

Deportations Loom as Families Struggle to Find Legal Counsel



Summary: *Deportation orders are being given out to hundreds of women and children seeking asylum in the United States without first getting help from legal representatives.*

Hundreds of undocumented mothers and unaccompanied minors from Central America are left wondering if they will be deported soon. A shortage of legal counsel for their asylum cases is leaving them vulnerable, according to attorneys and activists.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association has been working as closely with the mothers and minors, many of whom are in detention centers in Texas and Pennsylvania but as Greg Chen, director of advocacy at the AILA, said, "We have volunteer attorneys representing many of those families, but statistics show us that most of them don't have a lawyer to represent them at deportation hearings."

Senators Ask Obama Administration to Help Sudanese Woman with Asylum

Data shows that a large number of women with children that are seeking asylum in the country but given a deportation order in the past 18 months did not have legal counsel. The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse reports that around 86 percent of the 18,607 women and children with deportation orders between July 2014 and December 2015 lacked legal counsel.

Russian Man Awarded Asylum in United States Thanks to Villanova Law Students

Chen says, "A woman with an attorney can prove she is being persecuted if she is ordered back to her country of origin, and will also know the importance of going to court to fully understand its legal obligations." TRAC reports that having an attorney makes obtaining asylum 14 times more likely.

Mentally Disabled Immigrants Facing Deportation to Be Provided With Representation

Executive director of Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. Jeanne Atkinson states, "It is deplorable that the government would issue final deportation orders to some 19,000 women and children who never had the chance to have an attorney help them seek the protection of asylum. Even Americans who favor the strictest interpretation of immigration laws are often surprised to find that these families have no right to a court-appointed professional attorney if they don't have the wherewithal to hire one themselves."

Source: <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2016/02/08/lack-legal-counsel-leaves-100s-families-set-for-deportation/>

Photo: news.yahoo.com