

## Retained Immigration Counsel

The primary responsibility for the filing of all employment-based immigrant and nonimmigrant petitions on behalf of the University of Michigan lies with the International Center at the Ann Arbor campus. However, the University has [retained the services of several immigration attorneys to assist with the filing of specific immigration benefits](#) [1], such as O-1 petitions, certain green card applications as well as Adjustment of Status applications.

The retained immigration counsel program is managed by the Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel selects and retains the immigration counsel and negotiates the fixed fees. Most services handled through retained counsel are handled on a fixed fee model; as a result there is no price difference between the different law firms. For an overview of the current fees, refer to the [Fees and Checks section](#) [2].

The hiring unit is responsible for paying the legal fees, filing fees and costs associated with the primary beneficiary.

1. University policy strictly prohibits the department from deducting from a foreign national's salary its business expenses (including legal fees or costs) associated with filing the petition.
2. Legal fees and costs associated with the immigration petitions are a normal and routine part of the recruitment and retention process, just like relocation reimbursement or assistance in finding employment for traveling partners or costs associated with starting a lab/research program/office.
3. It is important that the University establish the primary attorney-client relationship by assuming full responsibility for the legal fees and costs.

The foreign national is responsible for dependent fees and visa related fees as well as the costs associated with the medical exams, finger prints and photographs.

With limited exceptions, all employment-based green card applicants must now attend an in-person interview at USCIS as part of the Adjustment of Status application process, i.e. the final step of the green card application process. Given the additional scrutiny experienced by citizens from travel banned countries, the Office of General Counsel recommends that citizens of Chad, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Somalia, Yemen and Venezuela attend the interview with retained counsel. This fee can be paid by either the hiring department or the individual.

### Request Process

To initiate any request that involves retained immigration counsel:

- The International Center must receive the [Request for Retained Immigration Counsel Form](#) [3]. If a department has a preference for a given firm on the retained counsel list, the department can indicate that preference on the request form.
- Once this form has been received, the request will be assigned to the requested attorney. *Departments should not contact retained counsel unless and until the attorney has been retained for a given immigration petition.* Any immigration related questions should be directed to the International Center.
- Once the attorney has accepted the case, he or she will contact the department to further discuss the request. In some instances, the attorney might contact the department and foreign national before accepting the request.

## Questions or Concerns?

Please contact the International Center with any questions or concerns about the attorney working on a given case.

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**Source URL:** <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/fsis/retained-immigration-counsel>

### Links

[1] <https://ogc.umich.edu/frequently-asked-questions/immigration/retained-immigration-counsel-program/>

[2] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/fsis/fees-and-checks>

[3] <https://internationalcenter.umich.edu/sites/default/files/forms/RetAttnyRequestForm.pdf>