



CAIR
CHICAGO



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

CIVIL RIGHTS



WE ARE
RESISTERS
2018
MARCH TO THE POLLS

NÃO!
EXPULSAR O
REGIME FASCISTA
DO TRUMP/PENCE!

DEFEND
EQUALITY

TRUMP
JOB 00-12
U.S.
REV 2010
HTL&R

311

311



CIVIL RIGHTS DEPARTMENT

Our Civil Rights Department handles cases that range from prejudiced gestures to full-blown discrimination. Our clients are Muslims, as well as members from other faith communities who have had Islam imputed upon them. Law Clerks and interns assist our attorneys in several projects that highlight distinct civil rights issues that range from citizenship delays, to securing the rights of Muslims to practice their religion freely in the public sphere, schools, places of employment, prisons, and other institutions.

CIVIL RIGHTS:

Our cases include racial profiling, harassment and bullying in schools and workplaces, citizenship delays, police misconduct, prisoners' rights, and travel discrimination. We are committed to upholding equality and combating discrimination of all forms through negotiation, litigation, education and awareness. We also meet regularly with community partners and government agencies & leaders to advocate against hate and discrimination in our workplaces, schools, and communities.

Every intake is our priority.

CAIR-Chicago's client, a Syrian Muslim man who was politically active against the repressive Syrian regime, obtained approval of his asylum application.

CAIR-Chicago currently has 18 pending asylum applications on behalf of Syrian, Libyan, and Yemeni nationals.

A Muslim woman was verbally assaulted by an employee at a Maytag store when she requested a new oven to replace the damaged one that had been delivered to her.

She was provided a new oven after CAIR-Chicago intervened and sent a letter to Maytag addressing the abuse.

CAIR-Chicago, in conjunction with the law firm Hughes Socol Piers Resnick and Dym, Ltd., files a Federal lawsuit against USCIS and DHS seeking documents related to a secret government vetting program for citizenship applicants from certain Muslim-majority countries.

JANUARY

CAIR-Chicago settles a case involving a Muslim family from Harvey, Illinois, whose son was being mistreated due to racial bias at his school.

CAIR-Chicago worked with the clients and the school to negotiate an apology and a settlement for the client.

CAIR-Chicago's client, a Muslim woman from Pakistan, successfully obtained her United States citizenship and participated in her oath ceremony.

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

CAIR-Chicago's client, a Muslim woman from India, received her United States citizenship and participated in her oath ceremony.

MAY

JUNE

CAIR-Chicago challenges the Dodge County, Wisconsin, Sheriff regarding the denial of Ramadan accommodations for Muslim inmates, in response to a Muslim inmate's complaint that Muslims at Dodge County Detention Facility were not receiving adequate prayer schedules and mealtime adjustments.



Shafaq Vali attends citizenship ceremony after CAIR-Chicago's support.

A YEAR OF PROGRESS

“Citizenship delay continues to be a prominent issue in American Muslim communities with over 65 cases opened in 2018. However, CAIR-Chicago has won 576 cases to date and will continuously strive to resolve as many of these cases as possible.”

Litigation Director, Phil Robertson

CAIR-Chicago presses USCIS regarding the status of its pending asylum cases, a number of which have been pending for over a year after their asylum interview, and a number of which have not been scheduled for an interview despite being filed nearly three years ago.

CAIR-Chicago sends a letter to the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission regarding a Muslim man who experienced discrimination by opposing counsel during a custody hearing, requesting an investigation on the attorney.

CAIR-Chicago files a charge with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on behalf of a Muslim man who was terminated from his job due to his religion.

CAIR-Chicago files a mandamus complaint against USCIS on behalf of client, a Muslim man from Yemen, for a two-year long delay in scheduling his interview.

Following CAIR-Chicago's lawsuit, client attended green card interview and received his green card.

JULY

AUGUST

CAIR-Chicago files an extensive response to a Motion for Summary Judgment filed by Advocate Hospital in a case involving a Muslim pharmacist who was discriminated against at work for a number of years on the basis of his race, religion, and national origin.

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

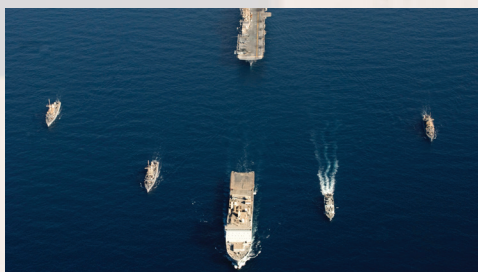
CAIR-Chicago, in conjunction with the ACLU and Chicago law firm Hughes Socol, send a letter to the U.S. Navy requesting an accommodation for a Muslim recruit who wears a beard.

After a few appeals, the Navy granted the accommodation (though with some restrictions).

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

CAIR-Chicago files a charge with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on behalf of a Muslim man who was not provided sufficient religious accommodations by his employer to observe his Jumuah prayer and was instead compelled to quit.



After a few appeals, the Navy granted special accommodation to a Muslim client who had a beard.

2018 CASES BY THE NUMBERS

94
General/
Miscellaneous

48
Employment

33
Prison

20
FBI

16
Criminal

11
Government
Agency
General

117
Immigration

14
School

18
Asylum

5
Hate Crimes

20
Travel

272
TOTAL
CASES CLOSED
IN 2018

396
TOTAL
INTAKES
IN 2018

\$1.62M
NEGOTIATED IN
SETTLEMENTS
FOR CLIENTS

576
CITIZENSHIP CASES
RESOLVED TO DATE AFTER
LONG DELAYS
OR DENIALS



eliminating
empowering women
ywca
evanston/north shore



CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECTS

ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF OUR COMMUNITIES ARE PROTECTED.

CITIZENSHIP DELAY PROJECT



In 2009, USCIS implemented a covert vetting program called the Controlled Application Review and Resolution Program (“CARRP”). This process relies on outdated terrorist databases, uncorroborated information, discriminatory procedures, and social biases against Muslims to invoke arbitrary requirements for the enhanced vetting of immigration-benefit applicants from certain Muslim-majority countries.

Since 2010, CAIR-Chicago has noticed a trend toward pre-textual denials, inordinate delays, redundant requests for interviews and fingerprinting, and generally stricter scrutiny applied to Muslim applicants.

In an effort to learn more about the impact of these programs, in 2017 CAIR-Chicago requested documents and data from USCIS showing processing times and trends for Muslim immigration applicants.

In 2018, CAIR-Chicago filed suit against USCIS to obtain records showing the processing times for certain immigration applications based on country of origin.

CAIR-Chicago also continued to assist community members who experienced long delays in their TPS, green card, employment authorization, and citizenship applications.

HATE CRIMES PROJECT



Communications Coordinators Saadia Pervaiz and Asha Binbek give cultural sensitivity training staff at Aurora Public Library

The Department is routinely contacted by community members who have experienced hate crimes as a result of their religion. In 2017, CAIR-Chicago was instrumental in getting changes enacted to Illinois’ Hate Crime law which were beneficial to community members.

In 2018, CAIR-Chicago worked with a number of Sheriff’s departments and local law enforcement agencies to develop an internal policy for booking and photographing Muslims who wear religious headwear.

CAIR-Chicago also worked with community members who had been the victims of hate crimes to get the proper police reports filed, make sure law enforcement followed up, and address the filing of hate crime charges with State and local prosecutors.

GIVIL PROJECTS RIGHTS



Our projects are initiatives we work on outside of our normal scope of work and range from providing legal assistance to travelers coming into the United States to protecting the First Amendment rights of Muslim prisoners.

PRISON PROJECT

CAIR-Chicago receives reports of Muslim inmate discrimination because of their observance of Ramadan, the denial of Halal dietary accommodations, the loss of religious materials, the denial of prayer accommodations, cases of physical and/or mental abuse and harassment, and other examples of religious discrimination.

CAIR-Chicago tackles these incidents of religious discrimination by notifying the Illinois Department of Corrections, requesting internal policy changes, and seeking cultural sensitivity training for all IDOC staff.

CAIR-Chicago continues to work with the Muslim inmate community in having their grievances timely processed and heard by their respective institutions.



CAIR-Chicago panel on Restorative Justice at our Azima Center.

SCHOOL BULLYING PROJECT

In 2018, CAIR-Chicago continued to be vigilant in monitoring cases of alleged bullying of Muslim students by other students, teachers, and staff.

Cases involved not only abuse at school, but also abuse off school grounds (such as at public places or through social media platforms), and involved indirect bias as well as overt discrimination and threats of violence.

CAIR-Chicago reviewed cases of school bullying occurring at all levels of education, including at universities and specialty schools, and continued to work with local law enforcement and school administrators to address underlying causes and protect the victim from further abuse.



CIVIL

FBI/GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATION PROJECT

2018 saw a steady number of FBI and DHS voluntary interview requests of Muslim community members.

CAIR-Chicago worked with the Agency to address the issues raised or to attend the interview with the community member who was contacted.

CAIR-Chicago filed suit against the Chicago Police Department for the assault and battery of a Muslim woman on a subway platform who was profiled by police officers, and in 2018 a conditional settlement of that lawsuit was negotiated with the City.



Board Member Ahlam Jbara delivers a riveting speech to crowd of over 75,000 people at Keep Families Together March.

ASYLUM & IMMIGRATION PROJECT

Due to the Muslim ban upheld by the Supreme Court, obtaining immigration benefits and non-immigration visas has been nearly impossible for individuals from the five named Muslim-majority countries.

The civil wars in Syria and Yemen, as well as continued political strife in other Muslim countries, lead to an increase in the number of Muslims seeking asylum in the United States in 2018, particularly from Middle Eastern countries.

In 2018, CAIR-Chicago helped these clients complete their applications for asylum, draft an Affidavit which tells their story, prepare a legal

memo in support of their application, assemble a binder of supporting documents and media materials, and get ready for their interview.

The Department also helped them file their applications for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and employment authorization documents (EAD cards).

CAIR-Chicago continues to file lawsuits on behalf of those applicants whose applications have been delayed in processing or have not been acted upon in a reasonable time, including a lawsuit on behalf of its Muslim asylum applicants who have experienced excessively long delays.

RIGHTS PROJECTS

TRAVEL PROJECT

In 2018, a significant portion of the Muslim community continued to experience delays in travel and other travel-related issues, such as detention and prolonged interrogation at border crossings, the seizure of phones and personal computers without authorization, and the summary revocation of visas (unfortunately often resulting in the immediate return or deportation of the traveler).

The Muslim bans upheld by the Supreme Court in 2018 have made it nearly impossible to travel to and from the five designated Muslim-majority countries (Syria, Libya, Iran, Somalia, and Yemen).

However, clients traveling from all other countries in 2018 also found it hard to navigate the ever-changing landscape of international travel and regressive immigration policies.

CAIR-Chicago is working to investigate ways to end the travel double-standard that currently exists, including a potential Federal Court challenge to the No Fly list, as well as legislative efforts to develop a meaningful path to appeal travel complaints filed with DHS, DOT, and CBP.

Additionally, CAIR-Chicago drafted a Travelers' Bill of Rights which provides basic human rights for all travelers, and launched TAP (see next page).

EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

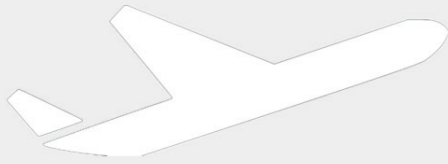
Discrimination against Muslims in the workplace (both private and public) has been a steadily growing trend over the past few years, and 2018 was no different.

CAIR-Chicago assists employees who have been discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, and national origin by preparing their charges to be filed with the EEOC or the IDHR, and representing them in those proceedings.

In 2018, CAIR-Chicago brought actions on behalf of a number of Muslim employees seeking relief for discrimination in the workplace, at the administrative level and also in Federal Court.



CAIR-Chicago client Saleem un-Nissa Begum poses at her citizenship ceremony in April. She is one of many citizenship/asylum cases our office has taken on.



TRAVELER'S

ON THE GROUND, **RIGHT WHEN YOU NEED US.**

778

INDIVIDUALS
WHO'VE REGISTERED
FLIGHTS WITH US

10,000+
ATTORNEY
VOLUNTEER
HOURS

427

VOLUNTEER
ATTORNEYS

1,433
CUPS OF
COFFEE
SERVED

FORMATION

On January 27, President Trump signed Executive Order 13769, commonly known as the travel ban - or Muslim ban - and restricted travel from 7 predominately Muslim countries to the United States. Thousands of protesters rushed to the airport; hundreds of attorneys set up shop in Terminal 5 of O'Hare Airport, writing briefs, petitions, and volunteering long hours to provide support, legal guidance and advice to affected travelers and their loved ones.

IMPACT

This organic movement was seen around the country as lawyers answered the call to protect those most marginalized and disenfranchised and advocate against the injustice executed by the federal government. CAIR-Chicago, realizing that this movement could not remain sustainable, created the Travelers Assistance Project, or TAP, organizing the volunteer attorneys under its umbrella. CAIR-Chicago Executive Director Ahmed Rehab created an online portal where travelers could enter the flight information which was then tracked and followed up on. CAIR-Chicago Deputy Director Sufyan Sohel worked alongside TAP volunteer leads Iman Boundaoui, Jamie Friedland, and Matt Pryor, to organize the attorneys into shifts, provide adequate training, and ensure that there were lawyers present at O'Hare International Airport. The lawyers remained on the ground through Mother's Day, the only airport in the country that maintained a consistent presence for that duration.

To find out more information about the Traveler's Assistance Project, or register your flights with TAP, visit www.tapus.org or call our 24/7 hotline at [+1-872-333-2737](tel:+18723332737)

ASSISTANCE PROJECT

OUR WORK

With the passage of new Muslim Bans & the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the bans, the need for an attorney presence was still critical, so TAP evolved to a 24-hour hotline, staffed by Sohel and a team of volunteer attorneys, which continues to be manned for the foreseeable future. With weekly emails and phone class from detained individuals - from all faiths & nationalities - the TAP team - **2017 Chicagoans of the Year** - continues to serve all those affected by the Muslim Ban.



TAP Coordinators receive
Legal Eagle award

“As a Muslim, an activist, and a lawyer, I find it pertinent to continue defending the rights of those affected by the Muslim Ban. It’s unfortunate that this is happening in America, a country that is proud of its immigrant heritage. We are seeing so many affected - even those from beyond the countries listed by the Bans - students, travelers, refugees, from all around the world. **We will continue to fight and advocate. It’s what we do.**”

Deputy Director Sufyan Sohel

