

Stephen and Sandra
SHELLER

 **CENTER *for* SOCIAL JUSTICE**



Temple University Beasley School of Law

SKITS – NOTARIO FRAUD

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SKIT #1:

This skit is about an immigrant who has been living in the US for 8 years and who wants to apply to be a permanent resident.

Provider: Welcome to *Northeast Philly Multi-Services*. Are you here for immigration help?

Volunteer: Yes, I saw a sign that said you help people with their immigration issues. Will you be able to help me? I have been in the United States for 8 years and I'm interested in getting a green card.

Provider: Wonderful, we are happy to help you become a permanent resident. First we will file for you to get your green card. You definitely qualify since you have been here for over 5 years. Do you have children who are citizens?

Volunteer: Yes, my seven year old and ten year old were born here.

Provider: You know about President Obama's order, right? The fact that you have children who are citizens guarantees we can get you permanent residency.

Volunteer: Oh, good. I was hoping that.

Provider: Ok, and have you ever gotten in trouble with the law – do you have a criminal record?

Volunteer: No.

Provider: In that case we won't have any issues. Let me see here [*ruffles through forms*], we can file you an asylum form. The process is much quicker. All you have to do is sign right here [*show Form I-589*].

Volunteer: What does this say [*points at line on form*]?

Provider: Oh, you don't have to worry about that - we handle everything. The only other thing we need to discuss is payment. We have a fee for our services - it's quite reasonable. Your bill will be \$5,000. Just sign right here. This form will show that you paid [*form is blank*].

END SCENE

SKIT #2:

This skit is about an immigrant applying for immigration status through work sponsorship.

Provider: Hi, how are you today [*name*]?

Volunteer: Well, I am here because I heard at my job that my wife/husband and I could get Green Cards because we work.

Provider: Yes, what kind of work do you and your wife/husband do?

Volunteer: My wife/husband and I work in restaurants as dishwashers. We have been working at our jobs for three years.

Provider: Then you can apply for a labor certification to get a green card. We'll need you and your supervisor to fill out these forms.

Volunteer: We are worried. Will we get in trouble working without a green card or a visa for three years?

Provider: No, that's not a problem. And you don't have to be worried about being fired, either. This is quite common. Everything will be fine.

Volunteer: Oh, that is great to hear [*looks through form*].

Provider: Yes, we know what we are doing. Ok, we will also need you to leave your birth certificates, marriage certificate, and the birth certificates for your children. I'll fill out the forms for you and let you know when your labor certification is here. Then we will work on the Green Card.

Volunteer: That was so easy! Thank you.

END SCENE

SKIT #3¹:

This is a skit about a common scam, the 10 year law. Listen carefully to what the provider says and what happens later. What do you think is the problem with this “lawyer?”

Volunteer 1: *[Name]*, I heard some great news on the bus today about immigration assistance! This guy was able to get a green card because he’s been in the States for over 10 years.

Volunteer 2: That is interesting – are you sure it wasn’t a scam? Getting a green card is really hard. You have to marry a citizen or something to get one of those.

Volunteer 1: Apparently, it is simpler than we thought. I got a phone number for the immigration assistance office. I say we call. *[Hand card to other volunteer]*. We can finally solve our immigration issues and get better paying jobs.

Volunteer 2: Okay....the card says he’s a lawyer. I guess we can give him a call.

Volunteer 1: Let’s make an appointment.

[Makes an appointment. Goes to office a few days later. The wait is very long.]

Provider: It is great to see you, thanks for calling. I am *[insert name]*. Sorry that you had to wait in the lobby for an hour. I help a lot of people and get very busy. How long have you been living here?

Volunteer 1: Thirteen years.

Provider: Were any of your kids born here?

Volunteer 2: Yes, one.

Provider: Then I can help you qualify for a Green Card under the 10 year law! The deposit will be \$1500. Please sign all the documents.

Volunteer 2: What are these papers?

Volunteer 1: How much will it cost?

Provider: I am a legal expert. I promise you qualify for a green card. You need to trust me. Look at all the people I work with. It’s because I know what I am doing. Please follow me *[takes them to another room]*. You will need to sign this application. You’ll get a work permit first and later a green card - I promise.

Volunteer 1: Is that all we have to do?

Volunteer 2: What about a contract? And I still don’t understand how much it will cost?

¹ Adapted from the Immigrant Legal Resource Center’s Anti-Fraud Comic.

Provider: No, all you need to do is sign the application and pay the \$1500 deposit. We keep a copy and that works as a contract. I'll let you know the final cost – it all depends on your application and what is necessary.

Volunteer 2: I am not comfortable with this.

Provider: Don't worry. I get people lots of green cards this way.

Volunteer 1: When will we receive our work permits?

Provider: Really soon - just a few months.

[A few months later. Provider hasn't been responding to calls. A notice for an Immigration Court date is sent.]

Volunteer 2: We have been calling him and he has not returned our calls. We have paid over \$3000 and we have no idea what is happening with our application. What should we do?

Volunteer 1: *[Takes a look at the mail and discovers a surprise].* We have mail from immigration court. The letter says something about asylum. What does that mean? I do not understand what most of these papers say.

Volunteer 2: It also says something about another lawyer coming with us to court. We never met this other person. We should call *[provider's name]*.

Volunteer 1: But he never picks up!

END SCENE

SKIT #4:

This skit is about a misunderstanding with the asylum process.

Provider: How are you today? Thank you for coming to my office. Would you like help with your immigration papers?

Volunteer: Yes, I hope you can help me. My children and I have been living here for eleven years. I would really like to become a permanent resident.

Provider: Great. We can file this paper *[Selects asylum I-589 application form and begins filling out sections]* and start the process to get your green card. *[Hands over form for client to sign]*.

Volunteer: *[Looks at forms]*. This is not true – my birthday is different. Also, that is not my address.

Provider: Those are small details - do not worry. I will also need you to sign this form saying you experienced religious persecution in your home country.

Volunteer: But I only want to stay here because I have a good job and my children like it in the U.S.

Provider: Signing this form will allow you to stay here. That is what you want, right?

Volunteer: Yes...

Provider: Great so sign the form [*volunteer signs form*].

[*A few months later client receives a notice about an asylum appointment.*]

Provider: Hi, it's so nice to see you again.

Volunteer: I got this notice that I am an asylum seeker. What is asylum? I thought I would get a green card because I lived here 10 years. That's what you said.

Provider: You'll be fine at the asylum appointment. It's no big deal. They are just going to ask you a couple of questions. Tell them you were attacked because of your religion.

Volunteer: What do you mean? I thought all I had to do was fill out some papers!

Provider: Here listen to these recordings and read these papers about religious persecution. This is all you need to know.

[*The following month at the asylum appointment.*]

Immigration Officer: Thank you for showing up for your asylum interview. This application says that you have a fear of religious persecution in your home country. Can you explain why you can't go home?

Volunteer: I don't want to go back to my country because the U.S. is my home now. My family has been here for eleven years. I can't go back because there are no jobs in my country.

Immigration Officer: That's not a good reason for asylum. You will be put into deportation proceedings and referred to Immigration Court to explain your situation to the Judge.

Volunteer: But the person helping me promised I would be able to stay!

END SCENE