

THE SPECIAL IMMIGRATION RELIEF PROGRAM (SIRP) FACT SHEET

Political Asylum Project of Austin (PAPA)

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What is the Special Immigration Relief Program (SIRP)?

The Special Immigration Relief Program includes the **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)** Program and the **Immigrant Victims of Crime Protection Program (IVCPP)**.

TPS is a temporary immigration status granted to eligible nationals of designated countries. The Attorney General may make TPS available to individuals in the United States who are temporarily unable to return to their homeland because of ongoing armed conflict, environmental disasters, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. The extreme devastation of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 prompted the Attorney General to make a designation under TPS for Honduras and Nicaragua. The 2001 earthquakes in El Salvador led the Attorney General to grant TPS to eligible Salvadorans.

IVCPP is a project that promotes and enforces the use of laws specifically passed to protect immigrant victims of crime, namely the "T" and "U" Visa provisions of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (VTVPA). Both visas provide legal immigration status—including work authorization—to the victims and certain family members, most of whom will be able to adjust to Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status after three years.

What services does SIRP provide?

- Through SIRP, PAPA provides legal assistance to clients who qualify for protection under TPS or VTVPA. This includes: eligibility screening, assistance in preparing required documentation, filing of applications, and case monitoring.
- PAPA provides assistance to clients filing for Crime Victims Compensation (CVC) with the Office of the Attorney General of Texas.
- PAPA provides information and referrals to other agencies in order to ensure that clients receive any additional aid they may need in areas such as taxes, child support, counseling, and education & leadership opportunities.

IVCPP: Did you know...?

- "T" Visa status is available to up to 5,000 victims of severe forms of trafficking each year, including sex trafficking and forced labor.
- "U" Visa status is available to up to 10,000 victims of certain crimes each year who cooperate in the investigation or prosecution of the perpetrator.
- Immigrant victims of crime are often hesitant to report the crimes perpetrated against them due to fear of deportation, language and cultural barriers, fear of a criminal justice system they do not understand, and lack of understanding their civil rights and responsibilities.

Who qualifies for IVCPP?

- The "U" Visa is available to:
 - immigrant victims of crime who are being helpful, have been helpful, or are likely to be helpful in the investigation and/or prosecution of the crime committed against them.
 - immigrant victims of crime who have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of the crime committed against them.
- The "T" Visa is available to victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.

TPS: Did you know...?

- 100,000 Hondurans and 6,000 Nicaraguans applied for TPS during the original application period.
- PAPA has registered or assisted 1,000 Honduran, Nicaraguan, and Salvadoran clients for TPS.
- In 2002, PAPA re-registered 288 Hondurans & Nicaraguans and 260 Salvadorans for TPS.
- The earthquakes in El Salvador left over half the country homeless.

Who qualifies for TPS?

Countries currently designated for TPS:

- Angola
- Burundi
- El Salvador
- Honduras
- Liberia
- Montserrat
- Nicaragua
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- Sudan

This project is funded by:

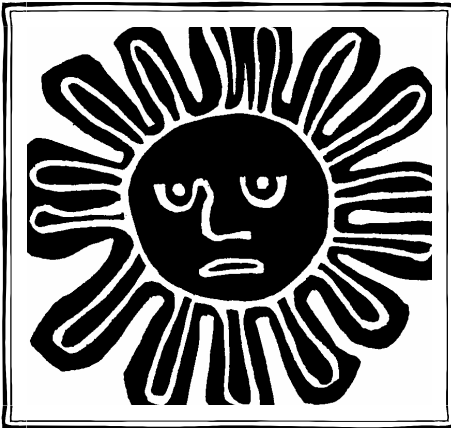
- Crime Victims Civil Legal Services Program of the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, which administers funds allocated by the Texas Attorney General's office.
- Donations/Fundraisers

Why is this program important?

SIRP provides TPS-eligible clients with the opportunity to pursue happier, more secure lives in the U.S. by assisting them in obtaining legal status and the opportunity to work in the U.S. IVCPP provides help to some of the most vulnerable members of our society, immigrant victims of crime, by providing them the opportunity to escape dangerous situations and report the crimes committed against them.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Political Asylum Project of Austin is to provide free and low-cost legal services and education to promote justice for immigrants and asylum seekers in Central Texas.



A Brief History of PAPA

PAPA began in 1987 as a joint project of Casa Marianella, the Friends Meeting of Austin and the Austin Chapter of the National Lawyer's Guild. PAPA was opened as a response to the legal needs of the large number of Central American refugees fleeing their war-torn countries and arriving in Central Texas. In 1990, PAPA became incorporated as an independent, non-profit organization. Over the years, PAPA has expanded services considerably to meet the growing legal needs of the immigrant community in Central Texas. Along with the expansion of legal services, we now provide education and training to emerging immigrant leaders so that they might advocate on behalf of the immigrant community.

Volunteer Opportunities

PAPA endeavors to educate the community at large about immigration issues in Central Texas by involving the community through volunteerism. PAPA has subsisted over the past decade thanks to the commitment of many dedicated volunteers. The following opportunities are available under the **Special Immigration Relief Project**:

Attorneys assist in putting together client's application with supporting documents, and represent clients with complex case histories at NA-CARA interviews.

Case Management Assistants keep the client files and databases updated and assist in general administrative duties.

Document Translators translate client's supporting documents into English.

Other volunteer activities include:

Fundraisers assist board members and other community supporters to organize special events.

Outreach workers represent PAPA at outreach events, distribute educational materials and recruit volunteers.

Newsletter Editors coordinate the editing, printing and distribution of the quarterly newsletter, *Noticiero PAPA*.

There are many ways to become involved with PAPA...

Yes! I would love to support PAPA in its services to indigent asylum seekers, immigrant victims of domestic violence and other low-income immigrants. Enclosed is my tax deductible donation of:

- \$500 \$250 \$100
 \$50 \$25 \$___ (other)

Yes! I would love to volunteer for PAPA! I am interested in volunteering as:

- pro bono* attorney researcher
 case monitor interpreter/translator
 newsletter editor grantwriter/fundraiser
 intake interviewer outreach

Your support is greatly appreciated.

Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____ Zip _____
Phone (H) _____ (W) _____
Fax _____ Email _____

Please mail this section to:
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