

# HOW TO GET PERMANENT RESIDENCE IF YOUR SPOUSE ABUSES YOU

## DOES YOUR SPOUSE:

Emotionally abuse you, such as insult you or your child at home or in public?

Threaten to deport you or turn you into the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service)?

Control where you go, what you can do, and whom you can see?

Hit, punch, slap, kick, push, or hurt you or your children in any way?

**If your answer to any of these questions is "YES," you and your children may be able to receive:**

Threaten to take your children away or hurt them?

Threaten to beat you and your children or terrorize you and your children?

Force you to have sex when you do not want to?

Permission to work and live in the United States and a green card without your spouse's help

**To qualify under this program you must submit a "VAWA Self-Petition" (also called a "Violence Against Women Act Application").**

## THE REQUIREMENTS TO QUALIFY FOR THIS PROGRAM ARE:

- >> Your spouse must be a United States citizen or must have a green card (that is, be a lawful permanent resident). If he had a green card but has been deported since he abused you, or if you recently divorced him because of the abuse, you may also still qualify.
- >> Your spouse must have abused you or your child during the marriage. You or your child probably were abused if you can answer “Yes” to any of the questions asked on the other side of this flyer.
- >> At some point in time you must have lived with your spouse. It does not matter whether you lived with your spouse in or out of the United States.
- >> You must not have gotten married just to get a green card but instead you must have gotten married in “good faith” (that is, because you really wanted to be married).
- >> You must be currently living in the United States, except under certain circumstances.
- >> Children may also qualify if their United States citizen or lawful permanent resident parent abused them.

## THINGS YOU MUST TRY TO DO:

- >> Keep police, doctor, and other records of the abuse.
- >> Keep all of your immigration documents including a copy of your spouse’s immigration documents.
- >> Keep a copy of any documents that establish your residence with your spouse (bank statements; leases; children’s school records; etc.).
- >> Keep a copy of any documents that establish that you live in the United States.
- >> Keep a copy of other important legal documents (marriage license; prior divorce certificates; birth certificates; etc.).
- >> Do not submit an immigration application on your own without first speaking with a lawyer or someone at a community agency who is an expert in immigration law.



Please call CRIS’ Legal Services Program for information and assistance  
614.235.5747 or visit 3624 Bexvie Avenue, Columbus, OH 43227 on Tuesday or Thursday  
● 9:00am - 11:00am ● 1:00pm - 3:00pm ● 4:00pm - 7:00pm ●