

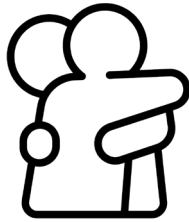
Immigrant Legal Assistance Fund: \$15 million in FY27 to expand the Massachusetts Access to Counsel Initiative (Line Item: 4003-0124)

Having an attorney is critical protection against deportation and permanent family separation. But there is no right to a government-paid lawyer in immigration court. Immigrants who cannot afford a lawyer must navigate our complex immigration proceedings alone.

In Massachusetts:



55% of immigrants facing deportation do not have legal representation.



Immigrants with counsel are **5 times more** likely to win relief.



Detained immigrants with counsel are **10 times more** likely to prevail.

What is MACI?

- Launched late last year, the **Massachusetts Access to Council Initiative (MACI)** is the Commonwealth's new statewide program providing free immigration legal services to eligible low-income Massachusetts immigrants at imminent risk of deportation.
- The Office for Refugees and Immigrants administers MACI in partnership with the MIRA Coalition and the Committee for Public Counsel Services, mobilizing a statewide network of nonprofit legal service providers and private law firms.



Since November 2025, MACI has built a statewide infrastructure

- Secured legal representation for 350 Massachusetts immigrants facing potential deportation.
- Supported the hiring of 21 immigration attorneys across MACI's 15 service sites statewide.

Now, MACI must scale to meet rapidly escalating demand. ICE arrests in Massachusetts increased by 336% in 2025, and as of the end of February 2026, the MACI intake line has already received more than 6,000 calls from immigrants seeking legal help.

A \$15 million investment would allow MACI to:

- Provide legal representation to more than **1,000 families** in FY27.
- **Expand attorney capacity** to take on more detained cases.
- **Reduce wait times** for immigrants seeking legal help.
- Cover **critical costs**, including filing fees, bonds, and other case-related expenses.