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The Ascend Justice Newsletter • August 2026



In July, members of our immigration team testified in front of Chicago city officials to ask them to enforce Illinois state laws that keep federal agents away from courthouses. Though perhaps not as visible now as they were during the so-called "Midway Blitz" last spring, ICE and Border Patrol agents continue to arrest people in and around courthouses in Chicago, including at the Cook County Domestic Violence Courthouse, and their presence has a chilling effect on the very people who need justice most.

We are especially worried about the safety of abuse survivors. We have had clients decide not to pursue Orders of Protection cases against their abusers because they were afraid of coming to the courthouse. We have seen criminal cases fall apart because immigrant witnesses were too afraid to appear in court. From undocumented survivors to citizens, many of our clients are fearful not only of deportation, but also of the violent ways federal agents arrest people and of the inhumane detention apparatus being built in our country, where people face neglect, torture, and intense pressure to sign away their own rights.

This is not a sustainable justice system. When people stay away from our courts out of fear, we are all less safe. This issue impacts every single person. If you care about immigrant rights and courthouse safety, please consider reaching out to your state and local officials to urge them to keep federal agents away from courthouses.



Modernizing the IDVA

We were thrilled to be part of Governor Pritzker's bill signing ceremony for SB3020 on August 7!

The bill, which Ascend Justice championed, modernizes the Illinois Domestic Violence Act (IDVA) to include digital abuse, like online stalking, harassment, and doxing. The bill also allows people to attend Orders of Protection hearings virtually so survivors can avoid being in the same room as their abuser.

These provisions will make everyone in Illinois safer, and we are thankful that they have now been signed into law.

[Read the public act.](#)

[Read more from Governor Pritzker's press release.](#)

Goodbye Summer Interns!

We are saying goodbye to an amazing class of summer interns this month. We truly work with the best and brightest students whose intelligence, eagerness to learn and help, compassion for our clients, and enthusiasm for this work is infectious. We appreciate everything our interns do for us, and we can't wait to see what's next in their legal careers!

If you or someone you know is interested in interning with us, check out our [Join Our Team](#) page for up-to-date opportunities!



Help Our Clients Get School Ready



BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

Our clients' kids are heading back to school soon, so it's time for a donation drive! We need all the classic school supplies (backpacks, pencils, crayons, etc.), plus snacks and general hygiene items (family size shampoo, conditioner, body scrubs, soap, toothpaste, etc.) because all kids deserve to feel fresh and ready to take on the new school year!

Please take a look at our [wishlist](#) and buy what you can - we need multiples of lots of items, and everything you purchase will be shipped directly to us for distribution to our clients.



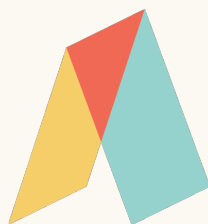
There are so many ways to support us!

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