

HELs- FAQs

How can I access Immigration Legal Services through my college?

Jewish Family Service of San Diego, through their Higher Education Legal Services program, and your campus have partnered to provide you *FREE Immigration Legal Services.

*USCIS fees not covered. See below for more info.

What is the Higher Education Legal Services program?

The Higher Education Legal Services (HELs) initiative is a unique opportunity for current students, staff, and faculty at local colleges to access personalized Immigration Legal Services from Immigration Attorneys and Department of Justice Representatives.

What services does JFS-HELs offers?

- Immigration eligibility consultations/assessments
- DACA- Initial & renewal
- Naturalization
- Family-based immigration
- Know Your Rights sessions
- Emergency Planning & Safety Preparedness
- Other legal immigration services
 - Including replacement of green cards, work permits, and more

JFS-HELs also provides presentations on various Immigration topics such as Know Your Rights, Family Preparedness, Naturalization: How to Become a US Citizen, DACA, Immigration 101: Possible Forms of Relief, Public Charge.

The goal is to educate and empower the community to know how to react in case of any encounters with Immigration Authorities, learn how to exercise their rights and stay up to date with the rapid changing immigration policies to avoid fraud.

Do I need to be a Jewish affiliate to access these services?

Jewish Family Service of San Diego was founded in 1918 when it began serving the Jewish refugees. As time passed, the list of services expanded and now, at JFS and the Higher Education Legal Services, we offer services to the community in general.

Who can access these services?

The Higher Education Legal Services (HELs) program provides services to eight **CA Community Colleges** in the San Diego and Imperial Valley region including Palomar College, MiraCosta College, SD City College, SD Mesa College, Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, Southwestern College, and Imperial Valley College. Services are available to current students, staff, and faculty.

HELs also provides services to two **Cal. State University** campuses including San Diego State University and Cal. State San Marcos. At the CSU level, HELs is able to provide services to current students, staff, faculty and their immediate relatives such as spouse, parents, children, and siblings.

Presentations are completely free and open to students, staff, faculty, their immediate families, and the public in general. Registration is required for HELs reporting purposes only. The Personal Identifying Information of the participants is not shared externally.

What are the USCIS fees and what does HELs' "free" service includes?

Attorney fees can be expensive, even if for a consultation only. Services with the Higher Education Legal Services program are FREE of charge meaning that the client/potential client will not have to pay out of pocket to obtain a consultation, legal assessment, or application completion.

However, any processing fees required by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) are responsibility of the applicant. USCIS fees can vary depending on the type of case. Visit <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees> for a list of current fees.

If I access services through my campus, would they know about my appointments?

No. JFS and HELS abide by the [HIPAA Act of 1996](#). Services are confidential from the moment an appointment is scheduled. This means that HELS will not be sharing client/potential client's information with anyone outside of their office unless written consent has been provided by the client/potential client via our Consent to Release of Information form.

For example, in instances where a student is being referred or assisted by a faculty/staff in scheduling an appointment, HELS cannot confirm or deny to the faculty/staff if the student attended the appointment or not. Also, HELS will not communicate any details of the case to anyone other than the client/potential client and anyone included in the Consent to Release of Information.

How can I schedule an appointment with JFS-HELs?

If you are interested in scheduling an appointment, you may do so by phone: (858) 637-3345, email: helsimmigration@jfssd.org, or directly via our website: www.jfssd.org/HELs.

What happens if availability for my campus does not work for me?

If the availability for your campus does not work for you, feel free to check out other campus' availability and choose the one that best fits your schedule. You will be able to identify your correct campus when filling out the form, or you may also add a note prior to submitting the form. If still none of the dates/times work for you, feel free to contact us directly via phone or email.

Where will my appointment take place?

The goal of the program is to provide free Immigration Legal services at the convenience of your college campus. However, due to the pandemic, HELS has had to adjust to conduct online services via telephone and Zoom video calls. Once an appointment is confirmed, a calendar invite, and email, will be sent to provide the Zoom link.

How can I obtain services if I am not a current student, staff, faculty or the immediate relative of a CSU affiliate?

Anyone not currently affiliated to a CA Community College or CSU system may receive services with JFS' General Immigration Services Department. To schedule an appointment, please email immigration@jfssd.org or call (858) 637-3365. If there is no answer, make sure to leave a message with your name, number, and reason for calling as missed calls are not returned.

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