



# Improve Your Resume by Becoming an Immigration Forms Specialist

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NATIONAL NOTARY ASSOCIATION

# What is an IFS?

An Immigration Forms Specialist is a professional trained to provide “non-legal immigration services” — services that do not require the qualifications and involvement of an attorney.

# Growing Demand for Immigration Forms Specialists

- The U.S. Census Bureau: 40 million people currently living in the United States were born in a foreign country.
- Immigration has accounted for 29 percent of U.S. population growth since the year 2000, according to the Pew Research Center.

# Growing Demand for Immigration Forms Specialists

- Hundreds of thousands of immigrants apply for naturalization status in the United States each year.
- 772,623 petitions were filed in 2013 alone, according to the Office of Immigration Statistics.

# Growing Demand for Immigration Forms Specialists

Most of the immigrant population is unable to afford the services of an immigration attorney and need lower-cost, non-legal immigration services.

# Visa Types



- **IR1** Spouse of a U.S. Citizen
- **CR1** Spouse for less than 2 years
- **K1** Fiancé(e) Visa
- **K3** Spouse of a U.S. Citizen awaiting approval
- **SD** Religious Workers



- **B1** Business Visitor
- **B2** Tourists
- **F1** Students



- People who have entered the country without being documented

# Non-Legal Services May Include:

Assisting applicants in completing forms

Providing translations

Securing supporting documents

Submitting completed forms to the USCIS

Making referrals to legal representation

# IFS Services Do NOT Include:

Advising a person as how to answer questions on forms

Giving opinions or discussing legal strategies

Selecting forms for the customer

Answering questions of a legal nature

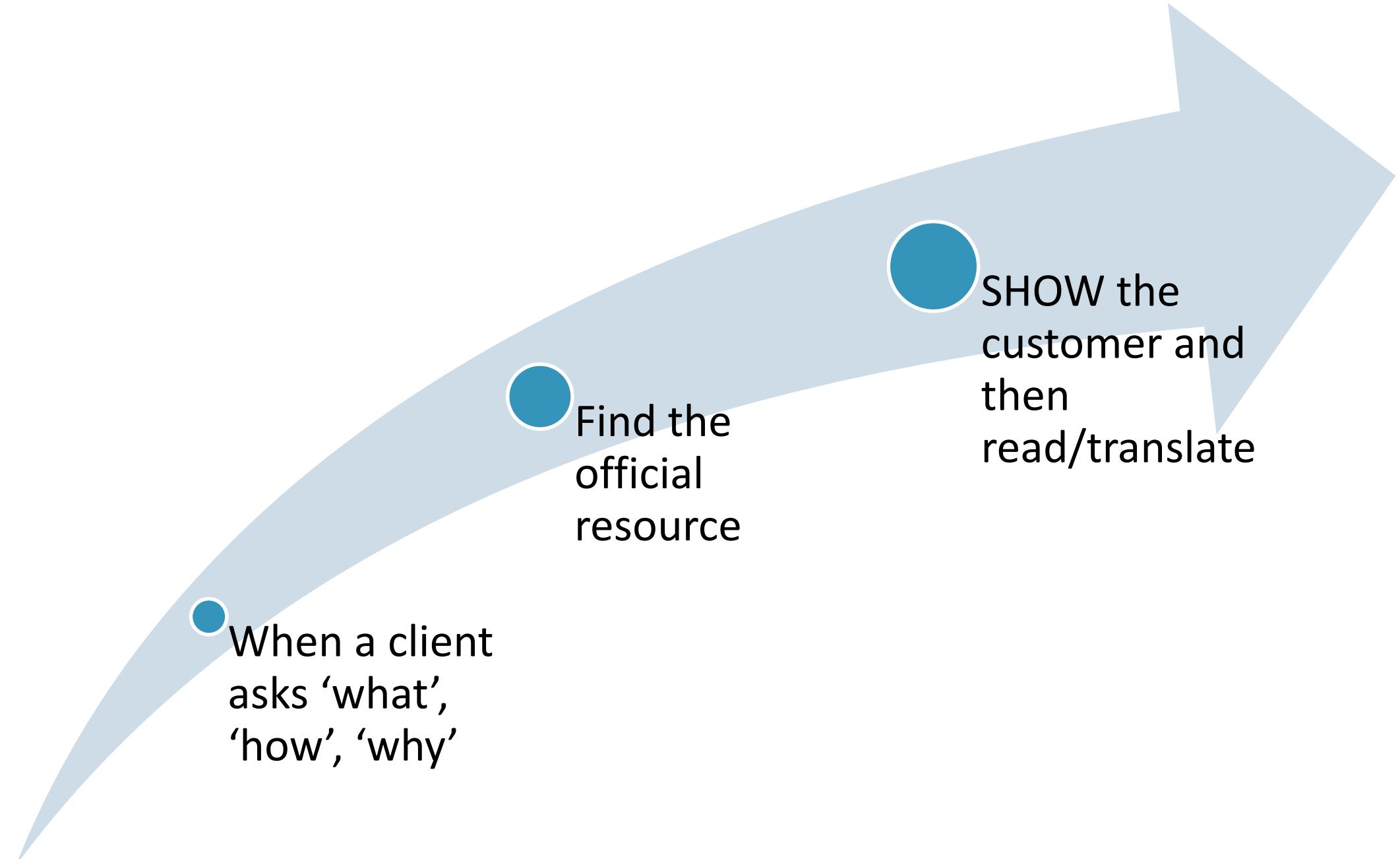
Appearing in court on the client's behalf

Making referrals for a fee or quid pro quo

# Avoiding the Unauthorized Practice of Law



# Avoiding the Unauthorized Practice of Law



# Getting Started: Know Your State

Designated  
Titles

Licensing and  
Bonding  
Requirements

Advertising  
Stipulations

Fee  
Stipulations

# Getting Started: Know Your State Designated Titles for IFS

- California: Immigration Consultant
- Georgia: Immigration Assistance Provider
- Illinois: Immigration Assistance Service Provider
- Maryland: Immigration Consultant
- Michigan: Immigration Clerical Assistant
- Minnesota: Immigration Assistance Provider
- Nevada: Document Preparation Service Provider

# Getting Started: Know Your State Certification and Bond

Surety Bond



Certifications/Licensing



Application/Registration Requirements



Background Screening



# Getting Started: Know Your State Advertising Stipulations

## Using the term 'Notario Publico'

'Notario Publico' actually means 'attorney' in most Latin countries

## Advertising as a Notary while 'holding oneself out to be' an Immigration Specialist

This restriction applies only to Notaries who are NOT qualified and bonded as Immigration Specialists

## Claiming to have rights, powers, or duties unauthorized by law

This clause prohibits Immigration Forms Specialists from providing unauthorized services... i.e. UPL

# Getting Started: Know Your State Fee Stipulations

Charging more fees than authorized by law

Price gouging

Charging more than a designated amount for 'entering data on forms'

Itemizing fees in a contract

CA: Fee restrictions only apply for 'entering data' but do not apply to other services provided such as translations, providing supporting docs, submitting forms, etc.

# Getting Started: Know Your State Fee Stipulations

In most states, there are no set fee limits for Immigration Form Specialist services such as translating, securing supporting documents, submitting completed forms and other services.

# Business Plan

Determine the services you will offer the public

Create a list of the USCIS Forms you will handle

Conduct Market Research

Create a pre-printed list of fees for each item

Post the completed menu of fees for each form you service

# Expenses Involved

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Costs of running business

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Insurance and Bond

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Continued education

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Supplies

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Desired profit margin

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Salary

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Office Rent

# Contract for Services

Provides terms and conditions

Protects the customer

Protects your business

Required by law in some states

**CALIFORNIA IMMIGRATION CONSULTANT CONTRACT FOR SERVICES**

This is a contract between \_\_\_\_\_, called "Immigration Consultant," and \_\_\_\_\_, called "Client."

**NOTICE**

It is important that the Client read this entire contract before signing it.

**THIS IMMIGRATION CONSULTANT IS NOT AN ATTORNEY AND CANNOT GIVE LEGAL ADVICE OR PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES IN REPRESENTING YOU IN THIS IMMIGRATION MATTER.**

It is a violation of California law for the Immigration Consultant to keep any of your original documents because you have failed to pay fees or expenses to the Immigration Consultant.

**I. SERVICES PROVIDED**

The Immigration Consultant will provide the following services: (List all services for which the client is being charged.)

1.	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
2.	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
3.	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
4.	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time

You are paying only for those services listed above and the Immigration Consultant makes no promise to provide any other services. The Immigration Consultant does not have special influence and cannot obtain special favors from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. It is a violation of California law for the Immigration Consultant to claim special influence or to make false or misleading statements to the Client. Immigration Consultant warrants that the services provided hereunder will be performed in a professional manner consistent with and in accordance with all applicable state laws and regulations. Immigration Consultant makes no guarantees or assurances that the services will achieve clients specific goals and/or results.

**DOCUMENTS**

1. Document Name	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
2. Agency/Office	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
3. Document Name	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
4. Agency/Office	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
5. Document Name	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time
6. Agency/Office	Purpose	Approximate Processing Time

**III. FEES AND EXPENSES**

You are paying only for those services listed above and the Immigration Consultant makes no promises to provide any other services. The Immigration Consultant does not have special influence and cannot obtain special favors from the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service. It is a violation of California law for the Immigration Consultant to claim special influence or to make false or misleading statements to the client. The Client agrees to pay the Immigration Consultant the following fees and expenses (Fill out A, B, or C):

# Contract for Services

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Itemized Services to be performed

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Cost of each item

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“Not an attorney” disclosure

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List of all documents to be prepared

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Purpose for hire and all actions to be taken

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Provision for reporting complaints

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Provision for reporting the unauthorized practice of law

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Written in both English and the customer’s native language

# Receipt for Services

Professional standard

Protects your business

Required by law in some states

*Receipt*

[Your Company Name] Supplier GST Number:		Date: Our Reference: Licensed Adviser Name: Licensed Adviser Number:		
To: [Client Name] [Company Name] [Street Address] [City – Postcode] [COUNTRY]		Receipt No. Corresponding Invoice No.		
Item No.	Service Description	Price (NZ dollars)	GST	Total
1	Fee for initial consultation and work on preparing work visa application prior to lodgement.	\$1,000.00	\$150.00	\$1,150.00
2	Translation costs.	\$100.00	\$15.00	\$115.00
			<b>Total amount payable</b>	<b>\$1,265.00</b>
			<b>Total amount received</b>	<b>\$1,265.00</b>
			<b>Total amount outstanding</b>	<b>NIL</b>

*Thank you for your payment*  
[YOUR FOOTER HERE]

# Resources

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For forms and updates on  
immigration regulations:

[www.USCIS.gov](http://www.USCIS.gov)

# Education

[www.nationalnotary.org/immigration/training](http://www.nationalnotary.org/immigration/training)

How to fill out the forms for common immigration needs:

- Family Petitions
- Naturalization
- Green Card
- Freedom of Information Act (FOA) requests
- Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

Opportunities for translating, securing supporting documents, submitting forms, making referrals

Filing, bonding and business requirements for California Immigration Consultants

Contract, advertising and signage requirements

Do's and don'ts for Notaries who are Immigration Consultants

How to build a reputation as a valuable Immigration Forms Specialist



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