

DOCUMENT CHECKLIST FOR VAWA SELF-PETITION CASES

CLIENT'S IDENTITY AND IMMIGRATION STATUS:

- ☐ Birth certificate(s) of client and client's children
- ☐ Passport(s) of client and client's children
- ☐ I-94 card(s) of client and client's children, if any
- ☐ All documentation previously submitted to or received from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and/or legacy Immigration and Naturalization Service

EVIDENCE OF ABUSER'S IMMIGRATION STATUS

For U. S. Citizens (USC):

- ☐ Abusive spouse's birth certificate
- ☐ Abusive spouse's naturalization certificate, if any
- ☐ Abusive spouse's passport
- ☐ Abusive spouse's social security card

For Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR):

- ☐ Abusive spouse's Permanent Resident Card ("green card")
- ☐ Any immigration document ever filed by or for the abusive spouse
- ☐ Abusive spouse's alien number
- ☐ Abusive spouse's passport
- ☐ Abusive spouse's Social Security card

If evidence of abuser's status is available, make a formal request on the cover letter that USCIS check abuser's status

QUALIFYING RELATIONSHIP:

Marriage in Good Faith:

Legal marriage/bigamous marriage to USC/LPR:

- ☐ Divorce decree(s), annulment decree(s), or death certificate(s) from prior marriages of both client and abusive spouse (if available)
- ☐ Marriage certificate of client and abusive spouse

Former spouse of USC/LPR

- ☐ Marriage certificate
- ☐ Divorce certificate from current spouse
- ☐ Divorce decree(s), annulment decree(s), or death certificate(s) from prior marriages of both client and abusive spouse (if available)

Widow of USC:

- ☐ Marriage certificate
- ☐ Divorce decree(s), annulment decree(s), or death certificate(s) from prior marriages of both client and abusive spouse (if available)
- ☐ Death certificate of USC spouse

Good faith:

- ☐ Affidavit of client describing how he or she met and came to know the abuser and evolution of relationship
- ☐ Affidavit or letters from family, friends, neighbors, and service providers attesting to good faith marriage and/or joint residence
- ☐ Photographs of client and abusive spouse, including photographs with children or other family members and friends
- ☐ Photographs of wedding ceremony and family events
- ☐ Emergency contact lists at place of employment that lists spouse as contact
- ☐ Birth certificates of children born during marriage
- ☐ Income tax return filings listing both spouses ☐ Proving co-mingling of assets and debts:
- ☐ Proof of joint property interests
- ☐ Joint bank accounts
- ☐ Joint lease agreements
- ☐ Property insurance in both client and abusive spouse's name or listing one as the beneficiary

- ☐ Other insurance documents showing joint ownership or listing one or the other as beneficiary
- ☐ Proof of health insurance showing joint ownership or listing one or the other as beneficiary to the other's account
- ☐ Proof of joint car ownership/insurance or listing one or the other as the beneficiary
- ☐ Rent receipts and utility (gas, electric, water, cable, phone) bills for service received at the marital residence
- ☐ Joint credit card statements
- ☐ Letters, cards, or other communications exchanged between client and abusive spouse, proving courtship
- ☐ Documents evidencing joint residence of self-petitioner and abusive spouse, such as:
 - ☐ Insurance policies
 - ☐ Utility (gas, electric, water, cable, phone), credit card, and other bill
 - ☐ Ownership document
 - ☐ Tax returns Lease agreements, even if one is on the lease and other is permissible resident
 - ☐ Letters from friends, family, or others directed to client and abuser at same address
 - ☐ Client's or children's school or medical records indicating joint residence
 - ☐ Any legal documents related to the couple or their children

PARENTAGE

Parentage by USC or LPR:

- ☐ Birth certificate of client
- ☐ Marriage certificate that created step-parent relationship to client

Parentage of a USC:

- ☐ Birth certificate of abusive USC son or daughter

JOINT RESIDENCE

- ☐ Client affidavit
- ☐ Credit card bills, letters, cards, and any mail addressed to one or both spouses at the address
- ☐ Joint bank accounts listing address

- ☐ Employment records
- ☐ Utility receipts (gas, electric, water, cable, phone)
- ☐ School records
- ☐ Hospital or medical records
- ☐ Leases, deeds, mortgages, rent receipts, letters from landlord, superintendent, or neighbors
- ☐ Insurance policies
- ☐ Affidavits by persons who knew client and/or abusive spouse
- ☐ Any other evidence that establishes that the client and his or her abuser shared a residence

EVIDENCE OF PHYSICAL ABUSE OR EXTREME CRUELTY:

Physical Abuse:

- ☐ Client affidavit
- ☐ Reports from police, judges, and other court officials
- ☐ Reports and affidavits from medical personnel, school officials, clergy, social workers, and other social service agency personnel
- ☐ Orders of protection or other court findings of abuse against abusive spouse
- ☐ Documentation that client sought assistance for abuse, such as record of residence in domestic violence shelter, or participation in domestic violence support group
- ☐ Affidavits from family, friends, or neighbors with knowledge of abuse
- ☐ Report from mental health professional confirming that Client demonstrates sequelae consistent with those of survivors of the kind of domestic violence reported by client

Good Moral Character:

- ☐ Police clearance or state-issued background check from each locality where client has lived for six months or more in the past three years
- ☐ Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) record, if necessary