

Common Immigration Options for Survivors of Trauma: Asylum, SIJS, T-VISA, U-VISA & VAWA

If you experienced violence, fraud, blackmail, or other forms of threat in the U.S. or while in your country of origin, you are not alone. There are several immigration options available to you as a survivor of trauma. Check them out below:



Asylum protects people fleeing persecution in their country of origin.

- To qualify, you must have **fear of persecution** based on political opinion, religion, race, nationality, or affiliation with a particular social group.
- You have 1 year from the date of your most recent entry into the U.S. to apply but may be able to apply after the 1-year deadline (for more information, please talk to a legal representative).



SIJS (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status) protects minors who are **abandoned, abused, or neglected** by at least one parent.

- To qualify, you must be unmarried and under the age of 18 (21 in some states).
- It is in your *best interest* not to return to your country of origin.



T-Visa protects survivors of **human trafficking**.

- To qualify, you must be inside the U.S. as a direct result of trafficking.
 - Trafficking includes force, fraud, or intimidation to make someone do work.
- Although it may be helpful to comply with law enforcement in the investigation/prosecution, this step is not required.



U-Visa protects survivors of **crime**.

- To qualify, you must have:
 - Been the survivor of an [eligible crime listed by the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services \(USCIS\)](#).
 - Been helpful (or are likely to be helpful) to law enforcement in the investigation of the crime. It does not matter if the person who committed the crime is ever captured or tried in court.
 - Experienced physical or emotional suffering as a consequence of the crime.
- The crime must have happened in the U.S.



VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) protects survivors of **domestic violence**.

- To qualify, you must be a survivor of domestic violence by a **U.S. Citizen or Lawful Permanent Resident spouse, child or parent** (domestic violence may be emotional, economic, or verbal abuse/control).
- The law protects men, women and children (gender does not matter).
- It **does not matter if abuse was reported** to police, hospital, therapist, counselor, teacher, etc (*but documentation can help as proof*).
- The abuse could have happened in any country.

These remedies can provide you with:



Protection from deportation



A work permit / [social security number](#)



Possible pathway to a '[green card](#)' & U.S. citizenship



Access to public benefits: cash aid (welfare), housing benefits, federal financial aid for college, health care insurance



Fee waiver for the application



Confidentiality (government cannot tell the abuser about case)



For U-visa, T-visa, VAWA and Asylum: eligible family members can be included in your application as [derivatives](#)

Next Steps

Fill out the Immigration Legal Intake Service to find out if any of these options are available to you:

If you need legal help right away, find a legal representative near you:



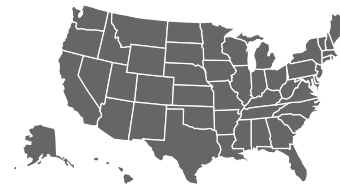
IT'S FREE



IT'S ANONYMOUS



IT'S CONFIDENTIAL



immigrantsrising.org/legalintake

immigrationlawhelp.org