THE DIOCESE OF CHURCHES FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

C4SO Policy on Immigration Assistance

Jesus taught us to love the immigrant and care for the poor. We hold this desire to love and serve immigrants in tension with the current laws and processes required by governments who determine the ways people come and go around the globe. Currently the complexities of immigration policy are beyond the organizational scope of the Diocese of C4SO, as helping a clergy or church staff person with their immigration process requires funding attorneys, assuming long-term liabilities, and managing ongoing governmental reporting. If a clergy or staff person requests that your church or the diocese assist them with their immigration process, please refer to the guidelines below.

- The diocese will not support or assist an immigrant in obtaining visas for themselves or others in their families. The diocese will not provide funding or grants to local churches for this purpose.

- An individual C4SO church may petition the diocese to assist an immigrant in obtaining a visa if:

    - The church documents a real need for the person to be employed at the church and provides a full-time job description and salary schedule.
    - The church shows proof that the *position* for which the person has been hired has been discussed previously, as in board meeting minutes.
    - The church has previously filed for determination to be recognized as tax exempt.
    - The church financially accepts the cost of hiring an experienced **immigration attorney** for the duration of the person's time in the United States. The church hires the attorney to carefully walk through the process with them, including completing all paperwork, before anything is signed or agreed upon.
    - The church must document each meeting and ask the church leadership and vestry to approve the proceedings.

If a local church meets the above criteria, they may petition C4SO asking permission to assist an immigrant with their visa. When the letter of petition is received with the accompanying documentation listed above, the Bishop, the Chancellor and church leadership will meet. The Bishop and the Chancellor will make a determination within 90 days of that meeting date.