

Brent Blackaby
Councilmember District 6

REVISED AGENDA MATERIAL for Supplemental Packet 1

Meeting Date: April 29, 2025

Item Number: #21

Item Description: Budget Referral: Deportation Defense Legal and Education Funds

Submitted by: Councilmember Brent Blackaby

Revised the lead agency from the East Bay Sanctuary Covenant to the Multicultural Institute, which has greater experience with contract administration and reporting while also being known for effective immigrant services in the Berkeley community. Attached the Multicultural Institute's Budget Request Allocation, including estimated costs and backgrounds on each of the five (5) immigrant-serving agencies who will share the funds.



Brent Blackaby
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 29, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Blackaby (Author), Councilmember Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor),
Councilmember Tregub (Co-Sponsor), Mayor Ishii (Co-Sponsor)
Subject: Budget Referral: Deportation Defense Legal and Education Funds

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Process an allocation of \$200,000 for Deportation Defense Legal and Education Funds.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$200,000 in FY 2026.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

When President Donald Trump was elected he promised “Mass Deportations.” On his first day of office, President Trump rescinded the Biden Administration’s guidelines to not allow immigration enforcement in or near “sensitive” areas such as schools, hospitals, social service centers and places of worship, unless there are exigent circumstances. Now Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) can enter and deport Berkeley residents at those sites as well as others.

This Budget referral would fund additional legal and educational services to help protect our immigrant communities against the national mass deportation movement. Wait lists for these services are already at 200+ people at our Berkeley-based Immigration Service Providers (Social Justice Collaborative, Oasis Legal Services, Multicultural Institute, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, East Bay Community Law Center). ~~East Bay Sanctuary Covenant~~ Multicultural Institute would distribute the funds among the five agencies for coordinated Legal Consultation and Support for Immigrants, including:

- Legal consultations/screenings
 - 20 min legal consultations/screenings - from trained attorney or DOJ accredited representative
 - Pro-se clinics for I-589 (affirmative asylum)
 - Virtual consultations and screenings
- Legal immigration services and limited scope representation, including limited relief and defensive relief.

- Community legal consultation events
- Know Your Rights (KYR) events
- Support Family Preparedness Preparation Trainings across the schools.
- Coordination with BUSD to implement 1-2 Train the Trainer workshops for all school staff (with follow up support).

The funding would allow our local immigration services agencies to implement urgently needed legal support services for Berkeley residents, demonstrate the City of Berkeley's commitment to protect and defend immigrant communities, and leverage additional funding. County funding recently allocated for emergency legal services is not going to any Berkeley based non-profits.

The City shall enter into a contract with ~~East Bay Sanctuary Covenant~~ Multicultural Institute that requests documentation at six months and 12 months to ensure that funds were used for the purpose for which they were allocated.

East Bay Sanctuary Covenant is currently seeking additional funding for coordinated legal consultation and support for immigrants through a grant from the Vera Institute of Justice SAFE Network catalyst funding of \$100,000, participation in a California Funder briefing on April 17th to leverage additional funds, and partnering with county organizations like Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership.

BACKGROUND

~~East Bay Sanctuary Covenant has been supporting Berkeley's sanctuary movement for over 40 years. They are one of the largest affirmative asylum programs in the U.S. Berkeley has a long history and deep commitment to welcoming and supporting immigrants and refugees and was the first city in the nation to declare itself a City of Refuge in 1971 (Resolution 44,784-N.S.) and has reaffirmed that declaration numerous times with the last on January 21, 2025 (Resolution No. 71,658-N.S.).~~

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with adopting this recommendation.

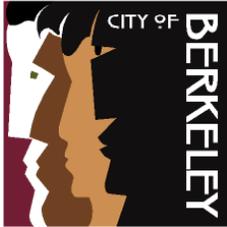
CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Brent Blackaby Council District 6 510-981-7160

Attachments:

1: Clean Copy

2: Multicultural Institute Budget Request Allocation



Brent Blackaby
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 29, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Blackaby (Author), Councilmember Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Tregub (Co-Sponsor), Mayor Ishii (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Budget Referral: Deportation Defense Legal and Education Funds

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Budget Process an allocation of \$200,000 for Deportation Defense Legal and Education Funds.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$200,000 in FY 2026.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

When President Donald Trump was elected he promised “Mass Deportations.” On his first day of office, President Trump rescinded the Biden Administration’s guidelines to not allow immigration enforcement in or near “sensitive” areas such as schools, hospitals, social service centers and places of worship, unless there are exigent circumstances. Now Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) can enter and deport Berkeley residents at those sites as well as others.

This Budget referral would fund additional legal and educational services to help protect our immigrant communities against the national mass deportation movement. Wait lists for these services are already at 200+ people at our Berkeley-based Immigration Service Providers (Social Justice Collaborative, Oasis Legal Services, Multicultural Institute, East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, East Bay Community Law Center). Multicultural Institute would distribute the funds among the five agencies for coordinated Legal Consultation and Support for Immigrants, including:

- Legal consultations/screenings
 - 20 min legal consultations/screenings - from trained attorney or DOJ accredited representative
 - Pro-se clinics for I-589 (affirmative asylum)
 - Virtual consultations and screenings
- Legal immigration services and limited scope representation, including limited relief and defensive relief.

- Community legal consultation events
- Know Your Rights (KYR) events
- Support Family Preparedness Preparation Trainings across the schools.
- Coordination with BUSD to implement 1-2 Train the Trainer workshops for all school staff (with follow up support).

The funding would allow our local immigration services agencies to implement urgently needed legal support services for Berkeley residents, demonstrate the City of Berkeley's commitment to protect and defend immigrant communities, and leverage additional funding. County funding recently allocated for emergency legal services is not going to any Berkeley based non-profits.

The City shall enter into a contract with the Multicultural Institute that requests documentation at six months and 12 months to ensure that funds were used for the purpose for which they were allocated.

East Bay Sanctuary Covenant is currently seeking additional funding for coordinated legal consultation and support for immigrants through a grant from the Vera Institute of Justice SAFE Network catalyst funding of \$100,000, participation in a California Funder briefing on April 17th to leverage additional funds, and partnering with county organizations like Alameda County Immigration Legal and Education Partnership.

BACKGROUND

Berkeley has a long history and deep commitment to welcoming and supporting immigrants and refugees and was the first city in the nation to declare itself a City of Refuge in 1971 (Resolution 44,784-N.S.) and has reaffirmed that declaration numerous times with the last on January 21, 2025 (Resolution No. 71,658-N.S.).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with adopting this recommendation.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Brent Blackaby Council District 6 510-981-7160

Attachments:

- 1: Clean Copy
- 2: Multicultural Institute Budget Request Allocation

City of Berkeley Budget Request Allocation

Date: April 17, 2025

Submitted by: East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, East Bay Community Law Center, Oasis Legal Services, Multicultural Institute, Social Justice Collaborative

Contact: Mirna Cervantes, mirna@mionline.org; Lisa Hoffman, lisa@eastbaysanctuary.org

Total Budget Request: \$200,000

Overview and Need

Immigrants are our neighbors, our friends, and our loved ones. They are a vital part of what makes Berkeley the city it is. The return of the Trump administration has brought renewed and serious threats to immigrant communities. The Berkeley City Council has an opportunity to help make sure that immigrants can access the services they need to stay safe and prevent family separation. This funding meets the urgency of this moment and reflects what it means to invest in protection for our immigrant community.

The model that has seen the most success across the nation is three-pronged (1) educate community members with know your rights (KYR) information, (2) prepare families with emergency preparation plans, and (3) defend immigrants with emergency legal consultations and removal defense representation. Berkeley families are urgently asking for these services from the UC, school district, community colleges, and our organizations.

Local immigrant-serving organizations cannot currently meet this increasing need without additional resources. Our organizations have waitlists up to 6 months long and cannot currently provide these critical services to Berkeley families without city support. If we don't act now, we risk an incalculable loss: the forced departure of valued members of our city, family separation, and increased fear and instability in our community.

Proposal

We're five Berkeley-based, immigrant organizations who are all on the Berkeley Mayor's Sanctuary Task Force. We have been working in a coalition to address the growing need for services and support. This proposal was shaped by the gaps we know exist and informed by models of programs that have proven effective. It reflects the importance of working together in response to the attacks on immigrant communities.

The funding would be divided in an equitable way based on the services provided, the expertise of each organization, and current capacity to carry out legal consultations and representation, KYR train the trainers, family preparation plans, and related work.

The contract administrator would be The Multicultural Institute (MI) (Executive Director: Mirna Cervantes). MI would be responsible for creating Memoranda of Understanding

(MOUs), contracts, invoicing payments, and reporting at 6 and 12 months on impact and numbers served. MI would also be responsible for liaising with the different entities on the Task Force and ensuring that the other legal services organizations are present at the events. With deep roots in the Berkeley community and a track record of effective, equitable service, MI is the ideal administrator to ensure that immigrant families and students receive the support they deserve. MI brings the trust, experience, cultural competency, and administrative capacity essential for leading this immigrant legal services partnership. MI's programs already prioritize community empowerment, advocacy, and access to essential resources, making it a natural fit to lead this initiative. MI will ensure that its legal partners can focus on service provision while it handles coordination, outreach, and logistics.

This amount of money will not allow for the provision of full-scale legal representation for every person in need. However, in our experience, providing a short legal consultation is essential for immigrants to understand their options. We can guide them to available resources, helping them avoid removal proceedings and the need for full scale representation. In some cases, we can assist with Pro-Se asylum applications or other immigration relief that provides an extra layer of protection.

This funding from the City of Berkeley has the potential to leverage an additional \$100,000 in Catalyst funding from the Vera Institute of Justice as part of the SAFE Network. In conjunction with the SAFE Network funding, our organizations would be able to provide representation for some community members who are already in removal proceedings.

Goal

Collaborate with members of the Berkeley Sanctuary Task Force (including BUSD and Berkeley City College) to offer the following services for Berkeley immigrants and institutions to prevent families from being arrested and deported.

- Emergency Legal Consultations (in-person and virtual)
- Know Your Rights Trainings of Trainers
- Family Preparation Plans Trainings of Trainers
- With additional funding from SAFE Network, provide removal defense legal representation (SJC and EBSC).

Estimated Costs for \$200,000 Allocation

- Legal Consultations and Services - \$140,000
 - \$100,000: Required match for the SAFE Network Catalyst Funding to provide removal defense representation for adults and unaccompanied minor youth, pro se asylum clinics, and other services to prevent families from being targeted by ICE and deported.
- Coordination with Berkeley Institutions - \$60,000
 - Support ongoing work with the Task Force (Berkeley City College, BUSD, UC Berkeley, etc.) including Know Your Rights and Family Preparation Plans

Background on each organization

The Multicultural Institute (MI)

Since its inception in 1991, the [Multicultural Institute](#) has worked towards accomplishing its mission of partnering alongside immigrants in their transition from poverty and isolation, to workforce participation and prosperity. Headquartered in West Berkeley, MI operates in the Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Mateo counties serving over 3,000 families in any given year. MI's strategies focus on economic development, vocational skills development, education, health and immigration support. Programs help constituents transcend socio-political and economic inequities by following a holistic approach that benefits their entire family and community networks. These programs ultimately, assist individuals in acquiring the skills needed to improve their lives economically, to contribute and participate in civic life, and improve their overall well-being.

East Bay Sanctuary Covenant (EBSC)

Founded in 1982 and based in Berkeley, [East Bay Sanctuary Covenant](#) (EBSC) provides legal and social services, community organizing, and education to over 12,000 refugees and asylum seekers yearly, helping them achieve legal status, citizenship, and well-being as they overcome extraordinary obstacles. EBSC offers trauma-informed, culturally competent services, including legal assistance, case management, a multilingual hotline, community forums, radio programs, English classes, citizenship preparation classes, cash assistance, arts-based workshops, organizing for policy change, and educational exhibits featuring stories of asylum seekers.

Social Justice Collaborative (SJC)

[Social Justice Collaborative](#) (SJC), founded in 2012 and based in Berkeley, serves immigrant communities. The organization specializes in full-scope removal defense and provides immigration legal services, social services, and impact litigation. Thousands of individuals and families have accessed services at no cost. Clients include asylees, unaccompanied minors, and survivors of violence. SJC attorneys offer expertise to guide practitioners navigating the intersection of immigration and criminal legal systems. SJC holds outreach and information sessions, hosts community pláticas, helps individuals navigate public systems, and connects them with essential resources. Advocacy efforts are carried out in partnership with local and statewide allies and shaped by years of experience providing direct services.

Oasis Legal Services

Founded in 2017, [Oasis Legal Services](#) is a leading service provider to the LGBTQ+ immigrant community and serves over 800 LGBTQ+ immigrants each year. From our offices in Berkeley and Fresno, California, we provide direct legal services and holistic case management to LGBTQ+ immigrants seeking asylum, residency, citizenship, and family reunification. Oasis also provides legal training, mentorship and education to attorneys around the country representing LGBTQ+ asylum seekers. We work with nonprofit partners nationally to support advocacy and litigation efforts to protect the rights of LGBTQ+ immigrants.

East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC)

The [East Bay Community Law Center](#) (EBCLC) is a Berkeley-based organization that is dedicated to advancing justice through expert legal services, impactful policy advocacy and training the next generation of social justice lawyers. Founded over 35 years ago, EBCLC is now one of the largest providers of free legal services to East Bay communities as well as operating as the clinical arm of UC Berkeley's School of Law. EBCLC works to promote justice and build a community that is more secure, productive, and hopeful by providing legal services and policy advocacy responsive to the needs of communities living with low income, and legal training that prepares future attorneys committed to addressing racial and economic injustice and poverty. Our holistic services include the Immigration Program that provides robust legal and social work services to local residents, empowering our immigrant communities to thrive.