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DHS U Visa Law Enforcement Certification Resource Guide

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Posted by Louis F. Quijas, Assistant Secretary for the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement and January Contreras, Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman

Last week, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released the U Visa Law Enforcement Certification Resource Guide ^[2]. This guide is a new tool being made available to law enforcement officials to support investigations and prosecutions involving qualified immigrant victims of crime. Included in the guide is information about U visa requirements, the law enforcement certification process, and answers to frequently asked questions from law enforcement agencies. In a department-wide effort, DHS is providing this guide in response to requests for more guidance from law enforcement officials and domestic violence advocates alike.

In our roles, we hear about the challenges in ensuring that all victims of crime, regardless of immigration status, can step forward to report a crime. Congress created the U nonimmigrant visa specifically to address this with the passage of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (including the Battered Immigrant Women's Protection Act) in October 2000 (TVPA). This legislation strengthened the ability of law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other crimes, while also protecting qualified victims of crimes. In the TVPA, Congress noted one of the reasons for creating the U visa: All women and children who are victims of these crimes committed against them in the United States must be able to report these crimes to law enforcement and fully participate in the investigation of the crimes committed against them and the prosecution of the perpetrators of such crimes.

Along with unprecedented efforts by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to make training and related resources more accessible to state and local law enforcement officials ^[3], and field guidance issued by Immigration Customs and Enforcement ^[4], this Guide is one more part of DHS efforts to support victims and law enforcement through the protections established in the TVPA.

Nonimmigrant Visas:

U Visa ^[5]

Agency:

DHS ^[6]

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[1] <https://immigration.com/news/u-visa/dhs-u-visa-law-enforcement-certification-resource-guide>

[2] <http://www.dhs.gov/files/resources/u-visa-law-enforcement-guide.shtm>

[3]

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=ee1e3e4d77d73>

[4] <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/secure-communities/pdf/domestic-violence.pdf>

[5] <https://immigration.com/visa/nonimmigrant-visas/u-visa>

[6] <https://immigration.com/agencies/agency/dhs>