



# The Advocates FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Defending Human Rights Since 1983

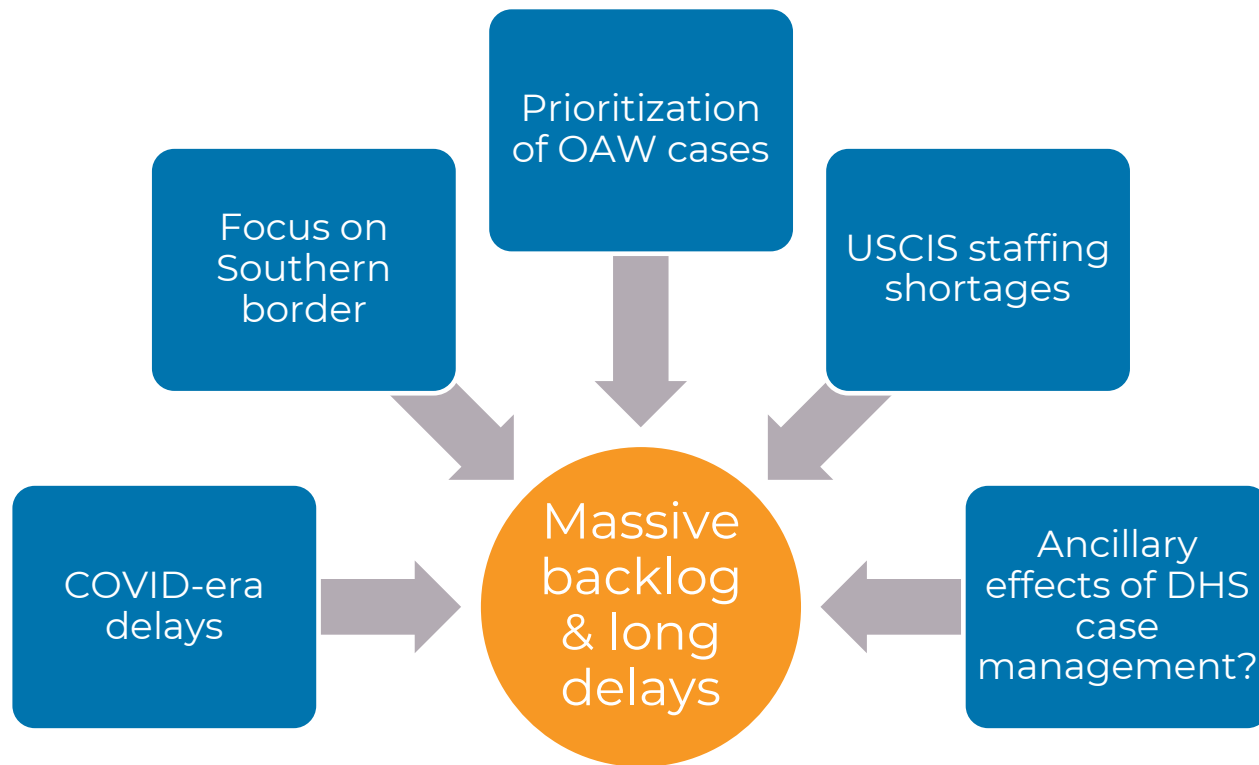
**AFFIRMATIVE  
ASYLUM  
TOPICAL OFFICE  
HOURS:**

**WHAT TO DO  
WHILE YOUR  
CLIENT IS  
WAITING FOR  
AN INTERVIEW**

**CASEY SCHULTZ  
BRUNING**

**FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

# CONTEXT FOR DELAYS IN SCHEDULING INTERVIEWS



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## Asylum Office Backlogs:

- 974,571 pending apps (as of 8/20/23)
  - **56,896 at CAO (as of 3/8/23); est. >68,000 (as of 8/20/23)**
  - 667,040 (as of 12/31/22); **48,500 (7%) at CAO**
- > 430,000 asylum apps filed in FY23 (as of 9/15/23)
  - 239,121 in FY22
- Historic low completions
  - 78,580 in FY19
  - **2,015 completions at CAO (10/1/22 – 3/8/23)**
  - 8,000 completed in FY23, of apps filed before 2018 (through 8/20/23)
- 65% staffing overall, 74% asylum officers

# WHAT CAN I DO WHILE I'M WAITING?

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ❑ Has an interview been scheduled? Check <https://egov.uscis.gov/> and/or <https://my.uscis.gov/>
- ❑ Can I reach my client?
- ❑ Is my client's contact information current with USCIS?
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- ❑ Do I know who at The Advocates for Human Rights to contact with questions?

# WHAT CAN I DO WHILE I'M WAITING?

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ❑ Does my client need help with an initial work permit application or renewal?
- ❑ Has my client become eligible for other immigration status/benefits?
  - Victim of a crime (U visa)
  - Domestic abuse (VAWA, U visa)
  - Temporary Protected Status
- ❑ Are there any changes in law or policy that impact my client's case?

# WHAT CAN I DO WHILE I'M WAITING? CONTINUE TO WORK UP THE ASYLUM CASE!

- Compile list of updates for Form I-589
- Update country conditions evidence with relevant changes
- Check for new persecution or threats against family/others in country of origin
- Review client's declaration and amend/supplement as appropriate
- Gather other evidence not submitted with initial filing
  - Supporting declaration(s)
  - Subsequent medical/mental health records evidencing past harm
- Look into trends for case type

# LIFE GOES ON FOR YOUR CLIENT EVEN IF THEIR CASE DOESN'T

- Needs:
  - Work permit and renewals
  - Housing, medical and mental health care, etc.
  - Reassurance
- Personal Changes:
  - Marriage (to a USC or LPR? May be able to adjust status)
  - Death of the principal applicant (need to refile new principal application)
  - Marriage of derivative applicant (will need to file their own application)
  - Criminal issues in U.S., attempt to avail self of protections of country of origin, etc.



# KEEPING IN CONTACT WITH YOUR CLIENT

- Make sure you know how to reach your client and they know how to reach you!
  - Phone, WhatsApp, email, address, employer
  - Backup contact – family, friend, etc.
  - Let them know if your contact information changes



# KEEPING IN CONTACT WITH USCIS

- Check case status regularly <https://egov.uscis.gov/> and/or <https://my.uscis.gov/>
- Keep your client's address updated with USCIS
  - Form AR-11: [Online](#) | [Paper Form](#)
- Keep your contact info updated with USCIS
  - [Form G-28](#) or [change of address letter](#)



# KEEPING IN CONTACT WITH THE ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

- Let us know if you:
  - Retire
  - Change firms
  - Change contact information
- Keep us updated about changes in client's contact information
- Check in with AHR staff attorney with questions
- Read monthly volunteer updates (including legal updates)
- Attend our CLEs and other trainings

# WHEN TO REACH OUT TO AHR

- When you need technical assistance in your case;
- When your interview has been scheduled;
- After your interview is concluded;
- If something in the case goes awry;
- If you can't find a sample in the pro bono resources;
- If you can't find the answer to a question in the pro bono resources;
- If you want to make sure your understanding of the law is correct;
- ...

# AFFIRMATIVE ASYLUM TOPICAL OFFICE HOURS, PART II

- Escalation options when your client has been waiting for an asylum interview or decision
- February 27, 2024, 10:00 AM CST
- Email Casey ([cschultzbruning@advrights.org](mailto:cschultzbruning@advrights.org)) or Theresa ([tdykoschak@advrights.org](mailto:tdykoschak@advrights.org)) if you would like to attend



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Casey Schultz Bruning:  
[cschultzbruning@advrights.org](mailto:cschultzbruning@advrights.org)