AI solutions for enhanced privacy and control solutions
- Securing alternatives for AI
- Securing the future of AI in your firm while protecting data

*James Chesser (DL), Chair AI in Immigration Law Course Planning Committee,
Fountain Inn, SC*

Joo Young Seo, Toronto, Canada

*Gregory Howard Siskind, Author, AILA's Immigration Law Practice and Procedure Manual: A
"Cookbook of Essential Practice Materials, 3rd ed., Memphis, TN*

*David L. Bridges, CIC Risk Management Consultant, Insurance Office of America (IOA),
Atlanta, GA*

3:30 pm–4:00 pm

Networking Break

SPECIAL SESSIONS

Aurora A, Level 2

9:30 am–10:30 am

Through the Glass Ceiling: Struggles and Opportunities for Women in Immigration Law

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

(Bias)

With women still only making 73 cents to a man's dollar, women in immigration law are no strangers to gendered issues. Panelists will explore strategies for women in immigration law to step up and be bolder and more strategic. They also will explore how to course correct common disparities while retaining exceptional women in law.

- Statistics on gender and income
- Gender dynamics in firms and nonprofits
- Asking for what you're worth
- Being strategic about pro bono and low bono work

Charity Anastasio (DL), Practice and Ethics Counsel, AILA Practice and Professionalism Center, Washington, D.C.

Ksenia Maiorova, Orlando, FL

Flavia Lloyd, Newport Beach, CA

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Maximizing Growth Opportunities: Business Development Strategies for Immigration Attorneys (Law Practice Management)

In today's competitive legal landscape, immigration attorneys face unique challenges and opportunities in business development. This session aims to equip legal professionals with practical strategies to enhance client acquisition, retention, and firm growth. Gain practical insights into effective business development strategies tailored to immigration law. Hear from our successful panel of immigration attorneys on their journey to business growth.

- Target markets and niche specializations
- Leveraging technology and automation
- Compliance with legal advertising rules and regulations
- How to get started, transitioning from minder to finder

Anthony Drago Jr. (DL), Removal Defense Section Steering Committee, Boston, MA

Farshad Owji, AILA Immediate Past President, San Francisco, CA

Nicholas Jesus Mireles, AILA Board of Governors, Los Angeles, CA

Bridgette M. Bennett, Groveland, FL

Poorvi Rohit Chothani, Mumbai, India

12:00 pm–1:00 pm

Networking Break

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

FOIA: A Powerful Tool in Combating the Immigration Crackdown in the New Trump Era

The restrictive immigration measures promised by the new administration likely will instigate a concomitant surge in the need for requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to fight against them. Whether you are advocating for individual clients whose FOIA case is stuck or strategizing in collaboration with other advocates in your region, this session is for you. Panelists will discuss FOIAs as an advocacy tool, attempt to demystify the process, and connect lawyers to the larger push underway to hold government accountable as they work with journalists, academics and a range of ground breakers to advance client interests. Panelists will answer:

- Routine experiences for agencies: CBP, EOIR, USCIS, ICE
- Appeals
- Updates on large-scale FOIA litigation
- Best practices: working with FOIA experts

Melissa Crow (DL), Washington, DC

Christopher Opila, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

Daniel Melo, Washington, DC

2:00 pm–2:30 pm

Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm

Winning Summary Judgment Against USCIS After *Loper Bright*

After 40 years, the Supreme Court overturned the doctrine of Chevron deference to federal agency interpretations. We are now in an era where federal judges are expected to decide whether USCIS has improperly restricted visa programs, improperly increased the requirements for approvals, and improperly denied petitions and applications. The way to beat USCIS in U.S. district court is through effective advocacy at the motion for summary judgment phase of litigation. Panelists will answer how to:

- Prepare an effective complaint challenging USCIS decisions, policy changes, or procedures
- Review and litigate the scope of the administrative record
- Challenge USCIS policies such as the *Kazarian* Two-Step EB-1A adjudication process
- Use the *Loper Bright* and *Corner Post* decisions to challenge USCIS policies issued more than 6 years in the past

Brian S. Green (DL), AILA Benefits Litigation Committee Chair, Highlands Ranch, CO

Charles H. Kuck, AILA Past President, Atlanta, GA

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Diane Butler, Director, AILA Board of Governors, Seattle, WA
Jeff Robins, Washington, D.C.

3:30 pm–4:00 pm
Networking Break

WEDNESDAY TRAININGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Adams, Level 1

8:30 am –7:00 pm
Aurora, Level 2
Registration

12:00 pm–6:00 pm
(Aurora 1-2, Level 2)
Exhibit Hall Hours

Adams, Level 1

6:00 pm–7:30 pm
Hot Topics with AILA National Officers: Immigration in the New Trump Era
The AILA Executive Committee will share on this panel the latest information on the top issues affecting immigration practitioners.

Kelli Stump, President, Oklahoma City, OK
Jeff Joseph, President-Elect, Aurora, CO
Alexis S. Axelrad, First Vice President, New York, NY
Jacqueline Watson, Second Vice President Austin, TX
Rekha Sharma-Crawford, Treasurer, Kansas City, MO
Michelle Saenz-Rodriguez, Secretary, Dallas, TX
Benjamin Johnson, AILA Executive Director, Washington, D.C.

7:30 pm–9:00 pm
Chapter Meetings

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2025

FUNDAMENTALS/SPECIAL SESSIONS

Colorado A, Level 3

7:25 am–8:25 am
Adjustment of Status Fundamentals (Fundamentals)

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

With many prospective immigrants already physically present in the United States, the new administration is sure to target adjustment cases in its attempt to restrict immigration. It is, therefore, crucial that practitioners become adept at handling these types of cases. Panelists will provide an overview of the adjustment of status process, discuss who qualifies, advise on best practices for identifying and addressing red flags, and discuss inadmissibility issues.

- The basic requirements for adjustment of status
- Form preparation and submission of an adjustment of status “package”
- Exceptions, including INA §245(k) and (i)
- Red flags and how to cure them
- Public charge issues and other common grounds of inadmissibility

Elizabeth Rompf Bruen (DL), AILA Board of Governors, Chicago, IL

Dustin J. O’Quinn, Seattle, WA

Ari J. Sauer, Memphis, TN

Sasha Westerman-Keuning, Clayton, GA

8:25 am–8:45 am

Networking Break

8:45 am–9:45 am

Ethical Considerations in AOS and Consular Processing: Accounting for Changes Under the New Administration (Fundamentals) (Ethics)

Understandably, clients want to be able to obtain immigration benefits in the fastest and most efficient way possible. This is doubly true given the restrictionist stance on immigration employed by the new administration. However, ethics rules and changing agency guidance under the new administration can temper attorneys’ advice in structuring a plan for clients to immigrate to the United States. Panelists will identify key limitations on the use of nonimmigrant visas and conflicts of interest that can arise in family– and business-related practices. They also will address common situations where clients will better benefit from consular processing.

- Distinguishing consular processing from adjustment of status requirements
- Ethically advising on the concept of presumed immigrant intent and the filing of adjustment of status in family and business contexts
- Dual representation of family members and spouses: What is to be done when one party discloses something they do not want the other(s) to know?
- Ethical issues associated with third-party payors and affidavit of support issues
- Use of FOIA to determine issues that could arise

John Patrick Pratt (DL), Coral Gables, FL

Grachielle Tenorio, Carlsbad, CA

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

9:45 am–1:30 pm

Track Break

1:30 pm–2:30 pm

Immigrants' List Civic Action Panel 2025: The Political Landscape for Immigration

This session will address the urgent challenges facing immigration attorneys, what's truly at stake for immigrant communities, and how we can successfully reshape the narrative around immigration as we head into the 2026 midterm elections.

Denyse Sabagh (DL), AILA Past President, Washington, D.C.

Ira J. Kurzban, AILA Past President/AILA Author, Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook, 19th Ed., Coral Gables, FL

Benjamin Johnson, AILA Executive Director, Washington, D.C.

Jeremy Robbins, Executive Director, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

John Miyasato, Washington D.C.

2:30 pm–3:00 pm

Networking Break

3:00 pm–4:00 pm

How to Stay Sane in an Insane Field: Managing Anxiety in the New Trump Era (Wellness)

Attorneys notoriously are very susceptible to anxiety, with immigration lawyers being particularly vulnerable to this given the nature of immigration practice. Unfortunately, if the new administration follows through on even half of the draconian measures it promises, the anxiety problem among immigration lawyers is liable to get much worse before it gets better. Practitioners therefore must be proactive in prioritizing their mental health and well-being not just for themselves, but also to better serve their clients. Panelists will offer strategies for dealing with changes brought on by the new administration, setting realistic expectations, developing emotional intelligence, handling high-pressure demands, and aligning client goals with achievable outcomes.

- How the practice of immigration law promotes anxiety
- Understanding the unique characteristics of anxiety and when to seek help
- Strategies for setting realistic client expectations
- Techniques for handling high-pressure client demands, including effective communication
- Developing resilience and emotional intelligence in client interactions

Mary M. O'Leary (DL), Petoskey, MI

Rex Chen, New York, NY

Lambert Dunn, Jr., Oklahoma City, OK

Noelle McWard, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Chicago, IL

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

4:00 pm–4:30 pm
Networking Break

4:30 pm–5:30 pm

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire Immigration Attorney

Audience members will be selected to play a fast-paced and educational game answering easy to difficult questions on a variety of immigration law issues. Contestants will “risk it all” by moving up the game’s financial ladder. Don’t know the answer? Poll the audience! Use a lifeline! Ask THE immigration expert: Ira Kurzban! Learn about the latest issues in immigration in this fun and interactive session. Arrive a few minutes early to enter your name into the drawing to be a contestant and for a chance to win a free registration for AC26!

Gregory Romanovsky (DL), Boston, MA

Ira J. Kurzban, AILA Past President/AILA Author, Kurzban’s Immigration Law Sourcebook, 19th Ed., Coral Gables, FL

Stefanie Fisher-Pinkert, Boston, MA

BUSINESS

Aurora A, Level 2

7:25 am–8:25 am

Permissible Activities under B-1 Visitor Visas and ESTA: The Line Between Authorized and Unauthorized (Intermediate)

Panelists will focus on one of the most common questions practitioners receive as business immigration lawyers: “What business can I do if I enter on my B-1 visa/ESTA?” Our experts will review activities DOS and DHS say are allowed under the B-1 visa and ESTA, scenarios and questions asked by employers and individuals looking to push the limits, and risks associated with crossing the line into “work” activities.

- FAM provisions
- DOS and DHS guidance
- B-1 in lieu of H-1B or H-3
- Best practices

Maka Hutson (DL), Dallas, TX

Daniel J. Parisi, AILA Board of Governors / Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Vice Chair, Madrid, Spain

Charlotte Slocombe, London, UK

Michael Patrick O’Rourke, Toronto, ON

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

8:25 am–8:45 am

Networking Break

8:45 am–9:45 am

Mergers and Acquisitions: State of the Practice (Intermediate)

Most practitioners are at least somewhat familiar with the immigration issues involved in mergers and acquisitions (M&A). In a perfect world, the immigration lawyer is brought into the picture prior to the deal's closing, but often has to clean up after the deal's closing. Recent cases and policies clarified certain aspects of the practice. In addition, certain events that often fly under the radar but may carry M&A implications will be discussed to assist practitioners to identify them:

- What does “due diligence” mean in an M&A deal?
 - How does it vary by the needs and interests of the client and/or the nature of the deal?
- What is the difference between being brought in before the deal is concluded and learning about ownership changes after the deal is complete?
- How does M&A this affect NIVs and IVs?
- Creative solutions to resolve problems before and after the deal is closed

Helen L. Konrad (DL), Richmond, VA

Marketa Lindt, AILA Past President, Chicago, IL

Eleanor Pelta, AILA Past President / AILA Bylaws Committee Chair, Washington, D.C.

Angelo Alfred Paparelli, Studio City, CA

9:45 am–1:30 pm

Track Break

(Colorado A, Level 3)

1:30 pm–2:30 pm

National Interest Waivers: Are They the Answer We Hoped For? (Intermediate)

In recent years, National Interest Waivers (NIWs) have become a more appealing alternative to PERM because of DOL backlogs and the availability of premium processing. Panelists will cover lessons learned from taking advantage of NIW opportunities and discuss the filing surge and consequential RFE's and EB-2 backlog that followed. They also will discuss successful case studies and lessons learned.

- Challenges: advanced degree/BA+5/exceptional ability
- The latest in RFEs: how to overcome?
- EB-2 backlogs: When to premium process ... and when not to
- Self-petitions vs. employer sponsorship

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Founders: changes to the policy manual under the Biden Administration and any subsequent changes

Ceridwen J. Koski (DL), Denver, CO

Lisa Helen York, Aurora, CO

Andre Linhares, Orlando, FL

2:30 pm–3:00 pm

Networking Break

3:00 pm–4:00 pm

Strategies for a Successful EB-1C Petition: Green Cards for Multinational Managers (Intermediate)

Panelists will provide a comprehensive overview of the EB-1C category. They will cover important legal distinctions from the L-1A, along with recent legal developments that help employers that have gone through corporate restructuring since the beneficiary's initial transfer. Additionally, panelists will discuss trends in EB-1C RFEs, along with strategies to navigate the new status-quo of EB-1 backlogs.

- Key differences from the L-1
 - More evidence required?
 - *Matter of Thornhill* and Branch petitioners
 - Employment abroad not necessarily continuous
 - Capacity abroad (managerial or executive)
 - Ability to pay
- Qualifying relationship and changes to the employer abroad: *Matter of F-M-Co*
- Recent RFE trends
- Managing EB-1 backlogs

David Grunblatt (DL), Annual Conference Committee, New York, NY

Sujata P. Ajmera, Austin, TX

Daniel P. Joyce, Buffalo, NY

Viktoria Bloomberg, Coto de Caza, CA

4:00 pm–4:30 pm

Networking Break

4:30 pm–5:30 pm

TN Visas: Navigating Complex Cases and Challenges in the New Trump Era (Intermediate)

Given the heightened scrutiny given to immigration issues under the new administration, it is possible that changes to eligibility, processing, and/or compliance requirements could impact the TN visa landscape. Panelists will delve into the intricacies of TN visa applications under the

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

new administration, including complex case types and degree nexus issues. They also will analyze the latest USCIS and CBP processing trends, address CBP challenges for both Canadian and Mexican nationals, and provide creative strategies to win cases.

- Complex case categories and occupations scrutinized for fraud: management consultants, interns, scientific technicians, automotive and agricultural workers in Mexico
- Degree nexus issues: creative strategies when the degree does not clearly align with the position/USMCA category
- DOS, CBP and USCIS issues: wait times with DOS for Mexicans, expedited visa appointment letters, processing trends with different agencies, RFE analysis with USCIS, and others
- Creative strategies: USCIS vs. CBP, airport processing, “port-shopping” and “flag-polling,” reverse TN, etc.

Bushra A. Malik (DL), AILA Annual Conference Business Track Chair, Troy, MI

Kathleen Campbell Walker, AILA Past President, El Paso, TX

Avi Friedman, Santa Monica, CA

Zabrina Reich, AILA CBP Liaison Committee, Buffalo, NY

FAMILY

Colorado BC, Level 3

7:25 am–8:25 am

Immigration Issues for Military Servicemembers and their Families

Panelists will discuss possibilities and strategies for ensuring the immediate relatives of servicemembers receive benefits. They also will advise on how to represent military families in adjustment, consular processing, and naturalization.

- Latest updates in military immigration
- What is Military PIP?
- Deferred Action for family members
- Representing military families in Adjustment and consular processing
- Military naturalizations
- Immigration options for survivors

Crucita Flecha (DL), Columbus, OH

Margaret Deborah Stock, AILA Author Immigration Law & the Military, 3rd ed., Anchorage, AK

Beth Boyer, White Plains, NY

Marino Alomias Branes Jr., Norco, CA

8:25 am–8:45 am

Networking Break

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

8:45 am–9:45 am

Supreme Court Update and Litigation Roundup

The panel will discuss how the law has evolved post-Loper Bright, Hippocratic Medicine, Munoz and other significant 2024 SCOTUS immigration decisions. Panelists will explain the litigation theories and status of AILA's key impact litigation cases as well as those of other major immigration lawsuits in 2025.

*Jennifer Coberly, AILA Business Litigation Attorney, Government Relations, Washington, D.C.
Ira J. Kurzban, AILA Past President/AILA Author, Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook,
19th Ed., Coral Gables, FL*

Brian S. Green, AILA Benefits Litigation Committee Chair, Highlands Ranch, CO

9:45 am–1:30 pm

Track Break

(Aurora A, Level 2)

1:30 pm–2:30 pm

Waiver Warriors: Advanced Strategies for Waivers of Inadmissibility in a New Era

Panelists will provide an overview of how the landscape of inadmissibility waivers has changed under the new administration, and they will advise on how best to help clients in light of this. They also will cover the latest trends and provide an in-depth analysis of advanced waiver strategies in immigration law, focusing on I-212, I-601, I-601A, and 237(a)(1)(H) waivers, as well as times when waivers might not be needed. They also will examine the standards applied to each type of waiver, because "extreme hardship" does not always apply. Finally, panelists will cover practical strategies for securing vaccine waivers, even in cases where clients are not opposed to all vaccines.

- Which inadmissibilities can be waived?
- Built-in waivers: VAWA unlawful entry waiver, VAWA criminal conviction waiver if related to abuse, spousal/special immigrant juvenile (SIJ) unlawful employment
- Mastering extreme hardship and other hardship standards
- Vaccine waivers

Russell Abrutyn (DL), Southfield, MI

Olsi Vrapic, Albuquerque, NM

Aaron Lawee, Chicago, IL

2:30 pm–3:00 pm

Networking Break

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

3:00 pm–4:00 pm

In the Weeds: How Marijuana Use, Production, and Sales Impact Noncitizens

Colorado has led the way in legalizing cannabis and psychedelics. Other foreign, state, and local jurisdictions are legalizing a range of different substances that are banned under the federal Controlled Substance Act. Panelists will advise on how changes in these laws impact noncitizens, as well as how attorneys should advise clients on this topic at the border, at the NIV/IV stage, and at naturalization.

- Inadmissibility, removability, and good moral character
- Screening and advising clients without convictions
- Controlled substances and immigration: current adjudication trends, court decisions, and agency practices regarding marijuana and other legalized substances (e.g., psychedelics, CBD)
- Advising on complex applications: offering guidance on challenging visa applications, adjustment of status (I-485), and naturalization (N-400) processes, including ethical concerns related to controlled substances and paraphernalia
- Overview of legalization efforts and future projections, including rescheduling cannabis from Schedule I to Schedule III

W. Scott Railton (DL), Bellingham, WA

Andrea Chavarria, Annual Conference Committee, Dallas, TX

Zachary Nightingale, San Francisco, CA

Whitney C. Wootton, Round Rock, TX

4:00 pm–4:30 pm

Networking Break

4:30 pm–5:30 pm

Post-Denial Options for Family-Based Petitions: Fighting Back Against Restrictions in the New Trump Era

In an increasingly likely scenario under the new administration, your client has received a denial... now what? How best can you help your clients in this restrictive immigration climate? Panelists will discuss strategies for refiling petitions, including when to consider a motion to reopen or an appeal, and they will address the implications of suing in federal court versus filings with USCIS.

- Appeals: understanding when and how to file an appeal
- Motions to reopen: when to pursue one, how to present new evidence or overcome denials
- Refile with USCIS: best practices for refiling a petition with USCIS after a denial
- Challenge in court: evaluating the option to contest the denial in federal court and key considerations

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Jonathan Wilmoth (DL), Kansas City, MO
Waleed Naser, Chicago, IL
Caroline van der Harten, Portland, OR
Kristina David, Century City, CA

REMOVAL

(Aurora B-D, Level 2)

7:25 am–8:25 am

Navigating Limited Scope Representation in Immigration Court: Ethical and Practical Considerations (Ethics)

EOIR's introduction of the Form E-61 and the advent of limited scope representation in immigration court promised to increase access to counsel for respondents in immigration court. This brings with it, however, potential ethical and practical issues that must be addressed in each case, which the panelists will address. They also will discuss EOIR's "Friend of the Court" guidance.

- Best practices for limited scope representation, and incorporating "limited scope" into your practice
- Nuts and bolts of the E-60/61: motions to reopen, notice of appeal at the Board of Immigration Appeals
- Preparing respondents to represent themselves
- Experiences from EOIR's Friend of the Court Program

*Emily Bachman Brock (DL), Westminster, CO
Matthew O. Boles, Columbus, GA
Rebecca O'Neill, Charlotte, NC
Sarah Ochoa, Baltimore, MD*

8:25 am–8:45 am

Networking Break

8:45 am–9:45 am

Crimmigration: Sex, Drugs and the ROC (Record of Conviction)

Keeping your client in the United States can often come down to what happens or already has happened in criminal proceedings, as well as the record of those proceedings. This is doubly true given the restrictionist immigration stance of the new administration. In this expert session, panelists will discuss recent developments in the complicated intersection of criminal and immigration law, including:

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Sex: Update on the “crime of child abuse,” minor vs. adult victims, AWA
- Drugs: Marijuana, khat, analogues and isomers, divisibility of state codes
- ROC: Plea negotiations, keeping the ROC clean, PCR (*Thomas & Thompson*/new EOIR regs), pardons, *Pereida* (inconclusive records and BOP)
- Changes in crimmigration under the new administration

Mary E. Kramer (DL), AILA Author, Immigration Consequences of Criminal Activity: A Guide to Representing Foreign-Born Defendants, 10th ed., Miami, FL

Helen Parsonage, Winston-Salem, NC

Emma Winger, Deputy Director, Immigration, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

Ofelia L. Calderon, Fairfax, VA

9:45 am–1:30 pm

Track Break

1:30 pm–2:30 pm

The NTA: To Fight Unprecedented Removal Efforts in the New Trump Era, Challenge Everything!

It is a virtual certainty that the president will do all he can to make his inhumane promise of mass deportation of immigrants become a reality. But all is not lost! Our members are one of the last, and most effective, defenses against these draconian measures. To be successful in these efforts, however, practitioners must pull out all the stops, including challenging notices to appear (NTAs). Even before the new administration took office, from Pereira to R-T-P-, the law around notices to appear (NTAs) had been shifting and chaotic in the last few years. Future challenges no doubt remain on the horizon. Our expert panelists will examine the current legal landscape and address various strategic considerations when deciding how, when, and why your client should challenge an NTA.

- Pleading and defective NTAs: implications and strategies post-*Fernandes*, *Morales*, *Campos-Chavez*, & *R-T-P-*.
 - Handling prior concessions
 - Service: accepting or waiving a claim-processing violation?
- Grounds for a motion to suppress
- Screening for unicorn scenarios: *Quilantan* entries and acquired citizenship
- Understanding the different burdens

W. Michael Sharma-Crawford (DL), Annual Conference Committee, Kansas City, MO

Andrew K. Nietor, AILA Board of Governors, San Diego, CA

Parastoo G. Zahedi, AILA Board of Governors, Vienna, VA

John Gihon, AILA ICE Liaison Committee Chair, Altamonte Springs, FL

2:30 pm–3:00 pm

(DL) = Discussion Leader

* = invited, not confirmed

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Networking Break

3:00 pm–4:00 pm

What the Heck is Happening at the Border?

One of the central tenets of the new administration's election platform was mass deportation of immigrants, particularly at the southern border. This draconian promise exacerbates the problems already created by past administrations implementing a dizzying array of programs, policies, and regulations aimed at curbing irregular border-crossing and preventing asylum-seekers from accessing protection. Our panel of experts will discuss the realities on the ground at both the southern and northern borders. They also will address the practical ramifications of those new (and not so new) policies for noncitizens at ports of entry, in ICE custody, and in the interior.

- Parole, parole, parole: parole programs vs parole at the border (Is it still a thing?)
- Intersecting programs, the roll out across the nation
- All about expedited removal: detained vs non-detained, executed vs unexecuted, reentry after expedited removal
- Detention and alternatives to detention (ATD) trends

Constance Russell Wannamaker (DL), El Paso, TX

Lauren D. Cusitello, San Diego, CA

Gregory Fay, Phoenix, AZ

Carlos Moctezuma Garcia, McAllen, TX

4:00 pm–4:30 pm

Networking Break

4:30 pm–5:30 pm

Representing Children in Removal: Ethical and Child Friendly Approaches (Ethics)

Few can forget the policy of forced separation of children from their parents at the southern border during the last Trump administration. There is little doubt that similar policies lay on the horizon in the new Trump administration. The need for practitioners to defend vulnerable and otherwise defenseless youth at the border is, therefore, paramount. Panelists on this dynamic session will provide practical advice to ethically support advocacy and communication with child clients and their caregivers. Participants should already have familiarity with common forms of relief available to children. Hear from practitioners on these themes:

- Migrant children under the new administration: what has happened so far, and what to expect in the future, at the southern border
- How to communicate with child clients
- Ethical considerations for working with caregivers and interpreters
- New juvenile docket memo
- Using soft power to navigate the court

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

*Jennifer Molina (DL), Baltimore, MD
Katie Annand, Oakland, CA
Derrick J. Hensley, Hillsborough, NC
Ashley Turner Harrington, Westminster, CO*

GOVERNMENT OPEN FORUMS

(Adams, Level 1)

1:30 pm–2:30 pm

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Open Forum

*Nell Barker (DL), AILA CBP Liaison Committee Chair, Chicago, IL
Zabrina Reich, AILA CBP Liaison Committee, Buffalo, NY
Graham S. Dudley, Director, Enforcement Programs Division, Admissibility and Passenger Programs, Office of Field Operations, Washington, D.C.*

2:30 pm–3:00 pm

Networking Break

3:00 pm–4:00 pm

Verification and Documentation Open Forum

*Kimberley Robidoux (DL), AILA Verification and Documentation Liaison Committee Chair, San Diego, CA
John Mazzeo, AILA Verification and Documentation Liaison Committee Vice Chair, Warminster, PA
Jennifer Deines, Acting Deputy Special Counsel, Immigrant and Employee Rights Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.*

4:00 pm–4:30 pm

Networking Break

4:30 pm–5:45 pm

U.S. Department of Labor Open (DOL) Forum

*Bob White, AILA DOL Liaison Committee Chair, Schaumburg, IL
Edward White, AILA DOL Liaison Committee Vice Chair, Boston, MA
Sonal Verma, AILA DOL Liaison Committee Vice Chair, Rockville, MD
Brian Testa, Director, Division of Policy and Regulation, DOL Office of Foreign Labor Certification, Washington, D.C.
Lindsey Baldwin, Director, National Prevailing Wage Center, National Prevailing Wage Director, DOL Office of Foreign Labor Certification Washington, D.C.
John Rotterman, PERM Director, Employment and Training Administration, DOL Office of Foreign Labor Certification, Washington, D.C.*

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

PLENARY SESSIONS

(Adams, Level 1)

10:00 am–12:15 pm

Plenary:

Keynote Address: Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General

DACA Commemorative Keynote: Gaby Pacheco

Presidents Installation

THURSDAY TRAININGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

7:00 am–4:00 pm

(Aurora Foyer, Level 2)

Registration

7:00 am–5:30 pm

(Aurora 1-2, Level 2)

Exhibit Hall Hours

6:00 pm–7:30 pm

(Crest, Level 2)

AILA Annual Membership Meeting and Annual Awards

FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 2025

FUNDAMENTALS

(Colorado BC, Level 3)

8:00 am–9:00 am

Es and Ls: Options for Company Owners, Leaders, Specialists (Fundamentals)

E and L visas can be relatively advantageous compared to H-1Bs, as there are no lottery issues.

But, of course, these visas require the presence of foreign operations and/or ownership. Our panelists will provide a brief overview of the L-1 and E-1/E-2 visa classifications and the nuances in filing petitions in each category. Panelists also will address necessary citizenship and qualifying organization requirements.

- The difference between L-1A and L-1B visas
- The difference between E-1 and E-2 visas

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- If a company / beneficiary can do either, which makes the most sense?
- Best options for startups: new office vs. startup E
- Applying with USCIS vs. border vs. consulate

Roberto J. Ortiz (DL), Doral, FL
Rebecca Bernhard, Minneapolis, MN
Dillon R. Colucci, Los Angeles, CA
Shaun Staller, Philadelphia, PA

9:00 am–9:30 am
Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

Introduction to the H-1B Visa: Scaling the Mountain (Fundamentals)

As the “go-to” visa for most foreign national hires, mastering the H-1B professional visa is a must for any new practitioner. Panelists will discuss the H-1B lottery, interplay of USCIS and U.S. Department of Labor filings, give insight on best practices in preparation for audits and site visits, and review overall challenges when preparing these kinds of filings.

- What is a “specialty occupation”?
- How can a foreign national meet the necessary qualifications for an H-1B visa
- What is required for H-1B and LCA compliance?
- Cap registration and how the lottery system works
- What is (and is not) H-1B cap-subject employment?

William Russell Hummel (DL), Charlotte, NC
Sonal Sharma, AILA Board of Governors, New York, NY
Nassim Mahzoon, Santa Clara, CA
Nicole Simon, Philadelphia, PA

10:30 am–11:00 am
Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Intro to the EB Immigrant Visas (Fundamentals)

An employment-based immigration practice is the backbone of many profitable firms. In this panel, our speakers will provide an overview of the categories, as well as the relative visa wait times in each. They also will discuss transitioning from nonimmigrant visas to Green Cards.

- EB-1: multinational executives and managers, extraordinary ability aliens, and outstanding researchers/professors

(DL) = Discussion Leader
** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- EB-2: national interest waivers, aliens of exceptional ability, professionals holding advanced degrees
- EB-3: professionals, skilled, unskilled, and other workers
- EB-4: special immigrants
- EB-5: Investors

Joseph John Shepherd (DL) New York, NY

Brittany Faith, AILA Board of Governors, Chattanooga, TN

Edward C. Beshara, Maitland, FL

Elise A. Fialkowski, Philadelphia, PA

12:00 pm–1:00 pm

Lunch Break

(Colorado A, Level 3)

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

Joining the Fight Against the Immigration Crackdown: Anatomy of a Removal Proceeding (Fundamentals)

Given the hardline restrictionist agenda of the new administration, the need for lawyer's adept at handling removal cases is more pressing than ever. For the novice practitioner, however, representing a client through a removal proceeding can seem like a daunting task. In this panel, our speakers will role play common situations and challenges in the case flow processing / master calendar hearings and individual calendar hearings through the roles of the private practitioner, assistant chief counsel, and immigration judge.

- The notice to appear
 - Representing clients facing removal
 - What happens at each type of hearing
- Pleadings and the burden of proof
- Common forms of relief and considering voluntary departure
- Prehearing briefs and experts
- Tips on how to prepare for and win an individual hearing

Kathleen Kersh (DL), Dayton, OH

Mohammad Saleem, Brooklyn, NY

Kathleen Pritchard, Portland, OR

Maria Alejandra Otero, Dayton, OH

2:00 pm–2:30 pm

Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30pm

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Employment-based Visa Options for Individuals in Temporary or Precarious Statuses

Often overlooked for undocumented individuals, or those with DACA, TPS or country-specific parole, employment-based visas can provide pathways to a more enduring, lawful status. The Department of State has streamlined access to employment-based visas for U.S. college graduates through an expedited 212(d)(3) waiver process to address common grounds of inadmissibility. This panel discusses how this expedited process works, how advance parole can be used for DACA recipients traveling to consular interviews, and what happens when someone successfully returns with an employment-based visa and 212(d)(3) waiver after consular processing. [Note: This session is open to all levels, as well as, business and humanitarian practitioners.]

- Common employment-based NIV and IV options for undocumented individuals and those with DACA, TPS or country-specific parole
- Overview and update on the expedited 212(d)(3) waiver process and tips for avoiding delays and problems
- Exploring H-1B cap-exempt options for individuals working at institutions of higher education, nonprofits, and government research organizations
- Update on advance parole adjudications and travel risks for DACA recipients seeking to consular process for an employment-based visa
- Strategies for adjusting to LPR status after returning with an NIV and 212(d)(3) waiver

Anita Gupta (DL), Austin, TX

Krsna Avila, Oakland, CA

Camiel Becker, Oakland, CA

FAMILY

Colorado A, Level 3

8:00 am–9:00 am

Creative Lawyering in the New Trump Era: U and T Visas

Join our panelists as they explore the latest U visa policies and case law. Get practical tips for addressing challenges, such as when the applicant faces criminal charges, or when they experience changes in their civil status. Learn innovative strategies for navigating the U visa process effectively, whether your clients are in the United States or abroad. Panelists on this advanced session will discuss creative arguments in establishing a qualifying crime when advocating with law enforcement agencies and USCIS, as well as other tips for outside the box thinking on U visas.

- U visa while in removal proceedings
- U visas for those outside of the United States
- RFEs and revocations
- Grounds of inadmissibility
Defining “Any similar crime”

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Unique bystander and indirect victim arguments

Alyssa C. Reed (DL), Denver, CO
Cintya L. Larios Guzman, Fairfax, VA
Catherine Seitz, San Francisco, CA
Diana Tafur, Glendale, CA

9:00 am-9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am-10:30 am

Complex Naturalization Issues

The N-400 process is the last time USCIS has the opportunity to vet noncitizens. Panelists on this session will assess complex naturalization issues and follow up with N-14s, N-336, and federal court review.

- Fully assessing eligibility for N-400
- Uncommon naturalization and citizenship processes (319b, N-600k)
- N-648, Medical Disability Exception
- N-336 process and evidentiary considerations
- Mandamus actions in federal court

Bradley Maze (DL), Southfield, MI
Scott C. Titshaw, Macon, GA
Rina Mahesh Gandhi, Fairfax, VA
Roberto A. Campos Garduno, San Antonio, TX

10:30 am-11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am-12:00 pm

Fighting the Threat of “Supercharged” Denaturalization

In the past, instances where naturalized citizenship was challenged were relatively rare. Given the new administration’s promise to “supercharge” denaturalization efforts, however, this situation is likely to change. It is therefore imperative that practitioners get up to speed on how best to represent clients faced with this predicament. Our expert panelists will outline the legal thresholds required for denaturalization, and they will provide strategic insights for defending against these challenges.

- Grounds for a naturalized citizen to lose citizenship, the government’s burden

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Defense strategies when your client enters denaturalization proceedings
- Cancellation or revocation of naturalization and its derivative consequences
- Renunciation of citizenship
- Tax considerations

Kathrin S. Mautino (DL), San Diego, CA

Aundrea Roberts, Annual Conference Committee, Duluth, GA

Matthew L. Hoppock, Shawnee, KS

12:00 pm–1:00 pm
Networking Break

(Aurora A, Level 2)

1:00 pm–2:00 pm
TBD

Please note that SCOPE: The Necessity for Political Engagement in the New Trump Era has moved to 4:00 pm Friday in the Open Forum Track *(Aurora B-D, Level 2)*.

2:00 pm–2:30 pm
Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm
Incorporating BIA Decisions into Your Toolbox

Panelists will explore Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) decisions that every family immigration practitioner should know. Cases include the legitimacy of nontraditional marriages, whether immigrant intent can be inferred when applying for an NIV extension, and whether a single act of prostitution still constitutes not “engaging in prostitution.” Panelists will break down 10 useful cases, highlighting their implications for your practice and advising on how to effectively integrate these rulings into your strategies. Attend this session to gain practical tips and tools to enhance your advocacy, navigate complex legal landscapes, and better serve your clients.

- How to research and find old cases
- Which cases are binding and how to use them effectively
- What wins when there is a conflict with the Policy Manual
- How to make sure a case has not been overturned
- Case examples of positive outcomes

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Cynthia B. Rosenberg (DL), Baltimore, MD
Guillermo Hernandez, Texas Chapter Chair, San Antonio, TX
Lance Curtright, San Antonio, TX

3:30 pm–4:00 pm
Networking Break

4:00 pm–5:00 pm
Consular Practice for Family Practitioners: Maneuvering Through the NVC and DOS
Panelists will cover essential topics, including current immigrant visa (IV) interview wait times and effective communication strategies with consular posts. Gain insights on expediting cases, changing consulate locations, and best practices to problem solve when things go wrong.

- IV interview wait times: understanding current trends and setting expectations
- Effective communication: strategies for engaging with NVC and consular posts and overcoming challenges
- Navigating consulate practices: handling variations in procedures and difficult consulates.
- Child Status Protection Act (CSPA) in consular processing: key considerations for CSPA applications
- Preparing for challenges: when your client has a criminal record or when anticipating administrative processing for a security check

Fazila Vaid (DL), Schaumburg, IL
Melissa Chavin, London, UK
Cathy Higgins-Mora, Wheeling, IL

LITIGATION & REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS

(Adams, Level 1)

8:00 am–9:00 am

EOIR Motions to Reopen, Reconsider, and Remand

Things didn't work out as hoped before the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) or immigration judge. The passage of time brings with it changes in evidence and law, or in absentia orders that have been entered. Reinstatement also presents its own unique challenges. The panelists in this intermediate session will discuss how, when, and why you might try for a second bite at the apple.

- The four “Rs”: motions to reconsider, reopen, rescind, and remand
 - Requirements, timing, and strategic considerations
- Preventing your client’s removal while the motion is pending
- Combining a BIA motion with a concurrent federal court challenge

(DL) = Discussion Leader
* = invited, not confirmed

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Considerations for future federal court challenges to motion denials
- *Lozada* bill: impact on practice if it passes

Sarah Weston Hayes Owings (DL), Atlanta, GA
Laura Lichter, AILA Past President, Denver, CO
David A. Isaacson, New York, NY

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

Fighting for Clients in the New Trump Era: Demanding Due Process in Immigration Court

If Trump’s first term was any indication, the new administration will attempt to severely curtail the ability of immigration judges (IJs) to administratively close, continue, or terminate removal proceedings. Couple this with the already record high backlogs and systems stretched to the breaking point, and IJs may be under unprecedented pressure to move cases to completion, often to our clients’ detriment. While some cases languish for years in the backlog, others are pushed through at lightning speed on the various “rocket dockets.” Our panel of experts will advise on how best to deal with the litigation landmines introduced by the new administration and how to secure full and fair hearings and reasoned adjudications.

- The state of litigation under the new administration
- Navigating competing dockets: interminable delays for some, rocket dockets for others
- The right to testify, present, and cross-examine witnesses
- The IJ’s duty to develop the record for both pro se and represented respondents
- When DHS does not appear or meaningfully participate

Ilana Etkin Greenstein (DL), AILA Annual Conference Committee Removal/Litigation Track Chair, Boston, MA

Genevra W. Alberti, AILA Board of Governors, Kansas City, MO

Andres Lopez, AILA Board of Governors/Governance Committee Vice Chair, Charlotte, NC

Emma D. Wells, AILA Board of Governors, Phoenix, AZ

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Immigration Policy Six Months into Trump’s Second Term: What’s Happened and What’s to Come

American Immigration Council experts will discuss the latest developments in immigration policy. Topics will include the latest on the administration’s stated efforts to implement a mass deportation regime, the explosive use of immigration detention, restrictions on legal immigration and humanitarian programs such as DACA and TPS, and the relentless assault on asylum.

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Jorge Loweree (DL), Managing Director of Programs, American Immigration Council, Washington, DC

Nayna Gupta, Policy Director, American Immigration Council, Washington, DC

Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, Senior Fellow, American Immigration Council, Washington, DC

Adriel Orozco, Senior Policy Counsel, American Immigration Council, Durham, NC

Victoria Francis, Deputy Director, State & Local Initiatives American Immigration Council, Denver, CO

12:00 pm–1:00 pm

Networking Break

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

Habeas Corpus Refresher

Considering the new administration's emphasis on detention, Habeas Corpus is a more important tool than ever before. It can be the last line of defense against unconstitutional confinement. Our expert panelists will give a refresher on the use of the writ and the process for filing petitions.

- Types of Habeas action in the immigration context
- Evaluating your case and strategies for using habeas
- When can Habeas be used to seek release from detention?
- What to include in the petition
- When and where to file
- Tips and tricks

Mark Stevens (DL), Washington, D.C.

Laura P. Lunn, Westminster, CO

Simon Y. Sandoval-Moshenberg, Fairfax, VA

2:00 pm–2:30 pm

Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm

Post-*Loper Bright* Issues: Navigating the New Legal Landscape Without *Chevron* (Advanced)

*Last term, the U.S. Supreme Court fundamentally altered administrative law by overruling *Chevron*, removing the mandate for federal judges to defer to an agency's reasonable interpretation of ambiguous statutes. One potential positive outcome of this decision is that it may make challenging agency interpretations detrimental to our clients easier. Panelists will explore the judicial and agency reactions over the past year, evaluate the current situation under the new administration, and offer predictions for future developments.*

(DL) = Discussion Leader

* = invited, not confirmed

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Analysis of situations where pre-*Chevron* rulings may still be binding
- Identifying and challenging agency interpretations and BIA precedent decisions that are now vulnerable to legal challenges or modification
- Challenges to new agency interpretations
- Efficacy of *Skidmore* deference and remaining influence of *Auer* and *Kisor*
- Revisiting principles of statutory construction

Kevin A. Gregg (DL), San Diego, CA

Lory Diana Rosenberg, Annual Conference Committee, Asheville, NC

Trina Realmuto, Brookline, MA

Michelle Lapointe, Legal Director, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

3:30 pm–4:00 pm

Networking Break

(Colorado A, Level 3)

4:00 pm–5:00 pm

Strategic Navigation of EOIR

EOIR has implemented a plethora of docket initiatives in the last few years. Panelists not only will identify which initiatives remain viable as of the conference, but also how to approach them in honoring client self-determinations. Some of these initiatives perpetuate the ping-ponging of cases between USCIS and EOIR, while others require the buy-in of DHS counsel in order to proceed. There are often strategic and practical reasons in deciding whether to seek to remove the case from EOIR's jurisdiction, but these decisions trigger ethical implications for attorneys as well. Panelists will provide strategies and resources to help attorneys best navigate the process, and they will assess changes to EOIR adjudications under the new administration.

- The impact of the new administration on EOIR adjudications
- Advising on prosecutorial discretion, motions to terminate, and their various consequences
 - Assessing right to trial, advising legal guardians of children
- Utilizing the efficient case and docket management in immigration courts regulation
 - ICE directive on victim-centered approach
- Surviving DHS motions to dismiss and post order motion practice
- Docket management tools

Elina Magaly Santana (DL), AILA Annual Conference Committee, Miami, FL

Annelise Maia Jatoba de Araujo, AILA Removal Defense Section Steering Committee Chair, Boston, MA

Susan Girardo Roy, AILA Annual Conference Committee/Removal Defense Section Steering Committee Vice Chair, Princeton Junction, NJ

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Kathleen M. Vannucci, Chicago, IL

BUSINESS

(Aurora A, Level 2)

8:00 am–9:00 am

PERM Filing Through FLAG: Adjudication Trends & Practical Tips (Intermediate)

As we approach the one-year anniversary of PERM adjudications through FLAG, what have immigration attorneys learned about the “new” ETA-9089? Should practitioners approach anything differently for PERM filings moving forward? The panelists on this intermediate-level session will discuss trends in adjudications, address PERM issues based on the current landscape, and review what we have learned so far.

- Updates and resolutions on the unknowns
- Strategically completing Forms ETA-9141 and ETA-9089
- Considerations for ETA-9089 drafting: job changes, remote work, telecommuting, and other worksite considerations
- Requests for information
- Processing times and audit trends

*Vincent W. Lau (DL), AILA USCIS HQ (Benefits Policy) Liaison Committee Vice Chair,
Boston, MA*

Rosanna M. Fox, AILA Board of Governors, Livingston, NJ

Tu Cam T. Castillo, Mokena, IL

Sari Long, Denver, CO

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

Advanced Issues in E-1 and E-2 Processing (Advanced)

Panelists will examine the current state of E-1 and E-2 practice, address some key hurdles practitioners report, and examine some key decisions practitioners make in every E visa application. They also will address practical considerations that affect practitioners in the field.

- Current state of the practice: high scrutiny, more §214(b) refusals, strict number of pages
- Source of funds, existence of international trade requirements and documentation
- Bias against small businesses with low investment or limited trade and funding using loans
- Consular filing or USCIS petition

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Third-country applications
- Use of E visa by entrepreneurs

Shavit Yarden (DL), AILA Annual Conference Committee, New York, NY

Amanda S. Brill, London, UK

Henry J. Chang, Toronto, CA

Lynn Marie Lee, Clifton, VA

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Behind the Consular Window (Intermediate)

Former consular officers will provide unique insight into the inner workings of a consular interview for nonimmigrant and immigrant visa processing. Many consular issues will be discussed from the visa officer's perspective. Panelists also will discuss the consular officer's expectations of visa applications and will give you a rare understanding of their thought processes.

- Consular training at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI)
- Workload, what the consular office is reviewing and analyzing
- Interview tips for applicants
- Waivers
- Administrative processing and denials

Matthew Hughes (DL), Portland, OR

Matthew Mauntel-Medici, Johnston, IA

David Strashnoy, Los Angeles, CA

12:00 pm–1:00 pm

Networking Break

(Colorado BC, Level 3)

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

Permanent Residence Strategies for Religious Workers

Ever since the shocking, sudden retrogression of EB-4 priority dates, permanent residence options for religious workers have been extremely challenging. In this interactive session, panelists and attendees will discuss creative options for the best path forward.

- Update on agency, legislative, litigation efforts to address the retrogression
- Creative immigrant visa (IV) strategies: PERM, National Interest Waivers, EB-1

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Nonimmigrant strategies during the IV process, timing, dual intent, departure from the United States and reset
- USCIS definition of “minister or other religious worker occupation”
- Sunset concern

James Lance Conklin (DL), Perry Hall, MD

William A. Stock, AILA Past President/ EB-4 Task Force Co-Chair/Law Journal Editorial Board, Philadelphia, PA

Kate Adams, Arlington VA

Olga Rojas, Chicago, IL

2:00 pm–2:30 pm

Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm

Monitoring Policy Manuals and Memos: Important Updates (Intermediate)

Panelists will survey recent changes to agency policy manuals, both before and since the inauguration of the new administration, and they will address how these changes may impact longstanding policy. In addition, panelists will review the status of commonly used policy memoranda, decisions, and letters in light of policy manual changes.

- Is there a CBP Manual?
- Key changes to nonimmigrant and immigrant visas under the Policy Manual (other EB immigrant categories (EB-1C, EB-5))
- Are old memos still valid? Johnny Williams B-1, Lafleur/Cohen Letter on H-1B Promotions, 2015 L-1B Policy Memo
- Monitoring Changes to the FAM

David J. Wilks (DL), AILA Board of Governors/Annual Conference Committee, Rochester, NY

Leslie A. Holman, AILA Past President/Business Section Steering Committee Vice Chair, Burlington, VT

Michael P. Nowlan, Detroit, MI

Robin D. O’Donoghue, Cambridge, MA

3:30 pm–4:00 pm

Networking Break

4:00 pm–5:00 pm

Advanced H-1B Issues: Compliance, Extensions, and Path to Permanent Residency (Advanced)

Panelists will cover the critical legal challenges and strategies for managing H-1B petitions, renewals, as well as the path to permanent residency for foreign workers. They also will provide

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

comprehensive legal insights into the complexities of H-1B management, ensuring both compliance and strategic planning for permanent residency.

- Compliance and challenges in H-1B petitions
 - Employer responsibilities: prevailing wage, LCA filings, maintaining compliance
 - Legal strategies for addressing RFEs, audits, and compliance issues
- H-1B extensions and renewals
 - Options for extending beyond six years, including the green card process and PERM certification
 - Legal pitfalls and strategies for maintaining status continuity during the renewal process
- Path to Permanent Residency for H-1B Holders
 - Transitioning to green card status: EB-1, EB-2, and EB-3 categories
 - Overcoming challenges in the green card process: backlogs, retrogression, priority dates

Petula Natasha McShiras (DL), AILA Board of Governors/Annual Conference Committee, Greenwood Village, CO

Maggie M. Murphy, AILA Board of Governors/Annual Conference Committee, Austin, TX

Allen Orr, AILA Past President,

Hudaidah Bhimdi, AILA Membership Committee Chair, Chantilly, VA

GOVERNMENT AND LIAISON COMMITTEE OPEN FORUMS

(Aurora B-D, Level 2)

8:00 am–9:00 am

TBD

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Session

Kevin Miner (DL), AILA USCIS HQ Liaison Committee Chair, Spring Conference Chair, Atlanta, GA

Irene Mugambi, AILA Board of Governors/USCIS Field Operations Liaison Committee Vice-Chair, Dallas, TX

Lucy G. Cheung, AILA USCIS High Impact Adjudications Assistance Committee Chair, New York, NY

Kate Angustia, AILA Supervisory Policy and Practice Counsel, Washington, D.C.

Michael Valverde, Former USCIS, Washington, D.C.

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Session

John Gihon, AILA ICE Liaison Committee Chair, Altamonte Springs, FL

Michelle L. Edstrom, AILA ICE Liaison Committee Vice Chair, Oklahoma City, OK

Kerry E. Doyle, Former ICE Principal Legal Advisor, Washington, D.C.

Claire Trickler McNulty, Former Senior Counselor to the Director for USCIS, Washington, D.C.

12:00 pm–1:00 pm

Lunch Break

1:00 pm–2:00 pm

Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) Session

Aaron Hall, AILA EOIR Liaison Committee Chair, Aurora, CO

Misha Seay, AILA EOIR Liaison Committee Vice Chair,

Charles Adkins-Blanch, Former EOIR/BIA, Falls Church, VA

Noelle Sharp, Former EOIR Supervising Immigration Judge, Falls Church, VA

2:00 pm–2:30 pm

Networking Break

2:30 pm–3:30 pm

U.S. Department of State (DOS) Session

Steven Heller, AILA DOS Liaison Committee Chair, Lewes, Great Britain

Claire Pratt, AILA DOS Liaison Committee Vice Chair, San Francisco, CA

Ahran McCloskey, Alexandria, VA

3:30 pm–4:00 pm

Networking Break

4:00 pm–5:00 pm

SCOPE: The Necessity for Political Engagement in the New Trump Era

In light of the electoral successes of the new administration and its hardline restrictionist agenda, now, more than ever, immigration advocates must become actively involved in the political arena. To counter the current alarmist narrative focused exclusively on the pitfalls (real and imagined) of immigration to the United States, more expert voices are needed to publicize

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

the overwhelmingly positive benefits of immigration to our country. And who is more “expert” on the topic of immigration than AILA members? Answer the call for increased political engagement and come learn from AILA’s Standing Committee on Political Engagement (SCOPE) about how to make a real difference in changing anti-immigrant hearts and minds.

- Local, state, and national involvement
- Congressional advocacy
- Debunking the myths and exhorting the truth: resources
- Strategic alliances

Gregory Chen (DL), AILA Senior Director of Government Relations, Washington, D.C.

Cory Forman, AILA Board of Governors, New York, NY

Olivia Serene Lee, AILA Board of Governors/ Member Experience Committee Chair, AILA Law Journal Editorial Board, San Francisco, CA

Paul Rampersaud, AILA Grassroots Advocacy Associate, Washington, D.C.

FRIDAY TRAININGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

7:30 am–4:00 pm

(Aurora Foyer, Level 2)

Registration

7:30 am–5:00 pm

(Aurora 1-2, Level 2)

Exhibit Hall Hours

7:00 pm–10:00 pm

(Adams, Level 1)

American Immigration Council’s Immigration Impact Celebration

SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2025

FUNDAMENTALS

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

(Colorado A, Level 3)

8:00 am–9:00 am

Less Common Nonimmigrant Visas with Work Authorization (Fundamentals)

Panelists here will discuss the use of visa classifications less commonly seen in immigration practice – those outside of the professional worker, intracompany transferee classifications. This brief overview will assist new practitioners in finding solutions for their clients coming from less common backgrounds and qualifications.

- Use of B-1 visas for business within the United States (e.g. B-1 in lieu of H-1B)
- TN, H-1B1, and E-3 visas
- O and P visas
- Religious worker visas
- Thoroughly screening clients through the onboarding process.
- Confidentiality, establishing trust with clients
- How to deal with clients who may be tempted to lie
- Cultural competence with clients from non-Western backgrounds; trauma-informed approach to eliciting information.

Whitney Lohr (DL), 2025 Annual Conference Committee, Miami, FL

Mark Ellis, 2025 Annual Conference Committee, Santa Clara, CA

Miki Matrician, Boston, MA

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

Mock Immigration Consultation: Family and Removal (Fundamentals)

Given the changes promised by the new administration seeking to curtail family immigration and ramp up removal proceedings significantly, it is more important than ever that practitioners become fully adept at representing these types of clients. To assist in this, panelists in this specially designed roleplay session will simulate common issues in consultations, with a focus on helping practitioners hone this important aspect of their lawyering skills in family and removal representation.

- Thoroughly screening clients through the onboarding process
- Confidentiality, establishing trust with clients
- How to deal with clients who may be tempted to lie
- Cultural competence with clients from non-Western backgrounds
 - Trauma-informed approach to eliciting information

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

*Kathleen Elizabeth Irish (DL), Family Section Steering Committee Vice Chair,
Kansas City, MO*

Michael R. Jarecki, Chicago, IL

Douglas R. Penn, Stamford, CT

Courtney Butler, Lakewood, CO

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Mock Immigration Consultation: Business and Investors (Fundamentals)

In this roleplay panel, panelists will simulate common issues in consultations, with a focus on business and investor clients.

- Who do I represent, the employer or the employee (or both)?
- Developing thorough questionnaires
- Dealing with clients who have resources for multiple visa avenues
- Advising companies through the challenges of employment-based immigration

Gayle Oshrin (DL), New York, NY

Rusty DeMoss, AILA Annual Conference Special Sessions Track Chair, Atlanta, GA

Ian Wagreich, Chicago, IL

Maurice H. Goldman, Tucson, AZ

12:00 pm–1:15 pm

Lunch Break

(Colorado BC, Level 3)

1:15 pm–2:15 pm

Introduction to Naturalization: The End of the Long and Winding Immigration Road (Fundamentals)

Panelists will provide an overview of the requirements for naturalization, including continuous and physical presence, good moral character, and passing the relevant exams. They also will present exemptions to these requirements, impart tips on preparing clients for their naturalization interviews, and advise on passing citizenship to foreign-born children.

- The five main requirements to naturalize: What exceptions / waivers are available?
- Introduction to Forms N-400 and N-600
- How to prepare clients for the English language and history/civics testing
- What is “good moral character” and how to rehabilitate clients
- Overview of derivative citizenship (jus sanguinis)

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Bridgette M. Sparkman Borg, AILA Board of Governors, Southfield, MI
Shobhana Kasturi, Naperville, IL
Sharadha Kodem Sankararaman, Irving, TX
Tessa M. Cabrera, San Diego, CA

2:15 pm–2:45 pm
Networking Break

2:45 pm–3:45 pm
Crimmigration 101 (Fundamentals)

Criminal activity carries with it grave immigration consequences. The new administration may make these consequences even more dire. In this panel, our experts will explain the interplay between criminal law and immigration law, including exceptions to general rules as well as potential avenues of relief.

- Overview of Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) §212 and §237 categories, including crimes of moral turpitude and exceptions
- Domestic violence issues that can lead to removability
- What constitutes a conviction under the INA?
- Analyzing federal, state, and foreign criminal law working hand in hand with criminal lawyers to minimize immigration consequences in plea bargaining
- Responding to aggressive RFEs and NOIDs
- What waivers / post-conviction relief may be available?

Michael S. Vastine (DL), Gulfport, FL
Ronald L. Abramson, Manchester, NH
Karl William Krooth, San Francisco, CA
Hans Meyer, Denver, CO

3:45 pm–4:15 pm
Networking Break

4:15 pm–5:15 pm
Nonimmigrant Visa Consular Processing: Preparing Clients for the Interview (Fundamentals)

Panelists will provide an overview of the process and timeline following petition approval and/or visa application submission. They also will guide the audience through common challenges, instilling confidence in clients before the interview, and advise on what can be done if a visa is not issued.

- The DS-160 nonimmigrant visa application and common issues in completion

(DL) = Discussion Leader
** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- When and where to apply for visas: navigating the maze of consular posts around the world
- How to prepare a client for the NIV interview
- Visa denials and administrative processing: introduction to INA §212 and §221g
- Communicating with consular posts / U.S. Department of State

Katie C. L. Fitchett (DL), London, UK

Bernard P. Wolfsdorf, AILA Past President, Santa Monica, CA

Ronald A. Nair, Annual Conference Committee, Norwalk, CT

Marko C. Maglich, Boston, MA

FAMILY and HUMANITARIAN

(Colorado BC, Level 3)

8:00 am–9:00 am

Public Charge Puzzles in the New Trump Era: Show Me the Money!

Public charge is a critical requirement for adjustment of status and immigrant visa applications, one that can create headaches for an attorney if not done correctly from the beginning. In the first Trump term, the administration interpreted the public charge statutory factors in a highly restrictive manner, suggesting that Trump's second term will see more of the same, making the headaches attorneys already deal with much worse. Panelists will help explore how to streamline and make sense of the labyrinth of regulations and instructions, and they will advise on how best to deal with the tighter interpretations of public charge factors that may be used by the new administration.

- Determining public charge considerations and assessing whether to use a joint sponsor or a household member's income
- Ensuring proper documentation is collected from clients for USCIS submission
- Ethical considerations when obtaining necessary documentation from the joint sponsor
- Strategies for avoiding boilerplate RFEs and providing alternative documentation for self-employed petitioners or joint sponsors
- Navigating complex scenarios: unauthorized employment of intending immigrants, domicile issues, and the use of I-864W, tax transcripts, and §204(I) substitute sponsors

William Niffen II (DL), 2025 Annual Conference Committee, North Kansas City, MO

Meghann Eileen LaFountain, Removal Defense Section Steering Committee, Middletown, CT

Charles Wheeler, AILA Author, Public Charge and Affidavits of Support:

A Practitioner's Guide, Immigration Law & the Family, and AILA's Focus on the Child Status Protection Act, Berkeley, CA

Jason C. Mills, DOL Liaison Committee, Fort Worth, TX

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

9:00 am–9:30 am
Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am
TBD

10:30 am–11:00 am
Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm
Understanding the Child Status Protection Act (Intermediate)

The Child Status Protection Act (CSPA) helps preserve the age of a "child" so they can remain in the immediate relative or F-2A category, or as a derivative in one of the preference categories. But calculating the age of a child can get complicated, especially now that USCIS and DOS apply different interpretations of the law. Panelists will discuss the substantive issues involved with the CSPA, the calculations of its protection/eligibility, and how USCIS and DOS compare in determinations of CSPA protection.

- CSPA: definitions and calculations of applicability/eligibility
- USCIS policy vs. DOS policy
- CSPA-related litigation
- Age freeze, CSPA formula, “sought to acquire,” opt-out provision, and automatic conversion
- Conversion issues; when to tell a parent NOT to naturalize

Brent W. Renison (DL), Portland, OR
Marisol L. Perez, San Antonio, TX
Carl Michael Shusterman, Torrance, CA
Amy Lenhert, Los Angeles, CA

12:00 pm–1:15 pm
Lunch Break

(Colorado A, Level 3)

1:15 pm–2:15 pm
Rocky Roads: Complex Marriage-Based Adjustments

We often focus on the beneficiary when it comes to potential problems that may hinder approvals, but sometimes it is the petitioner who has a "colorful" history. Maybe your clients' marriage is destined to fail, or they do not have what USCIS considers a “traditional marriage.” The experts on this panel will advise on best practices when dealing with dicey marital issues.

(DL) = Discussion Leader
** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Complicated marriage history, including fraudulent and customary divorces and religious and customary marriages
- Contemplating VAWA at the onset for dual representation cases, what happens when the marriage breaks down
- USCIS expectations for a bona fide marriage
- Outstanding criminal issues: warrants, restraining orders, previous domestic violence
- Adam Walsh Act: what it is, how to avoid it, how to challenge it
- Deceased spouse and humanitarian reinstatement

Maggie Castillo (DL), Long Beach, CA
Teresa A. Coles-Davila, San Antonio, TX
Patrick F. Valdez, Inglewood, CA

2:15 pm–2:45 pm
Networking Break

2:45 pm–3:45 pm
Mastering Complex I-751s: Strategies for Late Filings, Divorce Waivers, and Jurisdictional Issues

Join our panelists for a focused discussion on navigating the complexities of the I-751 process. Learn how to handle late filings, convert joint filings to divorce waivers, and address jurisdictional challenges between USCIS and immigration judges. Panelists will cover strategies for dealing with green cards that have already expired, ongoing divorces, and de novo reviews of denied I-751s. Attend this session to gain practical insights to effectively manage these critical issues in the removal of conditions process.

- Handling late filings
- Divorce waivers and separated clients
- Jurisdictional issues
- *De Novo* review
- Pitfalls and best practices with clients

Adriana Ruiz Robinson (DL), Annual Conference Committee/ DOS Liaison Committee, Bethesda, MD
Kevin Lawrence Dixler, Annual Conference Committee, Chicago, IL
Emily Robinson, Los Angeles, CA

3:45 pm–4:15 pm
Networking Break

4:15 pm–5:15 pm
Rebuilding Hope: Helping an Abused VAWA Self-Petitioner Succeed

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Family immigration cases do not always work out according to plan. In this session, panelists will discuss the requirements and process for helping an abused I-130 beneficiary change course to an I-360 based on the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

- Substantive eligibility requirements for VAWA self-petitions
- Procedures and benefits of changing case type, including unique VAWA inadmissibility/waiver considerations at the lawful permanent resident application stage
- Tips on avoiding ethical pitfalls and retraumatization through the process
- What is "battery or extreme cruelty"?
- Proving non-physical abuse

Tracie L. Morgan (DL), Family Section Steering Committee, Atlanta, GA

Lia Ocasio, Suffield, CT

Ghassan Shamieh, San Francisco, CA

Sonia Parras Konrad, Des Moines, IA

LITIGATION and REMOVAL PROCEEDINGS

(Adams, Level 1)

8:00 am–9:00 am

Advocating for Noncitizens with Competency Concerns: Legal and Practical Approaches
Mental competency in immigration proceedings is more than just M-A-M-! Panelists will dive into Matter of M-A-M-, but also Franco Settlement, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, safeguard protections, safe release, and competency proceedings. They also will advise on how to center client autonomy, gain trust, and maintain credibility when individuals are struggling with participation in proceedings.

- Safeguards and accommodations
- Working with clients- ethical considerations
- Advocating with ICE
- EOIR accommodations for attorneys

Cassandra Lucinda Lopez (DL), San Diego, CA

Sophie Dalsimer, New York, NY

Shira Hereld, Denver, CO

Dr. Darien Combs, Psychologist, Conscious Heart Counseling and Wellness, Denver, CO

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

9:30 am–10:30 am

Fighting for Clients in the New Trump Era: Jurisdictional Considerations for Federal Court

You have a compelling case that you can't wait to present to a federal court judge. But before you can get to the merits, you must address jurisdiction. When is the door to the federal court open and when is it closed? When can you find a little-used back door? Our expert panelists will discuss all the jurisdictional hurdles you must navigate to have your case heard in federal court, and they will discuss how best to prepare for those future challenges when representing your client before the agency.

- §1252(a)(2)(B): scope and strategies for avoiding the bar in the wake of *Patel* and *Wilkinson*
- Jurisdictional rules vs. claims processing rules
- Mandatory vs. non-mandatory claims processing rules
- Withholding only cases
- Exhaustion of administrative remedies and preservation of issues

Mark Stevens (DL), Washington, D.C.

Aimee Mayer-Salins, Newton, MA

Leslie Dellon, Senior Attorney (Business Immigration), American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

David Zimmer, Amicus Committee Chair, Boston, MA

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Asylum Litigation Updates: Practical Impacts of, and Predictions for, the New Trump Era

The changes enacted by both the Biden and new Trump administrations to this point have been difficult to track and predict. Panelists will attempt to provide the most relevant information and updates in asylum litigation, make sense of the changes that have been implemented as of June 2025, and advise on their practical ramifications. They also will discuss how to advise clients in this sea of uncertainty, and, where possible, they will make predictions on what lies in store for the future of the field. Panelists will focus on the following:

- The impact on asylum litigation under the new administration
- Asylum Clock Litigation (*Garcia Perez*)
- Enjoined/proceeding regulations
- Expedited removal
- Third country removal

Kelly White (DL), Annual Conference Committee, Washington, D.C.

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Ava Benach, Washington, D.C.

Mary Georgevich, Chicago, IL

Kate Goettel, Federal Court Litigation Section Steering Committee Vice Chair, Iowa City, IA

12:00 pm–1:15 pm

Lunch Break

1:15 pm–2:15 pm

Hot Topics in Bars to Asylum

The new administration's ongoing efforts to curtail the asylum program and discourage people from seeking asylum (continuing efforts already underway during the Biden administration) have had myriad repercussions for asylum practice, both substantive and procedural. At the same time, the shifting demographics of asylum seekers have raised new issues and added new layers of complexity. Our panelists will address some of the evolving issues relating to statutory bars to asylum and withholding of removal, including:

- Border policies: circumvention of lawful pathways, the June 4, 2024, regulation, and 2025 border policies
- One-year filing deadline: unfiled notices to appear and terminated removal proceedings
- Persecutor of others and terrorism-related inadmissibility grounds (TRIG): exceptions and exemptions in the wake of *Matter of Negusie*
- Firm resettlement: parameters and exceptions
- Predictions for the asylum program in the new Trump era

Nareeneh Sohbatiyan (DL), Annual Conference Committee/Pro Bono Committee Vice Chair, Los Angeles, CA

Dree K. Collopy, AILA Author, AILA's Asylum Primer: A Practical Guide to U.S. Asylum Law and Procedure, 9th ed., Law Journal Editorial Board, Washington, D.C.

Leah L. Chavarria, San Diego, CA

Paul O'Dwyer, New York, NY

2:15 pm–2:45 pm

Networking Break

2:45 pm–3:45 pm

Detention in the New Trump Era

Though immigration detention is nothing new, the new administration has increasingly used detention as a tool for coercion and deterrence, ramping up an action already employed during the Biden administration. Our panel of experts will discuss detention trends nationwide, the state of large-scale litigation, and strategies for securing clients' release. They also will attempt to predict what the future of detention efforts may look like in the new Trump era.

- Detention trends

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Litigation updates
- Caselaw and memoranda
- Bond, parole, habeas, and release on own recognizance (ROR)
 - Strategies for securing clients' release

Wendy S. Wayne (DL), Boston, MA

Stephanie Alvarez-Jones, Atlanta, GA

Rebekah Wolf, Immigration Justice Campaign Director, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

Rebecca Cassler, Senior Litigation Attorney, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.

3:45 pm–4:15 pm

Networking Break

4:15 pm–5:15 pm

Evolving Definitions of Particular Social Groups

In a post-Chevron era, the law on what makes for a legally cognizable particular social group (PSG) remains in flux. Panelists will do a deep dive into the current law of PSG formulation and where there may be room to undo or overturn problematic BIA precedent. They also will provide tips on crafting a winning PSG for your asylum/withholding claims, and they will advise on what to do when confronted with difficult caselaw in your circuit.

- Using *Loper Bright* and *Wilkinson* to advocate for a better standard
- Arguing and proving your PSGs
- Avoiding common mistakes when formulating PSGs
- Gender per se as a PSG

F. Evan Benz (DL), Annual Conference Committee, Washington, D.C.

Zachary Abraham Albin, Minneapolis, MN

Breanna Cary, Edmond, OK

BUSINESS

(Aurora B-D, Level 2)

8:00 am–9:00 am

Understanding H-2 Visas: Beyond the Basics (Intermediate)

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Are you an employment-immigration attorney and would like a more detailed view of the ever-changing H-2B program? Panelists will deep-dive into the web of regulations that surround the H-2 programs. They will demystify the H-2B caps and dive into how to make the visa caps work better for you and your clients. They also will look at the changing compliance landscape hovering over the H-2A and H-2B programs.

- H-2B:
 - Advanced issues: Timing of prevailing wage requests
 - How to get a Notice of Action with confidence!
 - A deep dive into the H-2B caps: FY caps, returning worker caps, and country-specific caps
- H-2A:
 - Compliance is king: looking at the new Farmworker Protections Act
 - Hot topics on H-2A
- PERM options

*Ashley Foret Dees (DL), Houston, TX
Michele Contreras, Cherry Hill, NJ
Loan T. Huynh, Minneapolis MN
Jarrod Sharp, Albany, NY*

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

PERM with the Pros: An Advanced Discussion of PERM Issues (Advanced)

Panelists will discuss advanced PERM issues and provide insights into counseling employers on strategies for their PERM programs. Topics to be discussed include strategies for PERM filings with nonimmigrant max outs, complexities relating to PERM job descriptions and recruitment, the impact of layoffs and corporate mergers and acquisitions, and audit triggers.

- Drafting tight, but not tailored, job descriptions
- Specific vocational preparation (SVP) analysis and business necessity explanation
- Good faith recruitment in light of DOJ settlements
- Audit triggers, including relationships with owners and combined occupations

*Sylvia Siew Jen Yong (DL), Annual Conference Committee, Toronto, ON, Canada
Sarah K. Peterson, Minneapolis, MN
Douglas Michael Russo, Publications Committee, Brentwood, TN
Yvonne Toy, San Francisco, CA*

10:30 am–11:00 am

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Transitioning F-1 and J-1s to Their Next Status: When the Odds Aren't in Your Favor

Numerous issues arise when F-1 and J status holders are not selected in the H-1B lottery, forcing them to seek alternative nonimmigrant status or permanent residency. Retaining talent is a continuing concern with the inadequate number of H-1Bs available each year. Our expert panelists will discuss viable options for those not selected in the H-1B lottery.

- Maximizing CPT/OPT/academic training and limitations
 - How this may affect future status
- Hurdles from F-1/J to other nonimmigrant categories: §212(e): O-1, L-1, E-1, E-2, TN, J-1
- Visa alternatives: concurrent cap-exempt H employment, remote employment in Canada, J Early STEM Research Initiative, etc.
- Having your client partner with cap-exempt organizations
- Is it possible to transition directly from F-1/J to permanent residence?

Alka Bahal (DL), Parsippany, NJ

Adam S. Cohen, Memphis, TN

Steve Springer, Director of Regulatory Affairs, NAFSA National, Washington, D.C.

12:00 pm–1:15 pm

Lunch Break

(Willow Lake, Level 3)

1:15 pm–2:15 pm

ICE/HSI I-9 Investigations: “We’re Ba-ack!” Trends, Strategies, and Fine Mitigation (Intermediate)

After a lengthy period during which government I-9 investigations were rare, practitioners now note a recent uptick in ICE/HSI investigations. With potential penalties rising each year, coupled with the increasing risk of relying on I-9 software, it is imperative that counsel understand how to advise clients. Panelists will cover current trends and what to do after a Notice of Inspection is served.

- Limiting the scope of the investigation
- Responding to notices of suspect documents, discrepancies, and technical/procedural failures
- How to mitigate damages and prepare responses
- Notices of intent to fine and related negotiations
- Litigation when settlement cannot be reached

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Amy L. Peck (DL), Omaha, NE

Bruce E. Buchanan, Author, The I-9 and E-Verify Handbook: A Guide to Employment Verification and Compliance, Nashville, TN

Katie Nokes Minervino, Portland, ME

2:15 pm–2:45 pm

Networking Break

2:45 pm–3:45 pm

TBD

3:45 pm–4:15 pm

Networking Break

4:15 pm–5:15 pm

NIV Options and Issues for Start-Ups, Small and Medium-Sized Businesses (Intermediate)

Panelists will address nonimmigrant visa and parole options for founders and employees of new U.S. companies. They also will discuss updates to the rules for H-1B business owners, O-1s for founders, the entrepreneur parole program, and common issues in the preparation of first time Ls, including tips for new offices as well as existing businesses and acquisitions. In addition, panelists will advise on whether E visas are a feasible option.

- Tips and tricks for O-1, E-2, and Ls for founders and their employees
- New office issues, new office versus non-new office, acquisition issues
- How changes to employer-employee relationship and other H-1B trends under the Biden administration have favored startup founders
- Updates on the state of the entrepreneur parole program based on new USCIS data and guidance

Jason Susser (DL), AILA Board of Governors/Annual Conference Committee, Memphis, TN

Ramon E. Curiel, San Antonio, TX

Julianne Cassin Sharp, Detroit, MI

Ian E. Scott, New York, NY

IMMIGRATION INNOVATORS TRACK/ EB-5 MINI TRACK

(Sponsored sessions to be selected by staff and the committee)

(Crest, Level 2)

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

8:00 am–9:00 am

Be a Client Whisperer: Understanding Consumer Trends & The Role Tech Can Play to Get Them Working for You

Clients are the lifeblood of legal practice, but do you ever study your clients as consumers? Consumer behavior and trends are constantly evolving. These changes can either be a headwind (unfavorable impact) or a tailwind (favorable impact) for your immigration practice. If you understand the wants and needs of your clients (as consumers) and apply this knowledge toward better execution, you can drive better engagement, more efficient operations, and set your firm up for scalable earned growth. Join this panel discussion to learn about current trends and how firms like yours are proactively solving for these dynamic challenges.

- **Engage:** Understanding modern client engagement and what you can be doing today to maximize engagement
- **Measure:** Perception is reality, understanding how your clients perceive your law firm? By measuring client satisfaction you will be able to take control of your relationships and become proactive
- **Act:** Once you know how your clients are feeling, you can take action to mobilize in different ways. Playbooks will ensure you are getting every client on a journey to being a satisfied referral.

Roman Zelichenko, Founder at GMI Rocket; Co-Founder & CEO at LaborLess, Kew Gardens, NY

Paul Bamert, VP of Marketing, Case Status, Charlotte, NC

Iris Ramos Carroll, Minneapolis, MN

Ruby Powers, Houston, TX

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

Ditch the Grief, Automate the Brief: Leveraging AI to Respond to Lengthy RFEs

Responding to Requests for Evidence (RFEs) is both time-consuming and a high-stakes task that requires thorough legal arguments and well-organized supporting documents. AI-driven tools are transforming how immigration attorneys handle RFEs, from analyzing USCIS trends to drafting persuasive responses with greater efficiency. This panel will explore how AI can assist in analyzing RFEs, review the documentation submitted in an initial filing, identify missing evidence, and streamline RFE response drafting and packet assembly.

- **AI-Assisted RFE Analysis:** Learn how AI can break down lengthy RFEs, identify key issues, and match them to relevant legal arguments and precedent
- **Smart Evidence Review & Organization:** Use AI to compare the RFE to the original filing, flag missing documentation, and suggest the best supporting evidence
- **Drafting Response Letters:** See how AI-driven tools can generate well-structured response drafts with persuasive legal reasoning while maintaining attorney oversight

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Live Demo – CaseBlink

Khalil Zlaoui, Co-founder of CaseBlink, San Francisco, CA

Eric Martinez, Dickerson Fellow & Instructor in Law, University of Chicago Law School, San Francisco, CA

Benedicte Boutrouille | Senior Attorney, Fakhoury Global Immigration, San Francisco, CA

Roxanne Fraser, Director of Legal Solutions, San Francisco, CA

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Using AI as Your Ally to Counterbalance 2025 Immigration Policies

With the immigration landscape changing overnight, you can no longer afford to wait on the sidelines evaluating whether it makes sense to implement AI in your legal practice. Generative AI is the key to moving cases forward more quickly, staying current on constantly changing policy, and enhancing your arguments. This spotlight session is for anyone working in immigration law who wants to ensure they have every advantage possible to compile stronger petitions faster than ever.

You'll learn about practical generative AI tools that leading firms are using to:

- Query comprehensive immigration law libraries and databases to help you develop case strategies, spot red flags, and generate checklists, intake forms, templates, and other materials customized to the facts of your case
- Generate expert letters, court documents, petition briefs, and entire case packets in minutes
- Get more value from case management systems, including gaining insights into your and your team's productivity, using AI to help you quickly assess what's happening with your cases, summarizing key case documents, and automatically moving data from uploaded documents to form fields
- Perform complex tasks like assessing a client's criminal history to determine inadmissibility, determining whether the CSPA applies in a matter, developing a response to an RFE and more

Gregory Howard Siskind, Co-Founder @ Siskind Susser Immigration Lawyers & Visalaw.ai

AILA Author, AILA's Immigration Law Practice and Procedure Manual: A "Cookbook" of Essential Practice Materials, 3rd ed., Memphis, TN

Raymundo Herrera, Product Specialist, Cerenade, Los Angeles, CA

Phillip Yadidian, Founder, Cerenade, Los Angeles, CA

12:00 pm–1:15 pm

Lunch Break

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

(Colorado D, Level 3)

1:15 pm–2:15 pm

Marketing Strategies for Immigration Attorneys: SEO, Social Media & CRM Integration

Effective marketing is key for immigration attorneys to attract clients and investors. This panel covers how to leverage search engine optimization (SEO), social media, and client resource management (CRM) tools to boost visibility, enhance client engagement, and generate quality investor leads. Experts will share practical strategies to integrate these tactics efficiently and grow your practice.

- SEO for lawyers: Optimize your website to rank higher and attract potential clients
- Social Media for Growth: Use LinkedIn, Facebook, and X to build credibility and generate investor leads
- CRM for efficiency: Automate client management and follow-ups to improve conversions
- Content Marketing: Establish authority through blogs, videos, and webinars
- Ethical considerations: Ensure compliance with digital marketing regulations for attorneys

Ali Jahangiri (DL), CEO of EB5 Investors, Newport Beach, CA

Irina Rostova, FINRA registered Broker Dealer with InvestAmerica, Parkland, FL

Natali Aun Santiago, Head of Legal and Technology Management, HOTELS Magazine, Irvine, CA

David Eisen, VP & Editor of HOTELS Magazine, Rockville, MD

2:45 pm–3:45 pm

Introduction to EB-5

EB-5 has the reputation of being among the most complex visa types, perhaps rightfully so. But, for the practitioner armed with the right knowledge, it doesn't have to be so difficult. In this investor-focused panel, our experienced speakers will provide a thorough overview and other key information for those who are brand new to EB-5 practice. Among the topics they will discuss are general terms, significant changes following passage of the Reform and Integrity Act (RIA), ever-changing rules and timelines, and representing high-net worth clientele.

- Standalone vs. regional center investors, RIA reforms and visa set-asides
- Basic requirements, at risk requirement, and minimum investment amounts
- Documenting source and path of funds
- Limiting the scope of your representation as immigration-only counsel
- Concurrent filings and condition removal

Joey Barnett (DL), AILA EB-5 Investor Committee Vice Chair, Los Angeles, CA

Halston Chavez, Tega Cay, SC

Belma Demirovic Chinchoy, Los Angeles, CA

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Irina Alexia Rostova, Parkland, FL

3:45 pm–4:15 pm
Networking Break

4:15 pm–5:15 pm
Navigating the Complexities of EB-5: Emerging Challenges and Untapped Opportunities
EB-5 is notorious among immigration practitioners for its complexities. To help make EB-5 practice less daunting and more doable, our panel of experts will examine the complexities of these EB-5 complexities. They will explore and explain sophisticated, nuanced topics within EB-5 that seasoned attorneys rarely have the chance to focus on in depth, including:

- USCIS trends in source of funds scrutiny
- The “sustainment” requirement and redeployment strategies
- I-956 alphabet soup: regional center management and compliance
- Crisis management in EB-5: litigation, bankruptcy, investor relations

Jennifer Hermansky (DL), AILA EB-5 Investor Committee Chair, Philadelphia, PA
H. Ronald Klasko, AILA Past President, Philadelphia, PA
Walter S. Gindin, New York, NY
Brandy Williams, Houston, TX

SPECIAL SESSIONS

(Colorado D, Level 3)

8:00 am–9:00 am
Setting Healthy, Ethical Boundaries with Your Clients Up Front (Ethics)
Panelists will help you identify ethical considerations and the type of boundaries you ought to have with your clients throughout your professional relationship. Meeting client expectations while maintaining personal well-being requires resilience and effective communication. Whether you’re starting your immigration career or looking to protect yourself against burnout, this panel will offer strategies for setting realistic expectations, handling high-pressure demands, and aligning client goals with achievable outcomes.

- The importance of clear and well-defined retainers/engagement letters
- The clauses every agreement should have (RPC 1.2 and 1.4)
- How to achieve clarity in fees and costs clauses, including fixed and hourly fees (RPC 1.5 and 1.15)
- Planning for the unknown: protecting yourself and your firm
- Ending the attorney-client relationship: closing letters and other strategies

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Tami V. Castillo (DL), AILA Board of Governors, Sacramento, CA
Gary Frost, Dallas, TX
Cheri R. Peterson-Ross, Chicago, IL

9:00 am–9:30 am

Networking Break

9:30 am–10:30 am

Reacting to Mistakes with Emotional Intelligence (Competence/Wellness)

As attorneys, we are humans, and so, like everyone else on Earth, we make mistakes. But how do we react to these errors, individually and/or within our team? Panelists will explore how to handle mistakes with emotional intelligence, offering strategies to respond compassionately and constructively to those mistakes, whether addressing them ourselves, with clients, with colleagues, or within a larger team.

- What happens in my mind and body when I make a mistake?
 - Self-awareness: detrimental narratives we create around mistakes
 - Perfectionism, inner criticism, and other lawyer traits
- What happens when a team member, colleague, or client makes a mistake?
 - Leading with a growth mindset: mentorship/teaching vs. punishment mindset
 - Leading by example: the power of vulnerability and more
- Strategies to react compassionately and constructively
 - Self-regulation, pausing before reacting, "feeling the feelings," recognizing vs. avoiding

Kenneth Craig Dobson (DL), Well-Being Committee Chair, New York, NY
Sarah Rice Sanger, Toronto, Canada
David Asser, Westminster, CO
Sara Marie Mailander, Boston, MA

10:30 am–11:00 am

Networking Break

11:00 am–12:00 pm

Ethically Addressing Client Expectations When Facing the Unknown (Ethics)

Immigration professionals are uniquely challenged by the uncontrollable changing tides of politics, court decisions, and unforeseeable agency delays. The radical changes to immigration law promised by the new administration serve only to exacerbate these challenges. Panelists will advise practitioners on how to provide counsel to clients ethically about options and likely outcomes in order to manage their expectations. They also will address how to keep up with the

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

constant legal and practice changes and still balance professional and personal life and well-being.

- Essential client communications in a time of uncertainty (ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct (RPC) 1.4, 1.6, 5.1-5.3)
- Making choices about limiting areas of practice and ensuring you have necessary legal resources
- Adopting coping mechanisms and cultivating resilience to meet the challenges that will arise for us, our clients, and our businesses
- Recognizing when you or your staff cannot diligently represent a client or accomplish promised work (RPC 1.3)
- Maintain communication with clients—and get paid—over long delays

C. Lynn Calder (DL), Raleigh, NC

Amanda K. Gennerman, Madison, WI

Jack Jrada, Brooklyn, NY

Andrea Comfort Martinez, Kansas City, MO

12:00 pm–1:15 pm

Lunch Break

(Crest, Level 2)

1:15 pm–2:15 pm

Ethics of AI for Immigration Lawyers and Their Staff (Ethics)

There has been a lot of hype about AI lately, and justifiably so: The market for AI has been exploding, and all indications are that it is here to stay. This session aims to separate fact from fiction, provide an introduction to AI, and address why you should care about it. Panelists will address what AI is, how to differentiate and choose a program, and how to begin using a program that best meets your needs.

- How different AI tools work and where best to apply them in your practice
- How to differentiate products and choose the right one
- Ethics rules that apply: Model Rules of Professional Conduct 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 4.3, and 5.1–5.3
- Learn how to use AI ethically and teach your staff how to do the same
- Duty to disclose use of AI to client

Charity Anastasio (DL), Practice and Ethics Counsel, AILA Practice and Professionalism

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

Center, Washington, D.C.
Cyrus D. Mehta, Editor-in-Chief, AILA Law Journal, New York, NY
Abanoub Amin, Centreville, VA

2:15 pm–2:45 pm

Networking Break

2:45 pm–3:45 pm

Staff Retention: “Hi, I’m The Problem”

Good help is hard to find, and once you’ve found it, it can be even harder to retain. When you are struggling to figure out why you can’t find good help or why nobody stays, the answer may be in the mirror, or it may lie elsewhere. Panelists will explore various hiring and retention strategies, from the obvious (such as a strong benefits package) to the not so obvious (work culture).

- Understanding what your employees really want: beyond compensation to meaningful work and work-life balance
- Innovative benefits that set your firm apart: from sabbaticals to wellness programs and professional development opportunities
- Basic building blocks of leadership and delegation
- Making a plan that aligns with your firm’s goals for how you will find, hire, and retain your next employee
-

Kirby Gamblin Joseph (DL), Aurora, CO

Rosanna Berardi, Buffalo, NY

Elizabeth Anne Gibson, Chicago, IL

Lu (Kevin) Wang, Rocklin, CA

3:45 pm–4:15 pm

Networking Break

4:15 pm–5:15 pm

Personal Emergencies Affecting Your Practice

Emergencies of a personal nature are bound to happen to our staff, and to ourselves. What do you do in response? How do you handle when such an emergency arises? Do policies address all contingencies?

- Staff medical and other personal emergencies: practice issues, best practices in response
- Attorney medical and other personal emergencies: keeping your practice going
- Mental health wellbeing for staff and attorneys, including burn-out

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied

- Sudden death and bereavement
- Policies to have in place

Maggie Arias (DL), 2025 Annual Conference Committee, Coral Gables, FL

Medya Ansari, AILA Board of Governors, San Jose, CA

David N. Simmons, Englewood, CO

SATURDAY TRAININGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

7:30 am–3:00 pm

(Aurora 1-2, Level 2)

Exhibit Hall Hours

8:00 pm–11:00 pm

(Adams, Level 1)

AILA Saturday Night Party

(DL) = Discussion Leader

** = invited, not confirmed*

Note: All sessions and events are subject to change without notice. First-come, first-served. Once the room reaches maximum capacity, entry will be denied