

# Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

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## **Request for Assistance Regarding Litigation On Inefficiencies That May Delay Immigrant Applications**

Issue: Immigrants seeking legal status, work authorization, and travel documents are often required to submit to security checks of their names, fingerprints or other personal data against data bases maintained by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies. Security clearance process inefficiencies may delay the adjudication of certain immigrant applications. Occasionally, wrongful denials also occur due to inaccuracies and/or inadequate correction mechanisms.

Some examples of security clearance-related inefficiencies that have occurred include:

- duplicative demands for fingerprints;
- inadequate storage of information leading to repeated collection of the same information over time;
- problematic limits on the duration of clearance validity so that rechecking of the same information is required.

Pro bono assistance is needed to augment MLRI's staff resources in order to assist with federal court litigation as well as develop proposals for agency improvements to reduce delays and inefficiencies in the system overall. MLRI's immigration staff attorneys would work on this project as part of a legal team with the pro bono attorney, but our resources are stretched and that is the reason we need to get outside help. We would, of course, coordinate our advocacy with that of our national allies in the immigration law field.