

How to Choose an Immigration Attorney

Immigration is a stressful process, it can change your life or that of your loved ones. It's hard because laws and policies are being updated faster than ever. This makes it hard to know your options and rights. How can you make a good decision while under pressure?

An immigration lawyer can be a partner who helps you make good decisions, and find the options available to you. But, the problem is there are a lot of dishonest people who take advantage of immigrants. How can you choose the right person to help you?

In this post, we'll show you what to look for and what to avoid when choosing an immigration lawyer. You'll also find out what information you need to gather before contacting an attorney. Whether you're searching for an immigration attorney in Minneapolis, the Midwest, or anywhere else, these tips can help.

What You Need to Know Before Choosing an Immigration Lawyer

To make the right choice, you need to understand exactly what you're looking for. Here are a few questions to think of before starting your search:

- 1. What services do I need?** Try to identify exactly what service you need. These may include deportation defense, work authorizations, asylum requests, or green cards. This will help you find an attorney that's specialized in your type of case.
- 2. How soon do I need help?** You need to find an attorney that can help as soon as you need it. In the case of deportation defense, you may need immediate help, while other cases may take more time.
- 3. Have I organized all of my papers?** Gather the information you have, including past applications, immigration documents, and letters/notices. This will help your attorney understand your case before getting started and lead to better results.
- 4. Have I prepared a list of my questions and concerns?** During your first meeting with an attorney you need to decide if they're right for you. Preparing a list of questions will help you cover the points that are most important to you.

Answering these four questions will help you prepare for the first meeting with an attorney. After you answer these questions you can start your search for an immigration attorney.

Questions to Ask When Choosing an Immigration Attorney

Can I verify their credentials?

You want to ensure you are hiring with a licensed attorney. A good attorney may clearly display their degrees and license on their office wall and their website or offer them upon request. Ask the attorney to show you their credentials if you do not see them displayed.

Have they handled my type of case before?

Immigration requires knowledge of federal and state laws, as well as the court system. You need to find an attorney whose been successful with your type of case before. Seeing that they've handled similar cases will help you feel at ease and get better results. You can double-check this experience by searching for the law firm you're interested in on Google and reading their reviews. This will give you an idea of how legitimate they are. You can expand this search to their social media profiles as well.

Do I understand their rates?

Carefully review the retainer agreement with your attorney to understand how they charge and what their rates are. Are they charging a flat fee or hourly and why do they charge that way? Ask questions if you are not clear.

Are they empathetic and understanding?

Do you feel like they listen and pay attention to you? Feeling comfortable with your attorney will make it easier to discuss confidential information. At the same time, you need to feel like they care enough to trust them with your case.

Do they speak my language?

Choose an attorney that's fluent in your native language or one that can provide an interpreter. It's to express yourself in your native language and that you hear what the attorney has to say in your language. This makes it easier to achieve good results.

Things to Avoid in an Immigration Attorney

There are many good immigration attorneys out there. But some will try to take advantage of you. Sadly this happens too often, so you need to choose carefully. What are the warning signs that an attorney is wrong for you?

- **They avoid answering questions regarding experience or seem uninformed about the area of law.** A competent immigration attorney will answer your questions regarding their level of experience and provide information regarding the process you will go through and what difficulties to expect. The attorney will tell you if there are areas of your case that require research. If they refuse to provide their credentials, you should find someone else.
- **They promise that they'll win your case or give you an advantage that only they can provide.** An attorney can never guarantee that they'll win. If they promise that they have a loophole that no one else knows about, then stop and think. If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is.
- **They encourage you to lie.** A reputable immigration attorney will never tell you to lie. Doing so could get you into legal trouble and ruin the immigration process for you. A good attorney may tell you to withhold information that you aren't required to reveal. But, they won't ask you to lie.
- **They are unresponsive and poor communication skills.** A quality attorney will return your phone calls and emails and answer your questions in a way you can understand. This is necessary so you can stay informed regarding your case.

If you see any of these warning signs, then you should find another lawyer. Dishonest attorneys try to get as many clients as they can, charge you quickly, and do very little work. This does more harm than good for your case.

Why Your Choice Matters

If you're reading this post, it's because you know how important immigration is and want to make the right choice. You know that this choice will affect those you love and care about, and can have an even deeper impact on your family.

Working with an immigration attorney should improve your life instead of adding stress to it. It should make you feel more confident and help you feel secure knowing that your case is in the best hands.

[Click here to download and print a copy of this article.](#) Keep it with you as you interview potential attorneys and make sure the attorney you choose is right for you.

About Robichaud & Alcántara

Robichaud & Alcántara is a Minneapolis law firm specializing in immigration cases. Our services include: citizenship, family petitions, deportation defense, asylum, U Visas and a variety of other legal services. If you're in need of assistance, then we can help. We'll listen closely to your needs, provide personal attention, and do everything in our power to help you with your immigration case. Schedule a free consultation using the form below.