



# City of Fort Collins

## Immigration Legal Fund 2025-2026

### Request for Proposals

#### 1. Overview/Background

- **What is the Immigration Legal Fund?**

The Immigration Legal Fund grant was approved as a pilot program by Fort Collins City Council in 2021 and received additional funding through the budgeting process to continue the program from 2023-2026. The Immigration Legal Fund provides funding to community partners, nonprofit organizations and/or legal service providers to offer residents wraparound, holistic immigration legal services to meet the most urgent needs, reach the greatest number of impacted community members, and build trust in the immigrant community. \$440,000 in total grant funding is available (\$220,000 per year in 2025 and 2026) to be used for immigration legal services is available from the City of Fort Collins through this competitive application process. Grants will be awarded under the Immigration Legal Fund for services from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

#### **Unmet Need in Fort Collins**

The estimated unmet need for legal services in Fort Collins is 75-100 detention and deportation cases per year and 400 per year for affirmative cases such as DACA, naturalization, or legal permanent resident cases. Through the Immigration Legal Fund pilot, grant recipients identified additional unmet need of at least 25 cases per year in need of legal services supporting victims of human trafficking, victims of crime, and victims of violence against women. Immigrant community members continue to emphasize that the lack of access to affordable legal services and representation are the biggest barriers to successful integration for immigrants in Fort Collins.

#### **Fort Collins Immigrant Community Demographics**

Fort Collins has an immigrant community of more than 11,000 people or 6.8% of the total population. Approximately 4,500 Fort Collins residents are currently not United States citizens. 2,200 residents are eligible for naturalization, and the remaining 2,300 non-citizen immigrants are estimated to be undocumented and at risk for detention and deportation. 15% of children in Fort Collins live with at least one immigrant parent and 75% of these children are themselves US citizens.

## 2. Request for Proposal Timeline

- What is the process for grant applications?

-November 28 – December 18, 2024	Request for Proposals and Application Forms Available
-December 19 – December 23, 2024	Review of Proposals by Grant Review Panel
-December 23, 2024	Notification of Awards
-December 23 – December 31, 2024	Grant Contracting for Selected Applicants

## 3. Scope of Work and Program Requirements

- Funds Awarded

Funds awarded may only be used to assist individuals who meet the following criteria:

- Are residents of the City of Fort Collins.
- Are asserting viable claims for relief, defense, change of status, right to lawfully remain, or other pursuit of pathways to citizenship and/or need advice of counsel on immigration or naturalization matters

- How can grant funds be used?

The City of Fort Collins grant funding for immigration legal services is available to service providers of the following:

- Removal defense for Fort Collins residents who are detained in any immigrant detention facility in the U.S. and those released from an immigration detention facility who have cases pending in Immigration Court.
- Affirmative relief and removal defense for residents of Fort Collins not in detention.
- Increasing local access to direct legal representation and capacity-building for local immigration legal services.
- Improving self-advocacy resources and access for Fort Collins residents in need of immigration legal services.

Please see attached **Glossary** for additional information on included services and/or resources.

## 4. Legal Service Provider Requirements

- Who can apply for Immigration Legal Fund Grants?

- Nonprofit groups with 501(c)3 status in good standing with the IRS and State of Colorado
- Community and advocacy groups
- Colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning
- Attorneys, law firms, Bar associations, or other legal professional organizations and practitioners

**Applicants MUST:**

- Demonstrate a strong record of providing or outline a comprehensive plan to begin providing high-quality legal representation, support services, and education related to immigration legal issues
- Have licensed attorneys with immigration law expertise on staff or under contract who will directly provide the legal services described in this application or can demonstrate a recruitment plan and timeline to retain such services by qualified attorneys during the grant period
- Demonstrate that all professionals involved in providing services under this contract have the appropriate professional licenses and are in good standing with any applicable oversight agencies or professional organizations
- Demonstrate cultural competency and communication skills to consult with and/or represent clients regardless of identity, background, country of origin, or language(s) spoken
- Applicants must demonstrate a history of working with the Fort Collins immigrant community or detailed description of the applicant’s interest in working with the immigrant community in Fort Collins. Organizations with related experience providing services to immigrant community members will be given priority.

- **What are the grant reporting requirements for grant recipients?**

Quarterly Reports must be submitted to the City of Fort Collins for services provided between January 1, 2025 and December 31, 2026. Metrics and a quarterly report template will be provided to grant recipients during grant contracting.

- Q1 2025 Report      Due 4.11.25
- Q2 2025 Report      Due 7.11.25
- Q3 2025 Report      Due 10.10.25
- Q4 2025 Report      Due 1.9.26
- Q1 2026 Report      Due 4.10.26
- Q2 2026 Report      Due 7.10.26
- Q3 2026 Report      Due 10.9.26
- Q4 2026 Report      Due 1.15.27

**Program Assessment & Final Reports:**

In January of 2026 and 2027, grant recipients will work with City Staff to complete a comprehensive program assessment for that year. Grant recipients will be provided with the template during grant contracting and will include documentation of the following:

- Number of people receiving free legal advice, training, or other self-advocacy resources
- Number of people receiving direct representation (including age of the client and the case type)
- Status or outcomes of the cases or hearings
- Number of Fort Collins residents released on bond from an immigration detention facility during the program

- Number of referrals to the program by other participants
- Percent of participants who feel they are safer due to the legal services and resources provided by grant recipients
- Percent of participants who are more knowledgeable about their pathways to citizenship or lawful presence after the program
- Percent of participants reporting greater likelihood of accessing City or community resources due to the program
- Number of hours spent or average hours per case
- Client demographics including length of residency in Fort Collins (and other demographic information to be determined collaboratively by the City of Fort Collins and grant recipients)
- Individual or organizational stories of impact
- Number of individuals that are eligible for services turned away due to lack of capacity
- Number of individuals turned away due to ineligibility for the program and grounds for ineligibility (if known or reasonably ascertainable)

## 5. Evaluation Criteria

- What will the grant review panel prioritize in selecting grant recipients?

The grant review panel will be made up of immigrant community members, immigration and social justice advocates, and City Staff.

The grant review panel will prioritize applications that demonstrate the following best practices for publicly funded immigration legal services:

- **Wrap-around, holistic services to meet the most urgent needs**

Examples:

- Direct legal representation for the lifecycle of immigration cases
- An emphasis on legal services for deportation and detention cases
- Assistance with affirmative cases like DACA, SIJS, Asylum and Refugee Status, Visa Renewals, Violence Against Women Act protections, Family Petitions, Labor/Work Permit-Related Cases, Naturalization, Temporary Protected Status, Lawful Permanent Residency, and Family Reunification
- Adjustment of status
- Support through education and outreach for children unable to be reunified with their families

- **Reach the greatest number of impacted community members**

Examples:

- Support for legal pathways to citizenship and lawful presence through innovative direct and indirect engagement
- Legal Advice & Consultations through legal clinics
- Outreach materials and/or training for industries and employers working with immigrants under Work Authorization Programs

- **Building trust in the immigrant community through ongoing self-advocacy and program support**

Examples:

- Education and outreach that includes leadership and empowerment training to improve self-advocacy
- Focus on outcomes-based program metrics (program accomplishments like improvements in community safety) rather than output-based metrics (participant numbers or number of cases resolved)
- Know Your Rights Trainings in detention centers and embedded in local immigrant communities

- **Intentional collaboration with other service providers to maximize impact**

Examples:

- Formal partnerships to share resources and expertise
- Coordinated referral networks to ensure seamless client support
- Joint initiatives to address service gaps and enhance program reach

# Grant Proposal Format

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- The Request for Proposals will be available until **December 18, 2024**.
- Email completed Proposals to [NSPrograms@fcgov.com](mailto:NSPrograms@fcgov.com)
- Questions?  
- Contact Leo Escalante at: [lescalante@fcgov.com](mailto:lescalante@fcgov.com)

## Applicant Summary

Please provide the following Applicant Summary information:

**Application Title/Project Name**

**Amount Requested**

**Applicant Information (First Name, Last Name, Telephone, Email)**

**Organization Information (Organization Legal Name/Entity Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Country)**

**Telephone**

**Website**

**Federal Tax ID (EIN)**

**CEO/Executive Director/Project Manager (First Name, Last Name, Title, Email)**

- **Pre-Application**

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**1. Type of Organization**

- Nonprofit Group with (501c3)
- Community and/or Advocacy Group
- College, University, and/or Other Institution of Higher Learning
- Attorney, Law Firm, Bar Association, or Other Legal Professional Organization and/or Practitioner

**2. Select which of the following apply to your program and/or proposal. Please select all that apply**

- Direct legal representation of clients and support services in all types of immigration cases
- Direct legal representation of clients and support services in specific types of immigration cases (if this option is selected, please choose the specific case types below)
  - Detention, deportation, and clients released on bond facing deportation
  - Family reunification efforts to address the impacts of federal “family separation” policies
  - Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”)
  - Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (“SIJS”)
  - U and/or T Visa applications (victims of certain violent crime and trafficking) and renewals
  - Student Visa applications and/or renewals
  - Work Visa applications and/or renewals
  - Other Visa applications and/or renewals

- Lawful Permanent Resident cases and/or processes
- Naturalization cases and/or processes
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Support services without direct legal representation (like self-advocacy training or immigration information hotline)
- Other program or service
- None of the above

**3. Name of project or program for which you are seeking funding**

**4. What amount of grant funding are you applying for? (maximum award of \$440,000 (\$220,000 per year in 2025 and 2026) is currently available to be used during the grant period through December 31, 2026)**

**5. Will this project or program be offered in person within the city limits of Fort Collins?**

- Yes
- No
- Some activities will be offered in person within the city limits of Fort Collins

**6. Is this the continuation of an existing project or program or an expansion into a new area for you/your organization?**

- Part of an existing project or program
- New area or services

**7. Would your organization like to be considered for additional grant funding for immigration legal services if additional funding becomes available during the grant period (from January 2025 -December 2026)?**

- Yes, please contact me to discuss if additional funding becomes available
- No
- Maybe, please contact me to discuss if additional funding becomes available

● **Grant Application Part 1 - Organizational/ Applicant Alignment**

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**8. Describe how assisting community members with immigration legal issues aligns with your organization’s current work, mission, vision, or values.**

**9. If you are applying to work on specific case types, please explain your organization’s interest in those specific case types. (If you are applying to work on all immigration case types, please enter “N/A” for this question.**

**10. Briefly explain which parts of your proposal would be part of an existing project or program and which parts of your proposal would be a new area or service for your organization.**

● **Grant Application Part 2 - Program Operation Plan**

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**11. Describe your plan for client intake or application for participation.**

- a. Be specific as to how you will come into contact with clients for the first time (such as detention center programs, immigration information hotline, community referrals) and how cases will be selected for representation
- b. Describe what, if any, prior relationships you have with the Fort Collins immigrant community, partner organizations, other legal service providers, or detention centers that will help facilitate your program

**12. Describe your proposed program model for representing and/or supporting community members with this grant funding.** Please specify the ways your organization will:

- a. Serve eligible clients
- b. Employ, recruit, or contract qualified immigration attorneys or staff
- c. Provide competent and effective representation for the entire scope of the case for clients whose cases may be pending beyond the 24-month contract grant period (which ends December 31, 2026)
- d. Address the needs of clients that are outside the scope of legal cases, including social services, housing, education, healthcare, and other needs
- e. Conduct participant application processes, training sessions, and work with clients who speak a language for which you do not have in-house interpreters or translators

**13. What is your staffing plan for the proposal?**

**14. What is the implementation timeline for your proposal?**

**15. Please outline the budget for your proposal during the grant period (from January 2025 – December 2026).** The budget submitted is for application purposes only to give the grant review panel a clear picture of your proposal.

**16. Is your budget scalable (could you provide more with additional funding or would you still be able to accomplish the project's goals with less funding than requested)?**

- Grant Application Part 3 - Outcomes

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**17. What are your anticipated outcomes if awarded grant funding for this proposal? (Outcomes are not required to be anticipated case numbers, but can include any potential outcomes for individuals, the community, or the City your organization aims to achieve with this funding.)**

- Grant Application Part 4 - Other

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**18. Is there any other information you would like the grant review panel to consider?**



## Glossary

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**“Affirmative Relief” and “Affirmative Case”** includes:

- DACA
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)
- Asylum and Refugee Status
- U visas and T visas
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) protections
- Family Petitions including Family Reunification Matters
- Labor/Work Permit-Related Petitions
- Naturalization
- Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
- Lawful Permanent Residency (LPR)
- Adjustment of Status

**“Local access and capacity building”** may include, but are not limited to:

- Expanding the pool of pro bono and “low bono” immigration attorneys to provide services to Fort Collins residents
- Training and continuing education opportunities for attorneys and legal staff on current and emerging immigration issues and processes
- The use of law school clinics, law school graduate fellows, and law students to provide assistance to immigrants
- Other innovative projects that increase legal representation for immigrants

**“Resident of Fort Collins”** includes:

- Any individual who is currently a Fort Collins resident, which can be verified by appropriate and reasonable means (such as, but not limited to, mail addressed to and received by the resident at their Fort Collins address, ID card or student ID, vehicle registration, lease or mortgage documents, pay stubs)

**“Removal Defense”** includes:

- High-quality representation at all stages of immigration court proceedings
- Representation and legal support for master calendar hearings and bond hearings, detained removal, and non-detained removal after release
- Board and Immigrations Appeals (BIA) and remands from the BIA,
- State court proceedings related to immigration relief
- Transfer of venue proceedings, collateral proceedings incident to removal defense, and any costs associated with immigration-related defense
- Support services and/or engaging experts for testimony, assessment, or documentation

**“Self-advocacy resources and access”** may include, but are not limited to:

- Community outreach and education materials, workshops, and presentations
- ‘Ask A Lawyer’ legal clinics
- Immigration legal services hotlines, call centers, and self-help centers
- Training and materials for community immigration advocates and “train the trainer” activities for community members