



New Jersey Consortium for Immigrant Children

September 2023 Newsletter

Dear NJCIC Friends and Supporters,

As the summer draws to a close and we turn to autumn, I am excited to share NJCIC updates from the past few months. In the newsletter below, you will see it has been an incredibly busy summer. We continue to face pressing issues impacting immigrant children in New Jersey, including, for example, the implementation and expansion of ICE's Family Expedited Removal Management (FERM) program to south Jersey. Much work lies ahead, and I thank you for continuing to support our critical work in the Garden State.

Our 2nd Annual Immigrant Children & Youth Walk is just one month away, on October 1st in West Orange. Thank you to all of our generous sponsors, walkers, and donors who have already committed support. If you have not yet purchased a ticket, I hope you will consider joining us by signing up today. Our annual walk is a celebration of our clients and mission, and it also raises funds that enable us to continue providing critical services to immigrant children. You can learn more about the walk and purchase your ticket on the [event page](#). I hope to see you there!

We are very pleased to introduce [Alysia Colon](#), NJCIC's new Program Associate! Alysia comes to us from the University in Pittsburgh where she majored in Public Service. In her role, Alysia will be responsible for assisting with community outreach related to the expansion of Cover All Kids and she will spearhead our Immigrant Youth Advocates program. Welcome, Alysia!



Our new Program Associate,
Alysia Colon

Thank you for taking the time to read our fall newsletter. We hope that you keep an eye out for future updates and follow the Consortium on social media. Thank you for being an ally of NJ's young immigrants, and we hope to see you on October 1st!

In solidarity,

P. Monica Marín

Priscilla Monico Marín, Esq.
Executive Director - pmonicomarin@njcic.org

The 2023 Immigrant Children & Youth Walk is less than one month away!

This family-friendly event is a celebration of our clients and our work, bringing together allies and advocates in a show of support for NJ's immigrant youth.

Help us reach our goal and sign up today!

Date: October 1st, 2023

Location: 9 Cherry Lane - West Orange, NJ @ The Clipper Pavilion

Time: On-site check-in from 8:30-9:30 am
Walk starts at 9:30 am

Sign up, donate, and learn more by [clicking here](#).





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NJCIC Updates

In July, NJCIC hosted the Elizabeth Frankel Fellows, a summer legal program at the The Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights for current law students interested in immigration and child advocacy. The fellowship was created in honor of the late Elizabeth Frankel, a brilliant attorney and the former Associate Director of The Young Center. NJCIC had a wonderful time hosting and meeting the fellows and sharing more about what we do and the importance of public service in the legal profession. Our Executive Director Priscilla Monico Marin currently serves as Chair of the Advisory Committee of the Elizabeth Frankel Fellowship.

NJCIC also released two [organizational statements](#) this quarter expressing our opposition to the federal government's new Family Expedited Removal Management (FERM) program, which began in May of this year.



FERM is a new ICE program that places families on an exceedingly fast timeline for their Credible Fear Interview, dramatically reducing their ability to secure and retain legal representation. In addition, the family unit is placed on a curfew and the heads of households are subjected to GPS ankle monitoring. New Jersey now has two FERM sites, one in Newark and one in Marlton, effectively covering the entire state within the program's parameters. It is imperative that we affirm our support for immigrant youth and their families who seek safety in the United States and call New Jersey home.



In addition to the organizational statements, Executive Director Priscilla Monico Marin also released an Op-Ed criticizing the expansion of FERM, which was published in [NJ Spotlight News](#) just last week. The Consortium will continue to inform our supporters of FERM updates as the federal government's program is rolled out here in New Jersey.

NJCIC Executive Director Priscilla Monico Marin



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Updates from NJCIC's Legal Team

The Legal Team would like to thank outgoing Policy and Legal Intern Hunter Marrero, a rising 2L at Georgetown Law School. During his time at NJCIC, Hunter assisted with representation in SIJS and asylum cases and screened calls on our intake line. The NJCIC Legal Program wishes Hunter all the best in his future endeavors.

Our Legal Program recently created a wonderful new resource for clients, the [Guide to Immigration Court in NJ for Immigrant Youth and their Families](#), which was just released this month. Through the toolkit, clients, their caregivers, and local advocates can find helpful information on the immigration court process, all in an accessible and easy-to-understand format. The toolkit reviews how to find a qualified attorney, eligibility information for asylum and SIJS, and so much more. By making this important information easily available, we can help our clients and their families navigate a very difficult legal landscape. We would like to thank Catchafire and our volunteers, Vera Tong and Leticia Plata, for their amazing work designing and translating this guide.



Do I Need to Go to Immigration Court?

Anyone who is in the U.S. without legal immigration status can be ordered to go to immigration court for a hearing. The reason for the hearing is for a judge to decide whether or not the immigrant has a way to get legal immigration status in the U.S. This is called a removal hearing.

Not all children who recently arrived in the U.S. will have to go to immigration court, it depends on whether an active removal case was started by the government.

This section will explain the documents you may have gotten when you came to the United States and how to know if you need to go to immigration court.

Notice to Appear or "NTA"

If you were detained when you arrived in the U.S., the government can start a case in immigration court to "deport" or "remove" you from the U.S. The first step is to give or mail you a "Notice to Appear" or "NTA" for short with:

- 1 Your A-number - a 9 or 10 digit number that is only yours that identifies you in the immigration process
- 2 The reasons that the government started a removal case against you, such as that you are not a U.S. citizen and did not have permission to enter the United States.
- 3 The laws the government alleges you violated
- 4 Sometimes, the Notice to Appear will have the location of the court and the time and date that you must go. If the NTA does not have this information, you may receive another piece of paper with this information called a "Notice of Hearing." See sample on page 40.

Sample Notice to Appear

Tip
Make a copy or scan all immigration documents you have and give a copy to someone you trust, in case you lose the original copy.

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This summer we wrapped up our series of Know Your Rights (KYR) presentations. Over the last year, we held 5 KYR's across the state, providing local residents and families with valuable information on the immigration court process and the rights and resources available to them. Our last KYR took place in June in Asbury Park, in partnership with the [Oceans Family Success Center](#) and [New Jersey Natural Gas](#). We reached over 360 people through our KYR presentations! The series also included stops in Newark, New Brunswick, Lakewood, and Dover.

Our new Guide to Immigration Court in NJ



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Highlighting NJCIC's Policy Work

The Policy team also would like to thank Hunter for all of his great work over the summer. For the Policy Program, Hunter contributed to the upcoming Special Education Guide, organized and reviewed applications for our Immigrant Youth Advocates program, and assisted with our budget advocacy for the Legal Representation Program. Thank you Hunter!

We are beyond proud to share that the state budget for the 2024 fiscal year included an incredible and much-needed increase in funding for the Legal Representation Program— bringing the total sum of grant funding to \$7.5 million. This critical funding allows legal service organizations, including the Consortium, to continue providing free legal representation and social services to unaccompanied immigrant children and similarly-situated youth. NJCIC is very proud to be a part of this grant program in partnership with NJ's Office of New Americans (ONA), Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), and all of the great legal service providers that are a part of this network.



Our advocacy in the health equity space has also led to some exciting outcomes for immigrant youth in New Jersey. In January 2023, Cover all Kids was expanded so that all children, regardless of immigration status, can enroll in NJ FamilyCare. Close to 27,000 previously ineligible immigrant children have since enrolled in healthcare coverage, giving them access to essential physical and mental health care. That's a huge win for immigrant youth in NJ!

Lastly, we are currently gearing up to release a report on equity in education, in partnership with the Latino Action Network. This report will detail challenges facing Latinx students and offer recommendations to achieve greater equity in classrooms and schools across the state. Keep an eye out for the release this fall.



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