U.S. Department of Justice

Executive Office for Immigration Review

Office of the Chief Immigration Judge

5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2500
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

January 2008

The Immigration Court Practice Manual

In 2006, the Attorney General instructed the Director of the Executive Office for Immigration Review, in consultation with the Immigration Judges, to issue a practice manual for the parties who appear before the Immigration Courts. This directive arose out of the public's desire for greater uniformity in Immigration Court procedures and a call for the Immigration Courts to implement their "best practices" nationwide.

Accordingly, the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge is pleased to announce the release of the Immigration Court Practice Manual. The Practice Manual is a comprehensive guide that sets forth uniform procedures, recommendations, and requirements for practice before the Immigration Courts. The requirements set forth in this manual are binding on the parties who appear before the Immigration Courts, unless the Immigration Judge directs otherwise in a particular case. The Practice Manual does not limit the discretion of Immigration Judges to act in accordance with law and regulation.

In order to provide the public an opportunity to become familiar with the Immigration Court Practice Manual, it will not go into effect until April 1, 2008. Beginning on that date, Local Operating Procedures will no longer be used, and parties will be expected to follow the Practice Manual.

The Immigration Court Practice Manual has been printed in looseleaf format to allow for easy revision and updating by the user through the Internet. The Practice Manual is intended to be a "living document," and the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge will update it in response to changes in law and policy, as well as in response to comments by the parties using it. We welcome suggestions and encourage the public to provide comments, to identify errors or ambiguities in the text, and to propose revisions. Information regarding where to send your correspondence is included in Chapter 13 of the Practice Manual.

Following this printing and distribution, the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge will make the Immigration Court Practice Manual available through the EOIR website at www.usdoj.gov/eoir. We encourage you to share the Practice Manual with any individuals or organizations that may benefit from it.

Chief Immigration Judge