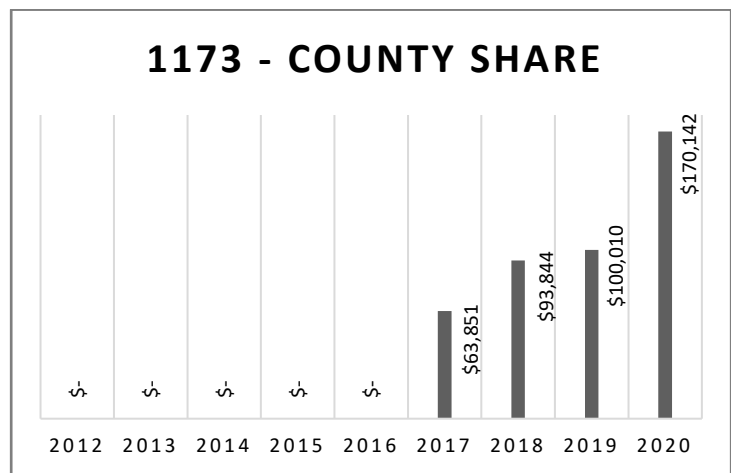


# OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION ASSISTANCE 1173



Regional Immigration Assistance Center (RIAC)

## MISSION STATEMENT

This Office is charged with ensuring that attorneys in a fourteen (14) county region, who are assigned to represent a noncitizen client in a criminal court proceeding, will have access to the training, advice and support needed to assist their client in making informed choices regarding any adverse immigration consequences that may arise in their criminal matter in compliance with the requirements established in Padilla v. Kentucky. In addition, this Office provides assistance to Judges, prosecutors and other law enforcement agencies so that all parties are aware of the potential immigration consequences.

## ABOUT OUR DEPARTMENT

This Office will provide support and assistance to assigned counsel representing a noncitizen parent or other adult in family court proceedings who requires competent advice on immigration issues that may impact their parental rights.

Since effective mandated representation of a client may depend upon the attorney's ability to identify a client's immigration status and to understand how that status may impact each stage of the client's court proceeding, this Office:

- Provides real-time immigration-related legal assistance in criminal and family court proceedings to reduce or alleviate the threat of removal of a noncitizen client from the United States, and
- Provides technical legal assistance as well as trainings and guidance on the development of immigration service plans and attorney best practices/protocols/procedures to be used in criminal and family court proceedings as well as post-conviction and appellate matters designed to ensure quality representation, and
- Partners with other legal service providers and government agencies to assist noncitizens living or detained in Albany County.

## WHO WE SERVE

Our Office assists indigent legal service providers to develop best practices and effective attorney protocol to ensure each provider has an immigration service plan that provides a systematic approach to representing noncitizen clients and remains compliant with Padilla. The immigration service plan will provide, at a minimum, for the timely delivery of accurate advice regarding the immigration consequences of contemplated dispositions in ongoing cases.

In order to determine each provider's ability to provide competent legal advice regarding the immigration consequences of criminal convictions or family court dispositions, our Office will facilitate periodic needs assessments of providers. This Office will also organize and develop Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs with the Albany Law School, the Albany County Bar Association, Immigration Defense Project and other organizations to provide the specialized education and assistance that is required.

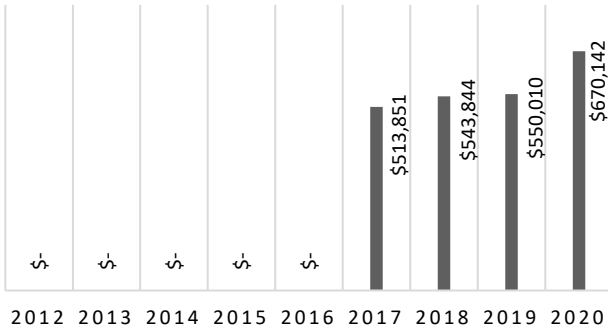
## 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Since the creation of this Office, it has assisted more than 520 individuals from 100 different countries. This Office has conducted more than 150 trainings and appearances at community and legal forums within its designated fourteen-county region. It has also assisted in the representation of several individuals who had valid constitutional claims to vacate prior criminal convictions, which would have otherwise led to the noncitizen's removal from the United States.

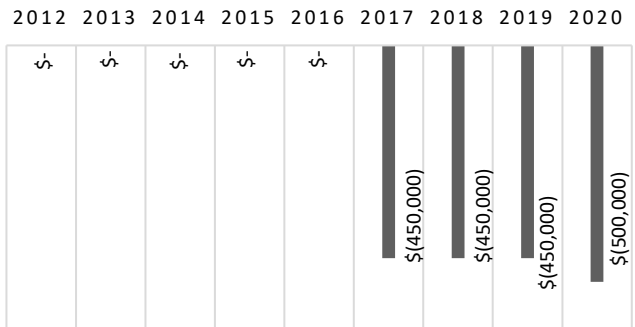
This Office has also been in the forefront of identifying and representing victims of human trafficking in addition to victims of crime and connecting these individuals to services, which assist in providing housing and vocational skills while also helping them navigate the pathway to lawful status.

# OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION ASSISTANCE - 1173

## 1173 - APPROPRIATIONS



## 1173 - REVENUE



### 2020 GOALS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

This Office shall:

- work closely with other indigent legal service providers, bar associations and nonprofit organizations to develop and coordinate regional attorney and judicial trainings and resource materials which address the intersections among criminal, family and immigration law
- improve the legal representation of indigent noncitizens by providing expert legal advice and defense strategies to court-mandated attorneys in assisting their noncitizen clients in making informed choices regarding any adverse immigration consequences which may arise from a family law and/or criminal court proceeding.
- collaborate with ILS and the other five (5) Regional Immigration Assistance Centers to analyze regional trends, collect data, and identify attorney best practices that should be considered for possible replication throughout the State.
- develop a community outreach plan which informs attorneys and noncitizens of the services that it is able to provide while remaining consistent with the constant evolution of immigration policy nationwide.
- assist in the representation of several individuals who have valid constitutional claims to vacate prior criminal convictions which would otherwise lead to the noncitizen's removal from the United States.
- be identify victims of human trafficking in addition to victims of crime and connect these individuals to services which assist in providing housing and vocational skills while also helping them navigate the pathway to lawful status.
- provide assistance to DACA recipients who are seeking guidance.
- assist attorneys whose clients may be targeted by impending ICE raids. (Too much specificity for the budget)
- provide an immigration hotline.
- provide assistance to noncitizens seeking to file applications with the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS).

### SUMMARY OF BUDGET CHANGES

The 2020 Executive budget for the Albany County Office of Immigration Assistance does not include any substantive programmatic changes.