# Table of Contents

## Chapter 1 Introduction

§ 1.1 Introduction to Immigration Relief for Abused Noncitizen Spouses and Certain Other Family Members ................................................................. 1-1  
§ 1.2 How to Use This Manual ........................................................................ 1-2  
§ 1.3 Contents of the Manual .......................................................................... 1-3  
§ 1.4 Overview of Self-Petitioning under VAWA: Who Is Eligible ................. 1-4  
§ 1.5 Overview of Self-Petitioning: Self-Petitioning Requirements ................... 1-5  
§ 1.6 Overview of Self-Petitioning: Process and Benefits ............................... 1-6  
§ 1.7 Other Forms of Immigration Relief for Abused Spouses .......................... 1-7  

Appendix 1-A Resources for Advocates Serving Survivors of Domestic Abuse, Trafficking and Other Crimes

## Chapter 2 Initial Discussions with Clients

§ 2.1 Overview of Working with Clients to Complete the Self-Petition ............... 2-1  
§ 2.2 Tips on Interviewing from Immigration and Domestic Violence Experts ...... 2-2  
§ 2.3 Using an Interpreter .................................................................................. 2-6  
§ 2.4 Explaining VAWA to Clients ..................................................................... 2-7  
§ 2.5 Explaining the VAWA Process .................................................................. 2-8  
§ 2.6 Talking about Advantages and Disadvantages of Applying for VAWA ...... 2-9  
§ 2.7 Getting the Client Started on Gathering Documentation ........................... 2-10  
§ 2.8 Next Steps .................................................................................................. 2-13  

Appendix 2-A “Working with Immigrant Survivors” by Gail Pendleton  
Appendix 2-B Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Confidentiality Provisions fact sheets  
Appendix 2-C IIRIRA § 384 on confidentiality and penalties for disclosure of information  
Appendix 2-E Sample VAWA Intake Form  
Appendix 2-F Documentation Checklists for VAWA Requirements in English and Spanish  
Appendix 2-G Model client authorization for release of information  
Appendix 2-H Model letters requesting birth, marriage, divorce, and death records  
Appendix 2-I Model request for police clearance letter  
Appendix 2-J Model request for police reports of domestic violence incident  
Appendix 2-K Model request for copy of temporary restraining order  
Appendix 2-L Guidelines for client declarations in English and Spanish
Appendix 2-M Guidelines for a letter of support from social service providers in English and Spanish

Appendix 2-N Instructions and model letters for clients to obtain criminal records (if necessary)

Chapter 3 Requirements for Self-Petitioning under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

| § 3.1 | Introduction | 3-2 |
| § 3.2 | Who Can Self-Petition under VAWA | 3-3 |
| § 3.3 | Requirements for VAWA Self-Petitioning Spouses | 3-3 |
| § 3.4 | Status of the Abuser: The Abuser Is (or Was) a United States Citizen or Lawful Permanent Resident | 3-4 |
| § 3.5 | Marriage Issues | 3-6 |
| § 3.6 | Abuse Issues: The USC or LPR Abused the Self-Petitioner during Their Marriage | 3-10 |
| § 3.7 | Residence Issues | 3-13 |
| § 3.8 | The Self-Petitioner Is a Person of Good Moral Character | 3-14 |
| § 3.9 | VAWA Exceptions for the Bars to Good Moral Character | 3-15 |
| § 3.10 | Children of the Self-Petitioner May Qualify for Derivative Status | 3-17 |
| § 3.11 | Requirements for VAWA Self-Petitioning Children | 3-20 |
| § 3.12 | The Self-Petitioner Is the Child of the Abuser | 3-20 |
| § 3.13 | The Abuser Is (or Was) a USC or LPR | 3-24 |
| § 3.14 | The USC or LPR Abused the Self-Petitioning Child | 3-24 |
| § 3.15 | The Self-Petitioning Child Is Residing in the United States at the Time the Self-Petition Is Filed, or, if Filing from Abroad, Meets Certain Requirements | 3-25 |
| § 3.16 | The Self-Petitioning Child Lives or Lived with the Abusive USC or LPR Parent | 3-25 |
| § 3.17 | The Child Is a Person of Good Moral Character | 3-25 |
| § 3.18 | Derivative Children | 3-26 |
| § 3.19 | Requirements for VAWA Self-Petitioning Parents | 3-27 |
| § 3.20 | The Self-Petitioner Is the Parent of the Abuser | 3-27 |
| § 3.21 | The Abuser Son or Daughter Is (or Was) a USC | 3-28 |
| § 3.22 | The USC Son or Daughter Abused the Self-Petitioning Parent | 3-29 |
| § 3.23 | The Self-Petitioning Parent Resides or Has Resided with the Abusive USC Son or Daughter | 3-29 |
| § 3.24 | The Self-Petitioning Parent Is a Person of Good Moral Character | 3-29 |
| § 3.25 | Prohibition on Petitioning for Abusers | 3-30 |
| § 3.26 | Humanitarian Parole | 3-30 |
**Appendix 3-A**  
Aleinkoff, Executive Associate Commissioner, Office of Programs, INS  
Mem/HQ 204-P, April 16, 1996  

**Appendix 3-B**  

**Appendix 3-C**  
Yates, Associate Director, Operations, USCIS Mem./HQOPRD  
70/8.1/8.2, January 19, 2005  

**Appendix 3-D**  
USCIS Chart: Waivable Conduct Contained in the Statutory Bars to Establishing Good Moral Character  

**Appendix 3-E**  
USCIS Attachment to January 19, 2005 Memoranda: Authorities Affecting False Testimony Determinations  

**Appendix 3-F**  
Sample Humanitarian Parole Packet  

**Appendix 3-G**  
Aytes, Acting Associate Director, Domestic Operations, USCIS  
Mem/HQ 70/8, October 31, 2005  

**Appendix 3-H**  
Sally Kinoshita, *Extreme Cruelty: What it is and how to prove it*, Asista Newsletter, 2-4 (Fall 2006)  

**Appendix 3-I**  
USCIS Policy Memorandum, “Continued Eligibility to File for Child VAWA Self-Petitioners After Attaining Age 21,” PM-602-0048, September 6, 2011  

**Appendix 3-J**  
USCIS Policy Memorandum, “Eligibility to Self-Petition as a Battered or Abused Parent of a U.S. Citizen,” PM-602-0046, August 30, 2011  

**Appendix 3-K**  
ILRC Practice Advisory, “Marriage Equality in Immigration Law: Immigration Benefits for Same-Sex Married Couples”  

**Appendix 3-L**  
Novak, Director, Vermont Service Center, USCIS Mem/HQOPRD  
70/8.1/8.2, January 19, 2005  

### Chapter 4  
The VAWA Self-Petitioning Process  

§ 4.1 Introduction to the VAWA Self-Petitioning Process .............................................. 4-1  
§ 4.2 Completing the VAWA Self-Petition .......................................................................... 4-2  
§ 4.3 Filling Out the I-360 ................................................................................................. 4-2  
§ 4.4 Documenting the Requirements for the I-360 ......................................................... 4-7  
§ 4.5 A Detailed Cover Letter with an Index of the Documentation .............................. 4-8  
§ 4.6 Notice of Entry of Appearance by the Attorney or Accredited Representative .......................................................... 4-10  
§ 4.7 Filing Fee Amount ................................................................................................. 4-10  
§ 4.8 The Self-Petitioner’s Detailed Declaration or Affidavit ........................................ 4-10  
§ 4.9 Proof That the Abuser Is (or Was) a Lawful Permanent Resident or United States Citizen ........................................................................................................... 4-11  
§ 4.10 Proof That the Self-Petitioner Is (or Was) Married to the USC or LPR ................. 4-12  
§ 4.11 Proof That the Self-Petitioner Suffered Battery or Extreme Cruelty ...................... 4-13  
§ 4.12 Proof That the Marriage or Intended Marriage Was in Good Faith ........................ 4-14  
§ 4.13 Proof That the Self-Petitioner Resided with the Abuser ....................................... 4-15  
§ 4.14 Proof That the Self-Petitioner Has Good Moral Character .................................... 4-16  
§ 4.15 Evidence of the Self-Petitioner’s Current Residence ........................................... 4-17
Table of Contents

§ 4.16 Documenting Eligibility for a VAWA Self-Petition for a Child or Parent .......................................................... 4-17
§ 4.17 Filing the Completed I-360 Packet .......................................................... 4-20
§ 4.18 Prima Facie Eligibility ............................................................................. 4-20
§ 4.19 Notice of Action/Request for Evidence ..................................................... 4-21
§ 4.20 Deferred Action ..................................................................................... 4-23
§ 4.21 Preference Categories for Family-Based Immigration ......................... 4-24
§ 4.22 How the Preference System Works .......................................................... 4-25
§ 4.23 Using the State Department Visa Bulletin to Make an Estimate of When Your Client Can Immigrate .......................................................... 4-25
§ 4.24 Employment Authorization ..................................................................... 4-28
§ 4.25 Adjustment of Status and Consular Processing .................................... 4-31
§ 4.26 Notice of Intent to Deny .......................................................................... 4-32
§ 4.27 Special Concerns for Advocates Who Are Not Attorneys or BIA Accredited Representatives .......................................................... 4-33

Appendix 4-A VAWA Document-Gathering Guide
Appendix 4-B Form I-360
Appendix 4-C Sample VAWA Self-Petitioning Cover Letter
Appendix 4-D Form G-28
Appendix 4-E Yates, Associate Director, Operations, USCIS Mem/HQ70/5.5, March 4, 2004
Appendix 4-F Sample Fee Waiver Requests
Appendix 4-G Sample Self-Petitioner Declaration
Appendix 4-H Pearson, Executive Associate Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, INS Mem. HQADN/70/8, January 2, 2002
Appendix 4-I INS Memorandum, May 6, 1997, from the Office of Programs, regarding Supplemental Guidance on Battered Alien Self-Petitioning Process and Related Issues
Appendix 4-J Sample Receipt Notice
Appendix 4-K Sample Prima Facie Determination Notice
Appendix 4-L Sample Notice of Action/Request for Evidence
Appendix 4-M Sample VAWA Approval Notice and Initial Grant of Deferred Action
Appendix 4-N Yates, Director, Operations, USCIS Mem. HQOPRD 70/8.1/8.2, dated April 8, 2004
Appendix 4-O Cronin, Acting INS Executive Association Commissioner, INS Mem. HQ/AND/70/6.1IP, dated September 8, 2000
Appendix 4-P Sample State Department Visa Bulletin
Appendix 4-Q Form I-765
Appendix 4-R Sample Notice of Intent to Deny
Appendix 4-S Form G-639 (FOIA Request)
Appendix 4-T Virtue, Non-Disclosure and Other Prohibitions Relating to Battered Aliens: IIRIRA § 384m 96 act.036, May 5, 1997
Appendix 4-U VAWA Adjustment of Status Red Flag Checklist
Appendix 4-V Sample Response to Notice of Intent to Deny
Appendix 4-W  Sample Letter Requesting Extension of Prima Facie Determination
Appendix 4-X  “Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Confidentiality Provisions at the Department of Homeland Security” Fact Sheet
Appendix 4-Y  Asista VAWA Good Faith Marriage Amicus Brief

Chapter 5  Adjustment of Status for VAWA Self-Petitioners

§ 5.1  Introduction ........................................................................................................ 5-1
§ 5.2  When Will a Lawful Permanent Resident Visa Be Available? .......................... 5-2
§ 5.3  Adjustment of Status for VAWA Self-Petitioners: Adjustment Requirements .................................................................................. 5-5
§ 5.4  When Should a Self-Petitioner File an Application for Adjustment of Status?........................................................................... 5-6
§ 5.5  VAWA, Aging Out, and the Child Status Protection Act ................................. 5-10
§ 5.6  Where to File the Adjustment Application for Self-Petitioners Who Have Never Been in Removal Proceedings ....................................... 5-14
§ 5.7  Adjustment Applications for Self-Petitioners in Removal Proceedings ........... 5-15
§ 5.8  Adjustment of Status for Derivative Beneficiaries ........................................... 5-17
§ 5.9  Applying for Adjustment of Status ................................................................... 5-18
§ 5.10  The Contents of the Adjustment Application Packet ..................................... 5-22
§ 5.11  Filing Fees and Requests for Fee Waivers for Adjustment Applications Filed with USCIS ..................................................................... 5-25
§ 5.12  USCIS Interview Process ............................................................................... 5-25
§ 5.13  If USCIS Denies Adjustment of Status ......................................................... 5-27
§ 5.14  Special Cases: Adjustment for Abused Spouses and Children of Principal Applicants under CAA, HRIFA, and NACARA .............................. 5-27

Appendix 5-A  USCIS, Policy Memorandum 602-0022, Subject: Revocation of VAWA-Based Self-Petitions (Forms I-360), AFM Update AD10-49 (December 15, 2010)
Appendix 5-B  Form I-912 Request for Fee Waiver
Appendix 5-D  Adjustment Cover Letter
Appendix 5-E  Form G-325
Appendix 5-F  Form I-864W, Intending Immigrant’s Affidavit of Support Exemption
Appendix 5-H  Form G-1145 E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance
Appendix 5-I  Adjustment Interview Preparation Materials
Appendix 5-J  Form I-485

Chapter 6  Inadmissibility Grounds for VAWA Self-Petitioners

§ 6.1  Overview ............................................................................................................ 6-2
§ 6.2  Health-Related Grounds ..................................................................................... 6-3
§ 6.3  Health-Related Grounds: Communicable Diseases ............................................ 6-4
§ 6.4  Health Related Grounds: Lack of Vaccination ................................................... 6-4
§ 6.5  Health-Related Grounds: Physical or Mental Disorders .................................... 6-5
§ 6.6  Health-Related Grounds: Drug Abusers or Addicts ........................................... 6-5
§ 6.7  Criminal Grounds: Overview ............................................................................. 6-6
§ 6.8  Some Definitions: “Conviction,” “Admission,” and “Sentence” ....................... 6-8
§ 6.9  Crimes Involving Moral Turpitude .................................................................... 6-12
§ 6.10 Multiple Criminal Convictions ........................................................................ 6-15
§ 6.11 Controlled Substance Violations ...................................................................... 6-15
§ 6.12 Traffickers in Controlled Substances ............................................................... 6-16
§ 6.13 Prostitution and Commercialized Vice ............................................................ 6-17
§ 6.14 Immunity from Prosecution ............................................................................ 6-17
§ 6.15 Particularly Serious Violations of Religious Freedom ..................................... 6-18
§ 6.16 Significant Traffickers in Persons .................................................................. 6-18
§ 6.17 Aggravated Felonies ......................................................................................... 6-19
§ 6.18 212(h) Waivers for Criminal Conduct for Immigrants .................................. 6-19
§ 6.19 National Security Grounds ............................................................................. 6-21
§ 6.20 Public Charge ................................................................................................... 6-22
§ 6.21 Previous Immigration Violations: Overview .................................................... 6-22
§ 6.22 Immigrants Present without Permission or Parole .......................................... 6-23
§ 6.23 Failure to Attend Removal Proceedings ........................................................... 6-24
§ 6.24 Fraud or Willful Misrepresentation .................................................................. 6-25
§ 6.25 INA § 212(i) Waivers for Fraud or Misrepresentation ....................................... 6-26
§ 6.26 False Claim of U.S. Citizenship ....................................................................... 6-27
§ 6.27 Stowaways ........................................................................................................ 6-29
§ 6.28 Smugglers and Encouragers of Unlawful Entry .............................................. 6-29
§ 6.29 Final Civil Document Fraud Order ................................................................... 6-29
§ 6.30 Foreign Students ............................................................................................... 6-30
§ 6.31 Ineligible for Citizenship .................................................................................. 6-30
§ 6.32 Prior Removal Orders or Periods of Unlawful Presence .................................. 6-30
§ 6.33 Having Previously Been Removed: INA § 212(a)(9)(A) .................................. 6-30
§ 6.34 Unlawful Presence Bars: INA § 212(a)(9)(B) .................................................. 6-32
§ 6.35 Reentering the U.S. without Authorization after Removal or One Year Unlawful Presence: INA § 212(a)(9)(C) ............................................................. 6-39
§ 6.36 Miscellaneous Grounds ................................................................................... 6-41
§ 6.37 Reinstatement of Prior Removal Order and Consequent Ineligibility for Relief ........................................................................................................ 6-42

Table of Contents 6
## Table of Contents

### Chapter 7  Waivers of Inadmissibility for VAWA Self-Petitioners

| § 7.1 | Overview | 7-1 |
| § 7.2 | The Exercise of Discretion | 7-1 |
| § 7.3 | Extreme Hardship: Definitions | 7-3 |
| § 7.4 | Documenting Extreme Hardship and Favorable Discretionary Factors | 7-6 |
| § 7.5 | INA § 212(g) Waivers for Health-Related Grounds | 7-8 |
| § 7.6 | INA § 212(h) Waivers for Criminal Conduct | 7-10 |
| § 7.7 | INA § 212(i) Waivers for Fraud or Misrepresentation | 7-11 |
| § 7.8 | INA § 212(a)(9)(B)(v) Waivers for Unlawful Presence | 7-13 |
| § 7.9 | INA § 212(a)(9)(C) Waiver for Reentering the United States without Authorization Following Immigration Violations | 7-14 |
| § 7.10 | Strategy and Procedure for Waiver Applications | 7-14 |
| § 7.11 | Form I-212 Consent to Reapply for Admission | 7-17 |

### Appendix 7-A  Form I-601

### Appendix 7-B  Response to Request for Evidence on I-601 Provisional Waiver Application. NOTE: This sample concerns an application for a provisional waiver of the unlawful presence inadmissibility grounds. While VAWA self-petitioners will usually not need a waiver of these grounds, the sample provides a general example of how to assemble documents to support a waiver application.

### Chapter 8  Consular Processing For VAWA Self-Petitioners

| § 8.1 | Introduction | 8-1 |
| § 8.2 | Overview of Consular Processing | 8-2 |
| § 8.3 | Step I: Establishing Email Correspondence and a Point of Contact | 8-6 |
| § 8.4 | Step II: Paying the Fees | 8-6 |
| § 8.5 | Step III: Submitting the On-Line Application for an Immigrant Visa, the Affidavit of Support and the Civil Documents | 8-8 |
| § 8.6 | Step IV: Preparing for the Consular Interview | 8-10 |
| § 8.7 | Step V: The Consular Interview | 8-13 |
| § 8.8 | Final Step: Once the Consulate Grants the Immigrant Visa | 8-14 |
| § 8.9 | Consular Processing for Derivative Beneficiaries | 8-15 |
| § 8.10 | Review of Visa Denials | 8-17 |
| § 8.11 | What Can Happen at the Border? | 8-18 |
| § 8.12 | Conclusion | 8-19 |

### Appendix 8-A  Sample DS-260

### Appendix 8-B  DS-260 Worksheet (English)

### Appendix 8-C  DS-260 Worksheet (Spanish)
Chapter 9  Conditional Permanent Residence and Abused Immigrants

§ 9.1 Introduction ................................................................. 9-1
§ 9.3 Termination of Conditional Status by USCIS during the Two-Year Conditional Period ........................................ 9-6
§ 9.4 Removing Conditional Status through a Joint Petition .......... 9-7
§ 9.5 Grounds and Procedure for Removing Conditional Status through a Waiver ........................................... 9-11
§ 9.6 Petitions and Waivers Filed for Children .......................... 9-21
§ 9.7 USCIS Interview .......................................................... 9-22
§ 9.8 Approval of the I-751 Petition .......................................... 9-24
§ 9.9 Denial and Review in Removal Proceedings ....................... 9-24
§ 9.10 Filing a VAWA Self-Petition in Lieu of Proceeding with an Application for a Waiver of the Joint Petition Requirement ........................................ 9-25
§ 9.11 USCIS Notice Requirements .......................................... 9-25
§ 9.12 Conclusion .................................................................. 9-25

Appendix 9-A Yates, Acting Associate Director, Operations, USCIS Mem/HQADN 70/23.12, December 2, 2003
Appendix 9-B Form I-751 Materials
Appendix 9-C Aytes, Acting Associate Director, Domestic Operations, USCIS Mem/HQPRD 70/6.2.8, January 30, 2006
Appendix 9-D Yates, Associate Director, Operations, USCIS Mem/HQ SCOPS 70/23.12, June 24, 2005
Appendix 9-E Neufeld, USCIS Acting Associate Director, I-751 Filed Prior to Termination of Marriage, Memorandum to Regional, District, Service Center, and Field Office Directors, April 3, 2009
Appendix 9-F Yates, Associate Director, Operations, Clarification of Classes of Applicants Eligible for Naturalization under Section 319(a) of the INA, January 27, 2005

Chapter 10  Obtaining Relief for Abused Immigrants in Removal Proceedings

§ 10.1 Introduction ................................................................. 10-1
§ 10.2 An Overview of Removal Proceedings ........................... 10-2
§ 10.3 Preliminary Considerations in Removal Proceedings: Prosecutorial Discretion and Motions for Continuance, Termination, and Administrative Closure ................................................................. 10-3
§ 10.4 The Process of Removal Proceedings .............................. 10-6
§ 10.5 Discovery in Removal Proceedings .................................. 10-9
§ 10.6 Motions to Reopen Removal Proceedings ........................ 10-14

Table of Contents 8
§ 10.7 Reinstatement of Prior Removal Order and Consequent Ineligibility for Relief ................................................................. 10-18
§ 10.8 Treatment of Statutory Bars to Relief for VAWA Self-Petitioners. 10-24
§ 10.9 Relief for Overstaying Voluntary Departure .................................................. 10-24
§ 10.10 Relief for In Absentia Removal ...................................................................... 10-25

Appendix 10-A Sample Motion to Reopen Following In Absentia Removal
Appendix 10-B Sample Motion to Reopen for Adjustment based on VAWA Self-Petition
Appendix 10-C Sample Motion to Reopen for Continuance and/or Administrative Closure for VAWA I-360 Adjudication
Appendix 10-D Sample Motion to Recalendar and Terminate Proceedings
Appendix 10-E Sample Immigration Court Order Terminating Proceedings Without Prejudice.
Appendix 10-F Instructions for Submitting Certain Applications in Immigration Court
Appendix 10-H Michael Aytes, Acting Assoc. Dir. for Opers., Memorandum re “Adjudicating Forms I-212 for aliens inadmissible under section 212(a)(9)(c) or Subject to Reinstatement under section 241(a)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act in light of Gonzalez v. DHS, 508 F.3d 1227 (9th Cir. 2007)” (May 19, 2009)
Appendix 10-I John Morton, Asst. Sec. ICE, “Guidance Regarding the Handling of Removal Proceedings of Aliens with Pending or Approved Applications or Petitions” (August 20, 2010)
Appendix 10-J USCIS Policy Memorandum, re “Guidance for Coordinating the Adjudication of Applications and Petitions Involving Individuals in Removal Proceedings; Revisions to the Adjudicator’s Field Manual (AFM) New Chapter 10.3(i): AFM Update AD 11-16” (February 4, 2011)

Chapter 11 VAWA Cancellation of Removal

§ 11.1 Introduction to Cancellation of Removal .......................................................... 11-1
§ 11.2 A Comparison of VAWA Self-Petitions with VAWA Suspension and VAWA Cancellation ................................................................. 11-2
§ 11.3 The Difference between VAWA Cancellation and VAWA Suspension ........ 11-3
§ 11.4 Persons Eligible to Apply for VAWA Cancellation of Removal or Suspension of Deportation ........................................................................ 11-4
§ 11.5 Requirements for Cancellation of Removal or Suspension of Deportation: Overview ........................................................................ 11-5

Table of Contents 9
§ 11.6 Establishing the Family Relationship ............................................................... 11-6
§ 11.7 Battery or Extreme Cruelty .............................................................................. 11-8
§ 11.8 Three Years Continuous Physical Presence ................................................... 11-11
§ 11.9 Extreme Hardship ........................................................................................... 11-12
§ 11.10 Ineligibility under Certain Inadmissibility and Deportability Bars .............. 11-14
§ 11.11 Good Moral Character .................................................................................... 11-17
§ 11.12 Discretion ....................................................................................................... 11-19
§ 11.13 Documentation and the “Any Credible Evidence” Standard....................... 11-20
§ 11.14 The Contents of the Application .................................................................... 11-21
§ 11.15 The Effect of a Grant of VAWA Suspension or Cancellation:
Permanent Residence ..................................................................................... 11-26
§ 11.16 Parole of the Child or Parent of a VAWA Suspension or
Cancellation Grantee ...................................................................................... 11-27
§ 11.17 Denials and Appeals ....................................................................................... 11-29

Appendix 11-A Sample VAWA cancellation application

Table of Contents 10