

For Immediate Release

Appleseed Releases Guide to Help Lawyers Navigate Immigration Courts

Guide Comes as Record-Setting Backlog of Immigrant Cases Face Uncertain Future

February 14, 2017 With refugees and other immigrants facing rapidly escalating challenges, the Appleseed Network today released a major new resource to help new and experienced attorneys navigate the complicated U.S. immigration court system and save immigrants from deportation, exile and persecution.

The new Practice Guide, titled “Getting Off the Assembly Line: Overcoming Immigration Court Obstacles in Individual Cases,” is a product of the Immigration Justice Collaboration of Appleseed, a non-profit network of 17 Centers across the U.S. and Mexico, dedicated to advancing justice and opportunities that help low-income people and working families build better lives. Georgia Appleseed is a member of the Appleseed Network.

A record half-million cases are waiting to be heard by U.S. immigration courts, which pose daunting obstacles: the near-absence of formal discovery, the challenges interpreting to and from foreign languages, and minimal out-of-court contact between attorneys, their clients and opposing counsel.

The Guide (www.appleseednetwork.org/immigrationcollaborative) provides an overview of immigration court proceedings, as well as specific sections on working with clients in detention, obtaining client documents from the government, pre-hearing communications with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), dealing with interpretation and videoconferencing challenges and reporting immigration judge and DHS attorney misconduct. The Guide also provides several template and sample documents to assist attorneys in these cases.

“This Guide should help every attorney do a better job in immigration court—and encourage more attorneys to do pro bono representation in these courts,” said Steve Schulman, co-chair of Appleseed’s national board.

The law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP provided pro bono assistance and counsel in the development of the new Practice Guide. This is the latest in a series of immigration-related research and publishing projects on which Akin Gump and Appleseed have collaborated. Previous reports have included *A DREAM Deferred: From DACA to Citizenship* and *Reimagining the Immigration Court Assembly Line*.

For more information and to download the report please visit www.appleseednetwork.org/immigrationcollaborative.

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About Appleseed

A nonprofit network of 17 public interest justice centers in the U.S. and Mexico, Appleseed is dedicated to building a society in which opportunities are genuine, access to justice is universal and equal, and government advances the public interest.