

IMMIGRATION LEGAL RESOURCES

UMB recognizes that some international students or scholars may have specific questions about their status that is beyond the expertise of UMB and campus officials. The following resources can help students and scholars find competent legal representation (sometimes at low or no cost):

Do I Really Need a Lawyer? - Before contacting a lawyer regarding an immigration issue,

- Speak with your OIS adviser to confirm that your questions are about immigration issues.
- Visit the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) (<https://www.uscis.gov/>) website where you will find answers to many of your questions.

How Do I Find the Name of a Lawyer? There are many ways to find lawyers:

- Check the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) <https://www.ailalawyer.com/> Immigration Lawyer Referral Service.
- Call your local bar association lawyer referral service. In Maryland, contact the [Maryland State Bar Association Referral Service](#).
- USCIS Find Legal Services Webpage: <http://www.uscis.gov/avoid-scams/find-legal-services>
- Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) listing of attorneys who provide immigration services either free or for little cost: <http://www.justice.gov/eoir/probono/states.htm>
- Immigration Law Help - an online directory of nearly 1,000 free or low-cost nonprofit immigration legal services providers in all 50 states: <http://immigrationlawhelp.org/>

How Do I Choose a Lawyer?

- Before choosing a lawyer, call the offices of the lawyers on your list, briefly explain your legal problem and ask:
 - Are you specialized and/or experienced in my type of problem?
 - Do you charge a flat rate or hourly fee for this type of work?
 - Can you give me an estimate of the cost?
 - Can you estimate the amount of time it will take?

Consider the following factors before agreeing to hire a lawyer:

- Can you communicate effectively with the lawyer? Was the lawyer clear and easy to understand? Are the fees reasonable in comparison with other lawyers' charges?
- Did the lawyer clearly explain how she or he will keep you informed of progress in your case?
- If you are not satisfied with this lawyer, do not hire him or her. Look elsewhere for legal help.
- Before you finally sign a contract with a lawyer, read it carefully. Make sure you understand it.
- Everything you and the lawyer agreed to should be in writing.