

Leslie Diaz



Our Expert in Immigration Court

With 15 years of experience, Leslie Diaz is our specialist in removal defense, family-based immigration, immigration consequences of criminal offenses, and federal and appellate court litigation. She also has expertise with certain employment-based applications, including National Interest Waivers, EB-1 petitions for extraordinary ability and outstanding professors and researchers and O visas for extraordinary ability in the arts, business and sciences. Leslie has prevailed in immigration courts across the country for clients facing removal and represented many detained individuals in bond proceedings. Additionally, she has extensive experience filing appeals to the Board of Immigration Appeals and federal courts of appeals. Several of her federal appellate court victories have resulted in published decisions, setting new precedents for other courts to follow. Outside of the courtroom, Leslie regularly appears before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and works on consular proceedings abroad, on behalf of foreign nationals seeking family and business-based immigration benefits.

A Natural at Defending Her Clients' Interests

Before joining our firm, Leslie served as a Staff Attorney for the Eleventh Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, where she assisted the appellate judges in analyzing immigration cases. She has also practiced in the areas of criminal and commercial litigation. Leslie received her JD from Emory University School of Law. While in Law School, she interned with the Southern Center for Human Rights and the DeKalb County Public Defender's Office, and participated in the Volunteer Immigration Project in Miami, Florida. Leslie is admitted to practice law in the state of Georgia, as well as the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia and the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Second, Fourth, Ninth and Eleventh Circuits. She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, where she mentors local chapter members and serves on various committees as liaison with the different immigration agencies. She regularly presents on immigration topics and at continuing legal education seminars.

Areas of Expertise in Immigration Law

- Immigration Court representation in removal proceedings and deportation defense
- Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and other immigration appeals
- Federal Court Litigation, including appellate court Petitions for Review and district court Mandamus and Administrative Procedures Act (APA) lawsuits.
- Employment-based permanent residency petitions
- Criminal grounds for removal and inadmissibility
- Securing bonds to release clients from immigration detention
- Cancellation of Removal for LPR and non-LPR
- Asylum – both before USCIS and the immigration court
- U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization
- Family based immigration including I-130, Adjustment of Status and Consular Processing
- EB-1 Extraordinary Ability, Outstanding Researcher
- National Interest Waivers
- U visas for crime victims
- I-601 Waivers of Inadmissibility, and I-601A Provisional Unlawful Presence Waivers
- Removal of Conditions (I-751)
- K-1 and K-2 fiancée visas
- K-3 and K-4 spouse visas
- USCIS interviews
- Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

Professional Leadership

Published Court Decision Victories

- Diallo v. U.S. Attorney General, 596 F.3d 1329 (11th Cir. 2010) - Outcome: Alien suffered past persecution, qualifying him for asylum.
- Montano Cisneros v. U.S. Attorney General, 514 F.3d 1224 (11th Cir. 2008) - Outcome: BIA abused its discretion in denying motion by failing either to follow its own past precedent or to provide reasoned explanation for not doing so, and (2) regulatory limit on motions to reopen in absentia removal orders did not limit aliens to one motion throughout removal proceedings.
- Madu v. U.S. Attorney General, 470 F.3d 1362 (11th Cir. 2006) - Outcome: District court retained habeas jurisdiction to review whether alien is subject to a final order of removal.
- Contreras-Rodriguez v. U.S. Attorney General, 462 F.3d 1314 (11th Cir. 2006) - Outcome: Immigration Court has jurisdiction to reopen removal proceedings for lack of notice of proceedings, even if alien has been physically removed from the United States

Organizational Leadership

- National Lawyers Guild, National Immigration Project, 2011 - present
- American Immigration Lawyers Association, 2006 - present
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (Georgia-Alabama chapter), EOIR Liaison Committee, 2010 - 2012

Professional Publications

"Calling a Fraud a Fraud: Why Congress Should Not Adopt a Uniform Cap on Homestead Exemptions", Emory Bankruptcy Developments Journal, 1999

Professional Lectures

- "Ethics and Professionalism", Spring Professionalism Program, Emory University School of Law, 2016
- "Fundamentals of Removal Defense", AILA Georgia-Alabama Chapter Annual Conference, 2016
- "New Member Mentorship", New Member Mentor Dinner, 2015
- "Eleventh Circuit Update and Strategy Session", American Immigration Lawyers Association Georgia-Alabama Chapter Conference, 2015
- "Strategies in Obtaining Reopening, Reconsideration, and Review of Removal Orders", Georgia-Alabama Chapter Annual Conference, 2013
- "Relief from Removal and Waivers of Inadmissibility", Family Immigration Law, 2013
- "Grounds of Deportability", Family Immigration Law, 2012
- "Victims of Crime Visas and Asylum Law", Immigration Law Fundamentals, 2011

Education

Juris Doctor, Emory University School of Law, 2000
Bachelor of Science in Journalism, University of Florida

Contact

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