

## Higher Education Legal Services FAQs

### What is the Higher Education Legal Services (HELS) program?

The Higher Education Legal Services (HELS) offers free immigration legal services to current students, staff and faculty at Community Colleges and State Universities in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

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

No. Jewish Family Service of San Diego JFS provides essential services to people regardless of religion, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ability, gender identity/expression, or sexual orientation. For more about JFS visit [www.jfssd.org](http://www.jfssd.org).

### What kinds of immigration services does HELS offer? (not a complete list)

- Consultations
- DACA Initial & Renewal
- Citizenship
- Family-based Immigration
- Know Your Rights
- Replacement of green cards and work permits
- Emergency Planning & Safety Preparedness

HELS does not offer services for work or student visas, and we do not offer other legal service areas such as family law, criminal law or tax law.

### Who is eligible for services?

HELS provides services to all California Community Colleges in the San Diego and Imperial Valley regions including Palomar College, MiraCosta College, San Diego City College, San Diego Mesa College, San Diego Miramar College, Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, Southwestern College, and Imperial Valley College. Services are available to current students, staff, and faculty. Dual enrollment high school students and students taking classes in adult education through one of these community college systems are also eligible.

HELs also provides services to the California State University campuses San Diego State University and Cal State San Marcos. In addition to services to students, staff and faculty, their immediate relatives (spouse, parents, children, and siblings) are eligible for services through HELs. Students continue to be able to receive HELs services for two years after graduation.

### **What does HELs' "free" service include?**

Attorney fees can be expensive, and some businesses will charge fees to complete and submit immigration forms without appropriate qualifications. Clients of HELs do not pay for any consultation, legal assessment, or application completion. There is no charge for any legal representation that HELs provides.

However, 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 [www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees](http://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees) for a list of current fees.

### **Will my school know about my appointments?**

No. Services are confidential from the moment an appointment is scheduled. This means that HELs will not be sharing any information with anyone outside of their office unless written consent has been provided.

### **Where will my appointment take place?**

HELs offers both virtual and in-person appointments. A HELs staff is on-site at each campus one day per week for scheduled appointments. Anyone who is HELs eligible can choose to meet in person at any of the campuses and is not limited to the college that they attend. HELs does not take walk-ins. In person appointments are also available at our JFS campus at 8804 Balboa Ave, San Diego 92123.

### **How can I schedule an appointment with JFS-HELs?**

You can schedule an appointment directly through our website at [www.jfssd.org/HELs](http://www.jfssd.org/HELs), by calling (858) 637-3345 or through email at [helsimmigration@jfssd.org](mailto:helsimmigration@jfssd.org),

## How can I obtain immigration services if I am not eligible for HELS?

Anyone not currently affiliated to a CA Community College or CSU system can contact the JFS Immigration Services Department. To schedule an appointment, please email [immigration@jfssd.org](mailto: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.