

# CLS Helps Immigrants



**Community Legal Services provides direct legal representation, systemic advocacy, and community education to low-income Philadelphians, including immigrants.**

Our work with immigrants, including those who are undocumented, prevents exploitation, lifts people out of poverty, and allows our clients to have a fair chance at accessing justice.



Community Legal Services regularly represents immigrant clients and we advocate on behalf immigrant and refugee communities in a number of ways, including:

- Providing legal information and advice to people with limited English proficiency (LEP) to help them get the services and benefits they need from the government, courts, health care settings, and other important places. We also advocate on behalf of LEP individuals to address discriminatory treatment and systemic barriers to programs and services.
- Obtaining medical coverage and care, including life-saving Emergency Medical Assistance, for people who face barriers to qualifying for health insurance because of their immigration status.
- Helping lawfully present immigrants navigate complicated eligibility rules so they can receive the cash assistance, SNAP, and medical assistance benefits for which they are eligible.
- Preventing the exploitation of vulnerable immigrant workers by providing community education on immigrant workers' rights and legal representation for workers who have been the victims of wage theft. Immigrant workers are particularly vulnerable to wage theft because language barriers prevent them from understanding their rights and seeking help, and their immigration status may make them susceptible to deportation threats.
- Connecting refugees and asylees with SSI benefits. Many refugees and asylees have survived severe mental and physical trauma. The effects of this trauma are frequently debilitating, and can serve as the basis for SSI disability benefits. CLS understands the complex laws for immigrants trying to obtain SSI, and we are often successful in helping them obtain the benefits they need.

For more information about our work with immigrants, please contact CLS Executive Director Debby Freedman at [dfreedman@clsphila.org](mailto:dfreedman@clsphila.org) or (215) 981-3784