

2021

ANNUAL REPORT



TEACHING, INTERPRETING, & CHANGING LAW SINCE 1979



The Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) is one of the nation's premier sources for analysis of immigration law and policy, helping to improve access to American civic life for immigrant communities across the United States. In addition, we provide resources for practitioners working on complex issues in immigration law, and we advance immigrant rights through strategies such as policy analysis and advocacy, civic engagement, and capacity-building with legal service providers.

- **Policy Analysis & Advocacy:** We seek progressive reform of immigration policies, Department of Homeland Security policies, and local, state, and federal laws that affect immigrant families.
- **Naturalization & Civic Engagement:** We educate newcomers about their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society and promote the pathway to naturalization.
- **Education & Capacity Building:** We provide technical legal assistance, trainings, publications, and resources to pro bono and community-based immigration lawyers, paralegals, and advocates.
- **Shaping Public Opinion:** We support grassroots leadership to bring the voices of newcomers to the public dialogue and policy decisions that affect their lives.

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Each year, the ILRC distributes thousands of copies of our 23 manuals and provides legal assistance on more than 8,000 issues to pro bono and nonprofit advocates, as well as public defenders, through our national Attorney of the Day service. In any given year, our staff attorneys conduct hundreds of trainings, community meetings, and workshops. In 2021, the ILRC held 193 in-person and online seminars and webinars for almost 15,000 attendees and participants. The ILRC also leads meetings and workshops where thousands of immigrants are screened for legal options while learning about their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society. Since 2011, the ILRC, as the lead of the New Americans Campaign, has helped more than 560,000 immigrants complete their naturalization applications.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

The ILRC's legal team holds expertise in:

- Naturalization and citizenship, and the processes of granting or transmitting U.S. citizenship to foreign-born individuals.
- The complex intersection of criminal and immigration law and how the criminal legal system can affect immigration eligibility and status.
- Immigrant post-conviction relief, including clean slate and other record clearance remedies.
- Family-based immigration, which allows close relatives of U.S. citizens to unify with their loved ones.
- Public charge—a bar to certain forms of immigration status based on receipt of means-based benefits, and how recent public charge rules and policies affect immigrants.
- Special challenges facing immigrant youth, including youth detention and policies regarding unaccompanied minors.
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), a form of legal relief for youth who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.
- Defense of immigrants in removal proceedings who, unlike in the criminal court system, are not provided an attorney.
- Immigration detention and bond eligibility.
- Asylum for people who come to the United States seeking protection from persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group, and related forms of immigration relief such as withholding of removal.
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), temporary relief that provides access to education and employment for young immigrants who were brought to the United States as children.
- U Visas, a form of immigration status for survivors of serious crimes.
- T Visas, a form of immigration status for survivors of trafficking.
- Protections under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) which recognize that undocumented status is often used to trap victims of domestic violence in abusive relationships.
- Temporary Protected Status, which is a temporary protection for nationals of certain countries experiencing humanitarian crises.
- Freedom of Information Act Requests for immigration cases.
- The grounds of inadmissibility and deportability, potential waivers, and how these all factor into eligibility for immigration relief and removal defense.
- Immigration enforcement that is prone to overreach and leaves immigrant communities terrified and unwilling to trust local law enforcement.
- Policy and advocacy efforts throughout the United States with a particular focus on local policy work in Texas, local and state policy work in California, and policy advocacy at the federal level.
- Organizing, a critical component to how community-led change happens in social justice movements to maximize the effectiveness and impact on immigrant rights.



MESSAGE FROM THE ILRC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The mission of the Immigrant Legal Resource Center is to work with and educate immigrants, community organizations, and the legal sector to continue to build a democratic society that values diversity and the rights of all people. On January 6, 2021, the world saw in real time the concerted effort to subvert a pillar of American democracy – the peaceful transition of power. Thousands, many dressed for combat and/or armed, assembled and participated in an attempted coup based on a series of lies promulgated by those at the highest level of government. On January 6, we witnessed the fragility of democracy. It also made us realize how powerful the phrase “to build a democratic society” is in our mission statement as well as how far people will go to undermine democracy.

Democracy takes work. Governance for the people and by the people is not a philosophy to be taken for granted. The ILRC dedicates a significant amount of resources on naturalization efforts. Although naturalization is certainly not the only pathway for immigrants to participate in our democracy, it is one important pathway. Naturalized citizens casting their votes not only help to decide who become our elected officials, their votes also inform immigration policy outcomes. Many are symbolically casting their votes on

behalf of family and community members who cannot—to make a broken immigration system fairer and more just for all. Democracy requires the care and commitment of everyone – citizen and non-citizen – to ensure that our elected officials represent the best interest of all people who choose to call America their home.

Since 1979, the ILRC has been helping to build a democratic society that values the diversity and rights of all people because embracing diversity builds stronger communities. Democracy is not for the elite few. It is not for those with power and influence. It should stand up for those with the least power and influence in our communities. Democracy, when done right, should protect the rights of all people with compassion, equity, and fairness. A 2021 Cato Institute poll on immigration saw that 91% of Americans welcome immigration at varying levels, as opposed to 9% who favor no immigration. Justice should undergird policy, and our work advocating for fairer and more just immigration policies is the embodiment of democracy.

Eric Cohen

FINANCIAL POSITION

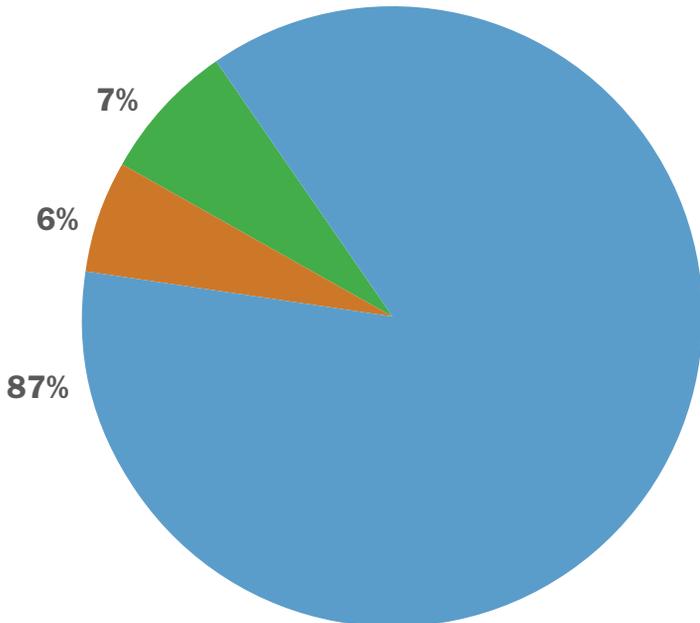
In 2021, 89 cents of every dollar raised by the ILRC was spent on program delivery and 11 cents of every dollar was spent on administration and fundraising. As a best practice, nonprofit organizations aim to spend at least 75 cents or more on program delivery each year.

The ILRC continued its regranting program in 2021. The ILRC regrants approximately half of its budget to partner organizations in the field. It is one of the ways that we pursue our mission to build the immigration legal and immigrant rights fields. Regranting funds is another way to ensure that our partners have the resources that they need to provide direct legal services and other support for immigrant communities. In 2021, the ILRC supported the work of 59 grassroots organizations with 97 grants distributed.

Cash and Investments	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	29,127,012
Current Grants Receivable	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	8,680,332
Other Current Assets	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	648,800
Long-term Grants Receivable	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	2,381,538
Net Property and Equipment	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	213,397
All Other Assets	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	94,206
TOTAL ASSETS	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	\$	41,145,285
Available for Operations	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	8,004,512
Board-designated Reserves	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	5,800,000
Temporarily Restricted	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	19,945,277
TOTAL NET ASSETS	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	\$	33,749,789
Payables and Accrued Expenses	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	388,620
Current Re-Grants Payable	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	4,948,708
Accrued Vacation	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	592,654
Other Liabilities	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	246,386
Loan Payable	●●●●●●●●●●	\$	1,219,128
TOTAL LIABILITIES	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	\$	7,395,496

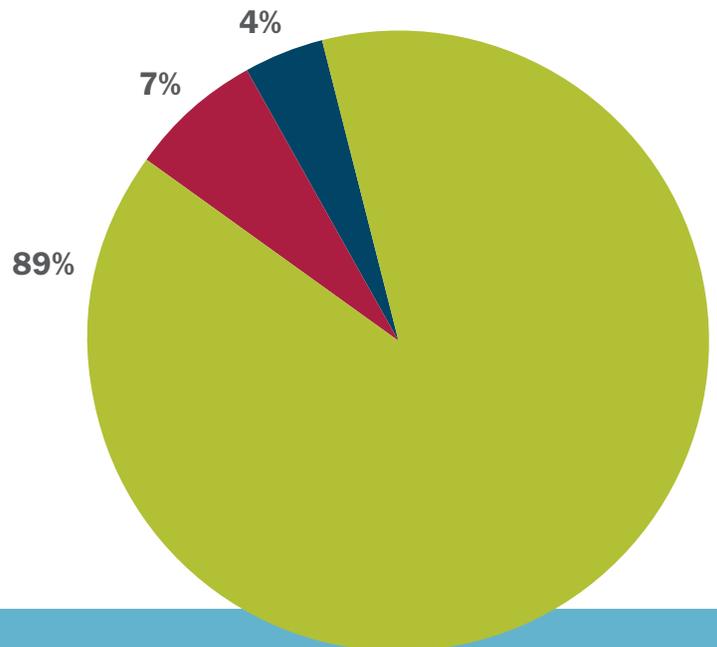
Donations and Revenue

- Grants
- Individuals, Events, & Other
- Fees for Services



Expenses

- Program Delivery
- Management & General
- Fundraising





2021 POLICY HIGHLIGHT: *ILRC'S WORK IN TEXAS*

In 2021, the ILRC was heavily involved in efforts to combat ongoing racist and anti-immigrant attacks in Texas, such as Governor Abbott's illegal and inhumane [Operation Lone Star](#), which criminalizes migrants seeking safety and refuge in our country by charging and jailing them for alleged state offenses, like trespassing. Through our work leading weekly Texas immigration advocates calls, we built the framework and infrastructure for statewide rapid response and took coordinated action, which we utilized to collectively fight back against Operation Lone Star from all angles. We jointly sent a national sign-on letter to the Biden administration, supported our grassroots partners as they fought to release people from jail, and we launched a statewide petition demanding that the participating counties stop aiding Operation Lone Star. We also co-coordinated a weekly meeting that served as a truly intersectional space to strategize and share information about Operation Lone Star. Additionally, ILRC staff attorneys helped to coordinate legal representation for individuals arrested under Operation Lone Star, and the ILRC's communications team developed responsive messaging.

In September 2021, we held a statewide communications training in partnership with the Comm/Unity Network. Governor Abbott's actions fueled narratives that criminalized entire communities and divided the field. During the training, we focused on inclusive messaging, responding to tough questions from reporters, and identifying shared values that can persuade new audiences to support our issues. We received tremendous positive feedback from attendees, and held a similar training for Spanish-speakers in October 2021.

In December 2021, we published a Texas [Cite and Release advocacy toolkit](#). The toolkit gives local organizers and advocates tools to successfully lead a cite and release campaign to reduce arrests in their communities and includes many helpful resources, samples, and insights for every step in a cite and release campaign – from initial education, research, and data collection through policy implementation. The coalitions we help facilitate in Houston and San Antonio also continued to advance their respective cite and release campaigns.

To learn more about the ILRC's [Texas work](#), please visit our [Texas webpage](#).

ILRC BY THE NUMBERS 2021

273,750

Know Your Rights
RED CARDS
Distributed

287

Trainings, Webinars, Community
Meetings, Task Forces, Workshops,
Media Reports, and CRISP Meetings



17,188
Participants



8081

Attorney of the Day
Issues Answered for Non-
Profits, Service Providers, and
Pro Bono Attorneys

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE DONORS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE ILRC WHOSE INVESTMENT

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