

Together, we do the
community **justice.**



Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc. (ABLE) is a nonprofit civil law firm in northwest and west central Ohio. ABLE's mission is to pursue justice and equity, facilitate access to opportunities for people with low incomes through passionate legal representation, and provide steadfast advocacy for systemic reform.

At ABLE, we are at the forefront of protecting the legal rights of low-income immigrants and refugees as they attempt to lead safe and productive lives in our communities. Our Immigration Advocacy Project provides high quality legal services to immigrants and refugees in our 32-county service area and agricultural workers throughout Ohio.

ABLE's advocacy focuses on keeping families together, protecting victims of crime, and building stronger communities as we fight against discrimination and advocate for civil rights. We also share critical information and updates with community partners who serve these same communities. Compassionate donors also give to ensure that we continue to provide this **crucial legal assistance.**

SUPPORT OUR WORK BY GIVING AT

ABLELAW.ORG/IMM-UPDATE-2025



AGRICULTURAL WORKER OUTREACH

Ohio is the second largest egg-producing state in the US. In early 2025, Ohio experienced one of the worst outbreaks of H5N1 (avian flu) in the nation, which led to the culling of over 15 million birds. This significantly impacted the state's poultry industry and drove up egg prices for the entire country.

In response, the National Center for Farmworker Health (NCFH) provided ABLE with a grant for staff to conduct specialized outreach, educating farm workers about avian flu prevention. Outreach during the first quarter of 2025 specifically focused on reaching dairy workers who are at heightened risk of contracting and spreading the avian flu.

From January 1 to May 15 of this year, **ABLE staff conducted outreach at 64 sites** that were either farms or areas where workers frequent.

As a result, staff have educated approximately 350 workers at high risk of contracting and spreading avian flu in Ohio.

ABLE also began its annual in-person outreach to general agriculture workers shortly after Memorial Day. **There are over 4,000 agricultural workers in Ohio**, and ABLE's outreach team continues to develop innovative ways to reach them, despite the unique challenges that they face. For example, most agricultural workers live in remote parts of the state, and some return to their home country after the season ends. Others are undocumented or have a status linked to employment, which makes them even more vulnerable to workplace exploitation and trafficking.

This year, we are launching a series of web-based Know Your Rights content alongside a new, unique door-hanger packet to distribute QR codes, brochures, and other educational materials that workers can take with them to report labor, housing, and other rights violations.

LEGAL CLINICS

The need for immigration assistance has increased exponentially in recent years, and providing clinics is a way for us to expand our capacity to reach the people who **need our help**.

In ABLE's clinics, we assist individuals and families with applications for asylum, Temporary Protected Status, employment authorization documents (work permits), and consultations to answer questions about their immigration cases.

ABLE partners with WilmerHale, whose attorneys have donated dozens of hours of pro bono time assisting clients with applications. ABLE also partnered with the University of Dayton School of Law's virtual program to conduct virtual clinics for clients who were unable to attend in-person events. Those clients were paired with law students who worked under the supervision of an attorney to meet virtually within the clients' schedules to complete asylum applications. **This year, we have assisted over 25 people in virtual asylum clinics alone.**

Since January 1, 2025, ABLE staff have assisted over 450 individuals and families in our free legal clinics.

REPRESENTING UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

Since the beginning of this year, ABLE has served over 100 unaccompanied children (or immigrant children who came to the United States without their parents).

Many of our unaccompanied children clients, who are already in the deportation pipeline, are often survivors of crime, including human trafficking, sexual assault, and child abuse. ABLE's experienced advocates provide a victim-based, trauma-informed approach to their advocacy as they represent these children in removal proceedings in immigration court and help with applications for immigration status before U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS).

ABLE also helps unaccompanied children gain access to education and other resources that are key to their survival. In addition to stabilizing their immigration status, we represent them in custody matters before local juvenile courts so that responsible adults can make important education and healthcare decisions on the children's behalf.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS MATERIALS

Our Know Your Rights information is used regularly by legal service providers, community partners, and immigrants throughout the state of Ohio, and in other parts of the country. ABLE staff have also worked tirelessly over the past four months to give presentations and distribute information in client communities about what to expect from increased immigration enforcement.

This year, we have educated over 1,700 client community members on their rights and immigration law updates so far.

In response to the increased threat of immigration detention and deportation facing our client communities, ABLE staff updated our *Know Your Rights: Preparing Your Family for Immigration Enforcement* booklets to reflect recent changes. These booklets are available both in print and online, with translations in English, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Kinyarwanda, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Swahili.

Our immigration website also lists information for students, parents, and teachers about student rights if ICE comes to their schools. These resources are available in English, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili.

Since January 20, 2025, over 6,000 people have visited ABLE's immigration website at immigration.able.org



SCAN TO VISIT

IMMIGRATION.ABLELAW.ORG

PASHTON'S STORY

Pashton, a 35-year-old Afghan father of four, fled to the U.S. after the Taliban seized power in 2021. He had worked at a family-run ice cream shop that defied Taliban orders by serving women, an act that drew violent retaliation. After armed Taliban members raided the shop, Pashton narrowly escaped and made the painful decision to leave his family behind.

In Ohio, an ABLE attorney helped him apply for asylum based on his past persecution and fear of returning to Afghanistan. His application was approved in January 2024. Overcome with emotion, Pashton wept when he received the news. Now on a path to permanent residency and U.S. citizenship, he is most hopeful about reuniting with his wife and children.

In Afghanistan, his daughters are no longer in school, which is something Pashton wants to change. Having never received an education himself, he dreams of a better future for his children, especially his daughters, where education is a right, not a risk.

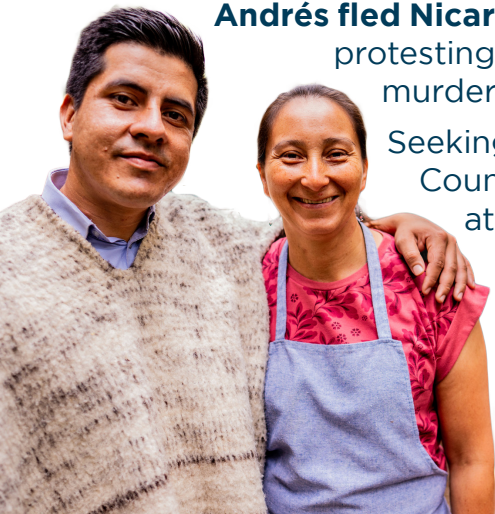


ANDRÉS' STORY

Andrés fled Nicaragua after being beaten, tortured, and imprisoned for peacefully protesting against the government. His cousin, also a political activist, was murdered by the regime.

Seeking safety, Andrés came to the U.S. but was jailed in a Seneca County detention center on a charge that was later dismissed. An ABLE attorney took on his case, applying for asylum and representing him in Cleveland Immigration Court. The attorney successfully proved that Andrés faced persecution due to his political beliefs, and the judge granted him asylum.

Despite the ruling, Andrés remained detained due to delays in ICE biometrics processing. His attorney continued to fight for his release, ultimately securing his freedom. Today, Andrés lives safely in northern Ohio with his family.



GENEVIEVE'S STORY

Genevieve came to the U.S. from Haiti, fleeing gang warfare and political violence. She settled in Springfield, Ohio, and prepared to attend her removal proceedings at the Cleveland Immigration Court.

While pregnant with her first child, her partner became abusive. On the day of her court hearing, he delayed driving her as an act of control. Genevieve arrived 45 minutes late, only to learn the judge had ordered her deportation in her absence.

Fearing torture if she returned to Haiti, she turned to ABLE for help. An ABLE attorney filed a motion to reopen her case, citing the abuse and coercion she faced. The judge granted the motion, lifting her deportation order. Genevieve has since left her abuser, and now lives safely with her baby in Springfield, able to continue her legal case without fear.

