

JASON D. MARKS, J.D.

Refugee, Asylum & Immigration Expert

Former USCIS Supervisory Refugee Officer | Former Asylum Training Officer | Attorney

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EXPERT PROFILE

Attorney and former USCIS Supervisory Refugee Officer, Asylum Training Officer, Refugee Officer, and Asylum Officer with eleven years of experience inside the U.S. refugee and asylum programs, including a position requiring a Top Secret security clearance.

His experience spans nearly every aspect of USCIS refugee and asylum law, policy, and operations, including asylum and refugee adjudications, affirmative and defensive screening processes, credible and reasonable fear, CAT-related protection issues, interview technique and testimony development, legal-elements analysis, credibility assessment, decision documentation, supervisory review, mandatory bars, TRIG/material support, national-security vetting, CARRP-related issues, overseas refugee processing, and policy implementation.

He also trained hundreds of asylum officers on the full range of affirmative and defensive asylum-related adjudications, including interviewing, testimony development, legal-elements analysis, credibility assessment, decision writing, mandatory bars, and national-security issues. He has also taught legal and civic education in other settings, including university law students in Ukraine, secondary students as a Peace Corps Volunteer, and public-interest/legal audiences.

His public writing and commentary include a [Washington Post op-ed](#), a [New York Times Magazine feature](#) as a named source, multiple quotes in [The New York Times](#) on refugee and asylum policy, and ongoing [Substack essays](#) on asylum, refugee, and immigration policy.

AVAILABLE FOR

- Case consultation and strategic case review
- Case-file review and operational analysis
- Expert declarations and litigation support
- Attorney trainings, CLEs, and law school instruction
- Policy and operational analysis
- Media interviews, background briefings, and commentary

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- U.S. refugee and asylum law, policy, and operations
- Refugee and asylum adjudications
- Affirmative asylum, asylum-related screenings, credible fear, reasonable fear, and CAT-related protection issues
- Country-conditions analysis and use of country-of-origin information
- Refugee and asylum eligibility analysis, including nexus, protected grounds, one-year filing deadline, firm resettlement, and discretionary determinations
- Bars and inadmissibility analysis, including persecutor bar, mandatory bars, criminal and security-related inadmissibility grounds, TRIG/material support, and related factual development
- Asylum and refugee interviewing, testimony development, and credibility assessment
- Legal-elements analysis, officer notes, interview records, and adjudicative reasoning
- USCIS/RAIO forms and case documentation, including I-589, I-590, I-869, I-870, and related records
- Decision writing, assessment structure, and review of officer analysis
- Terrorism-related inadmissibility grounds (TRIG), material-support issues, national-security vetting, FDNS coordination, and CARRP-related issues
- Refugee processing, overseas circuit rides, and supervisory review
- Asylum officer training, mentoring, and quality assurance
- USCIS / RAIO operations, policy implementation, and organizational culture
- Non-refoulement and international protection principles
- Afghan refugee and asylum adjudications

SELECTED EXPERT / LITIGATION SUPPORT EXPERIENCE

Expert Declaration — *E.Q. v. DHS, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, No. 1:25-cv-00791*

Prepared an expert declaration in national asylum litigation challenging the application of mandatory bars at the initial fear-screening stage. The declaration drew on experience as a former USCIS Supervisory Refugee Officer and Asylum Training Officer, including officer training, credible fear practice, refugee and asylum adjudications, mandatory bars, TRIG/material support, and RAIO procedures.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security

Supervisory Refugee Officer / Asylum Training Officer / Refugee Officer / Asylum Officer
September 2014 – October 2025

- Interviewed, adjudicated, reviewed, supervised, and trained officers on thousands of refugee and asylum cases across the full refugee and asylum adjudicative process, including testimony development, credibility assessment, legal-elements analysis, decision writing, supervisory review, officer training, and complex legal and national-security issues.
- Reviewed and supervised refugee adjudications as a Supervisory Refugee Officer, ensuring compliance with legal and procedural standards.
- Co-led a refugee circuit ride to Tanzania processing hundreds of Congolese refugee cases, conducting in-field training for a team of new Refugee Officers and providing supervisory review/sign-off on adjudications.
- Conducted a Dilley, Texas detail involving credible fear interviews and related protection screening work for detained families.
- Served as Asylum Training Officer, designing and delivering training to asylum officers on affirmative asylum adjudications, defensive asylum-related screenings, refugee and asylum law, adjudication procedure, interviewing, legal analysis, written assessments, country-conditions research, credibility, and bars-related issues.
- Adjudicated and reviewed complex Afghan refugee cases related to Operation Allies Welcome and post-evacuation processing, including holistic review of classified and unclassified reporting, national-security vetting, CARRP-related holds and review, TRIG/material-support issues, FDNS coordination, and elevated review requirements.
- Conducted overseas refugee circuit rides and field assignments including Tanzania, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, Turkey (twice), Ukraine (twice), and Nepal.
- Worked on complex national-security, terrorism-related inadmissibility, and material-support issues.
- Served as Chief Union Steward for the Refugee Affairs Division, AFGE, 2017–2020, representing USCIS employees and engaging with senior RAIO leadership during major policy changes.
- Coordinated AFGE amicus briefs in major asylum and refugee policy litigation, including challenges involving the suspension of USRAP, the Migrant Protection Protocols, Asylum Cooperative Agreements, and the third-country transit bar.

U.S. Peace Corps — Ukraine

Peace Corps Volunteer

2011 – 2013

- Served in Cherkasy, Ukraine, working on education, civic education, and community development initiatives.
- Taught English, civic education, and U.S. legal-system courses.
- Served as a visiting law instructor at two local universities.
- Served as a PEPFAR grant coordinator, reviewing Peace Corps Volunteer HIV/AIDS outreach grant applications and implementing an approved community outreach project in Cherkasy.

Southern Center for Human Rights

Capital Defense Investigator

Atlanta, Georgia / 2001 – 2004

- Conducted post-conviction investigations in death-penalty cases in Alabama and Georgia.
- Developed factual records for state and federal habeas litigation, including witness interviews, document review, and case investigation.
- Supported impact litigation exposing systemic failures in indigent defense, prison conditions, and capital punishment systems.
- Investigated claims involving ineffective assistance of counsel, mitigation, prison conditions, and due process violations.

Waters Kraus Paul & Siegel

Associate Attorney

El Segundo, CA / 2009 – 2011

- Represented plaintiffs in asbestos litigation.
- Conducted depositions, motion practice, court appearances, legal research, and trial preparation.
- Drafted briefs and supported litigation strategy.

Kazan, McClain, Satterley & Greenwood

Associate Attorney

Oakland, CA / 2007 – 2008

- Drafted motions and legal memoranda.
- Conducted legal research and case analysis.
- Supported discovery, litigation strategy, and trial preparation.

PUBLIC WRITING, MEDIA, SPEAKING & COMMENTARY

- Featured as a named source in *The New York Times Magazine*.
- Quoted multiple times in *The New York Times*, *Reuters*, and other national and international outlets on refugee and asylum policy.
- Author of ongoing Substack essays on immigration policy, refugee resettlement, asylum law, DHS operations, and the federal workforce.
- Op-Ed, *The Washington Post*: “The U.S. Hired Me to Protect Refugees. Now It Tells Me to Abandon Them.”
- Visiting Law Instructor — Ukraine, 2011–2013
- Guest Speaker — Georgetown University, Institute for the Study of International Migration, January 2020

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor

City University of New York School of Law, 2007
Criminal Defense Clinic

Bachelor of Arts, History

Florida State University, 1999

BAR ADMISSION

State Bar of California
Admitted January 2008