



JUSTICE FELLOW FAQs

What is Immigrant Justice Corps?

Immigrant Justice Corps (“IJC”) is a two-year Fellowship program for law graduates and college graduates with a passion for justice for immigrants. Our goal is to increase both the quality and quantity of legal services available for immigrants. IJC recruits and trains Fellows and places them with host organizations in New York City, Long Island, the Lower Hudson Valley and New Jersey.

What qualities make an IJC Fellowship applicant a strong candidate?

IJC seeks Fellows who are smart, compassionate, and passionate about justice for immigrants. IJC also seeks Fellows dedicated to the idea of a Fellowship program – you give us two years of hard work and we will make sure you will be immersed in immigration law and helping others who likely would not have had an attorney or advocate otherwise. Almost all IJC Fellows speak a language in addition to English.

Do I need to speak a language other than English?

The ability to speak another language other than English is preferable but not required. The language that is in highest demand by host organizations is Spanish. We also have Fellows who speak Mandarin, Haitian Creole, French, Arabic, Korean, and Urdu.

How does the application process work?

There is an online application for Justice Fellows (law graduates) which will be open from mid-September 2016 through early November 2016. Applicants must submit a résumé, transcript, two letters of recommendation, and write two essays. Applications are reviewed by a selection committee and IJC staff. Selected applicants will interview in late November 2016-early December 2016, and Justice Fellows will be selected and matched with host organizations by the end of December 2016 or early January. All Fellows start training with IJC the first week of September 2017.

The application process is similar for Community Fellows, but takes place in the spring.

Do all Justice Fellows have to take the New York Bar?

Generally, yes. While immigration lawyers may practice in jurisdictions where they are not admitted, IJC Fellows are required to take the New York State bar to comply with host organizations Student Practice Orders and also to enable them to appear in state court proceedings to represent clients in ancillary family or criminal court proceedings. However, there may be some flexibility to this rule.

Will Immigrant Justice Corps sponsor me for a green card or skilled worker visa?

No. All Fellows must be eligible for work authorization in the U.S. for the two years of the Fellowship.

May DACA recipients apply?

Yes. DACA recipients are welcome to apply to Immigrant Justice Corps, and comprise 14% of the current classes.

If chosen, may I defer?

No. Fellows who are selected must be ready to start the program September 2017.

Do I need to submit an official transcript?

No. Please upload a pdf of a school-issued transcript.

Can my resume be more than one page?

Yes, though please limit yourself to two pages.

Do I have to finish my application before my recommenders can submit their letters?

No. Your recommenders can upload their letters as soon as you enter their information into the recommendation application step.

May LLMs apply for the Justice Fellowship?

Yes, LLM graduates may apply if they have sat/will sit for the New York Bar before the Fellowship begins.

How is the match made between Fellows and partnering host organizations?

IJC matches selected Fellows with our partnering host organizations based on the applicant's experience and interest, gaps in services within the community, location interests, and partnering host organization's needs. During the matching process, Fellows receive information about host organizations where they may be placed and those same potential host organizations receive the Fellows application information. Based on the preferences expressed by both parties, IJC makes final placement matches. Offer letters, which include host organization placement, are sent to Fellows in late December - early January. This is a change from our past process where Fellows accepted their position before we chose the host organizations.

Do Justice Fellows continue to work in immigration after the Fellowship?

IJC graduated its first class of Justice Fellows at the end of August 2016. Approximately 97% of our Fellows will continue to work in immigration law with IJC, host organizations, other not for profits, government agencies and in private practice.

Will I have an opportunity to work with IJC outside of my host organization?

Yes! IJC hosts monthly trainings for all Fellows, in addition to clinics, social gatherings, and professional events for Fellows.

A primary purpose of IJC is to expand access to counsel. Therefore, if there is an emerging critical legal need, we may mobilize Fellows to respond. For example, since the summer of 2015, most Fellows have gone on a two-week rotation to Texas to represent detained families.

What is the IJC Justice Fellow experience like?

Because our Fellows are placed at many different partnering host organizations every Fellow's experience is unique. IJC's partnering host organizations practice a wide variety of immigration law, serve different ethnic communities, and/or work in different geographic areas. While everyday work environment is different for each Fellow, all Fellows are a part of IJC's team and together are provided:

- Monthly training and professional development opportunities including free CLE credit courses;
- Access to an immense network of professional immigration legal service providers—both organizations and individuals;
- Career planning assistance;
- Partnership with a large community of Justice Fellows and Community Fellows;
- Invitations to IJC sponsored social and professional events;
- Upon completion of the program, membership to IJC's Alumni group;
- A team of committed lawyers and professionals who want to help you succeed.

Am I an employee of IJC or of the host organization?

Most Justice Fellows become employees of their host organization and receive benefits and supervision through their host. IJC guarantees a minimum salary (\$56,000 for Justice Fellows), health insurance coverage, and at least three weeks' paid time off for Fellows, but beyond that benefits packages, work environment, and even salary, vary greatly from one organization to another. We work with host organizations to ensure that Fellows who make the IJC minimum salary **do not** pay a monthly contribution to health insurance (*for a single person only, if dependent coverage is needed there may be a monthly contribution made by the Fellow*).

Roughly half of IJC's Community Fellows are "out-placed" Fellows, similar to Justice Fellows, and become employees of their host organizations. The other half of Community Fellows work directly for IJC and receive benefits and supervision through IJC. Community Fellows earn \$38,000 each year.

While most IJC Fellows are not directly employed by IJC, each Fellow is a member of the IJC team, which consists of a consortium of contemporary social justice advocates focused on providing desperately needed legal services to vulnerable immigrant populations.

Will I be placed outside the City?

Maybe. Approximately one-third of Justice Fellows are hosted in Long Island, the Lower Hudson Valley, and northern New Jersey, to meet the extraordinary demand for immigration legal services in the counties that surround New York City. We anticipate continuing these placements; all are within commuting distance of NYC.