

National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights *(NCIWR)*

Guiding Principles

The *National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights* (NCIWR) is comprised of grassroots and advocacy organizations nationwide. We defend and promote equality for all immigrant women and their families living and working in the United States. We integrate human rights principles into our work and believe that immigrant rights are women's rights. NCIWR advocates at the national, state and local levels for comprehensive immigration reform, fair and non-discriminatory implementation of our immigration and enforcement policies, and reproductive and economic justice for immigrant women.

Equality for immigrant women can only be attained when immigrant women can live free from discrimination, oppression and violence in all their forms. We believe it is imperative that organizations advocating for comprehensive immigration reform also support fair and just immigration policies that protect the rights of immigrant women. The fate of millions of immigrant women's lives is at stake and we can no longer afford to remain silent.

Therefore, we, the undersigned organizations, support the following NCIWR principles in advocating for fair and comprehensive immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship and protection for all immigrant women:

NCIWR promotes an **equitable immigration policy** that provides:

- **Legal and safe immigration options** for undocumented men, women and children. Immigrant women must be free of mental, physical and emotional violence at the hands of traffickers, smugglers, intimate partners, employers, family members and others who exploit immigrant women's legal and economic vulnerability. Our immigration and criminal justice systems must ensure that immigrant women and their children are protected from gender-based violence, and must not perpetrate the cycle of violence by failing to provide adequate remedial measures that promote their safety and physical integrity.
- **A path to citizenship** that allows immigrant women to obtain work permits, to travel internationally and access higher education and federal financial aid. Immigrant women must have viable options that will permit them to be full contributors in the U.S. economic and societal landscape.
- **Legal channels** for immigrant women workers to fill future U.S. jobs.
- **Protection for all immigrant women workers** from exploitation and abuse in the workplace by providing fair wages and safe working conditions.
- **A reduction in the family and employment based immigration backlogs** that contribute to separation of immigrant women from their children, families and communities.
- A family-based immigration policy that **respects the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender immigrants and same-sex partners.**
- **An end to discriminatory, militaristic and inhumane immigration enforcement practices** that destroy the families, homes and communities of immigrant women

NCIWR promotes **reproductive justice** for immigrant women by advocating for:

- **Universal health coverage** that provides adequate health services and care for all immigrant women regardless of legal and economic status.
- **Reproductive health care coverage** financed through public funds provided to all immigrant women regardless of legal and economic status.
- **The repeal of all federal and state level restrictions on access to reproductive health services** by immigrant women and their children.
- **Social services for survivors** of domestic violence, sexual assault and trafficking.
- Equitable access to non-employment based **public benefits** for all immigrant women.
- Equitable access to confidential and non-coercive **family planning** services and **contraceptive equity**.
- Equitable access to **linguistically, culturally competent, and medically accurate** reproductive health care services.
- Equitable access to **comprehensive sex and sexuality education**.
- **Technical and training support** to service providers, attorneys, community advocates, and other professionals (both governmental and non-governmental) working with immigrant women at the local, state, federal, and international levels.

NCIWR promotes **economic justice** for all immigrant women by advocating for:

- **Fair and just trade agreements** that respect the resources--natural and human--of foreign nations.
- **Equitable access to jobs** with equal pay and benefits including health insurance, affordable child care, sick days, maternity and family leave, credit, insurance, pensions, fringe benefits, and Social Security.
- The **elimination of punitive federal and state government policies** that target immigrant women based on immigration or documentation status.
- **Ending the various forms of violence and oppression** perpetuated against immigrant women in the workplace, including physical, emotional, sexual, and institutional abuse.
- **Increasing public awareness**, education, and understanding of the fundamental and pivotal role immigrant women play in the familial, cultural and social spheres of every person residing in the United States.
- **Sharing best employment practices** throughout the network locally, nationally, and globally.
- The **elimination of all forms of human trafficking** through a survivor-centered advocacy model that opposes all forms of exploitation.

Steering Committee

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Organization for Women

National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights

Operating Principles

VISION

The members of the National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights (NCIWR) recognize that a gender perspective must be included in the immigration debate.

Led by the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (NLIRH) and National Organization for Women (NOW), the National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights seeks to defend and promote equality for immigrant women, and ensure that they are able to live free from discrimination, oppression and violence in all their forms.

MISSION

NCIWR advocates for fair, comprehensive and non-discriminatory approaches to immigration reform and policies that promote equality, reproductive justice, and economic justice for immigrant women.

NCIWR GOALS

Advance collective action and provide a forum for policy and grassroots organizations to bring their collective voices together on issues impacting the lives of immigrant women, their children and their communities via research, legislation and grassroots advocacy.

Build a base of grassroots organizations that take action for the rights of immigrant women, their children and their communities. Support individual member efforts on issues, legislation and campaigns that would positively impact the lives of immigrant women and their children.

Build the capacity of ally organizations to educate and mobilize their constituencies about the lives of immigrant women through action, legislation, media, education and public awareness, and fundraising.

Provide leadership within the immigrant and women's rights movements that offers a race and gender perspective, and is action oriented.

Expand debate and continue the discussion on the manifold issues impacting the lives of immigrant women.

VALUES GUIDING OUR WORK

Work collectively by:

- Sharing responsibility, resources, information and credit
- Respecting each other's time and ideas
- Active participation and communication from all steering committee members

Be transparent and create accountability by:

- Building relationships with member organizations and other social justice coalitions
- Communicating clearly and regularly with members and ally organizations

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- Implementing tools that measure outcomes and periodic evaluation

Elevate the visibility of immigrant women by:

- Involving national, state and local immigrant and women's rights organizations and activists
- Educating policymakers, ally organizations, and grassroots constituencies about the issues that affect immigrant women
- Building nation-wide, grassroots support for immigration policies that are fair, just, and embody NCIWR principles

STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING

The Coalition is a multi-organizational effort that is headed by a steering committee. The steering committee has two co-chairs, currently NAPAWF and NLIRH, and is composed of no more than five woman-centered organizations. NCIWR's three founding organizations, NLIRH, NAPAWF, and NOW will remain permanent members of the steering committee. The steering committee communicates by conference call on a bi-weekly basis, and face-to-face on an as-needed basis.

The steering committee reserves the right to extend, retract, or exclude membership to interested parties based on alignment to the guiding principles, values, and activities of the Coalition. The steering committee also reserves the right to represent the Coalition at meetings, conferences, media interviews, and Congressional office visits.

The Coalition has five subcommittees, each headed by one or more steering committee members:

- Action (NOW)
- Advocacy (NLIRH/NAPAWF)
- Media and Public Relations (NLIRH/NOW)
- Education and Outreach (NAPAWF/NLIRH)
- General Administration (NLIRH/NAPAWF)

Decision-making takes place on the steering committee level, where steering committee members operate by consensus. The steering committee welcomes input from Coalition members, and strives to maintain mutual dialogue with all participants. **However, given the nature of policy work and the short time organizations sometimes have to respond to federal or state activities, the steering committee reserves the right to implement a plan of action without feedback from Coalition members.**

JOINING AND LEAVING THE COALITION

Organizations interested in becoming members of the Coalition must first review NCIWR's Guiding Principles, Legislative and Campaign Objectives and Goals, and Operating Principles, and then indicate its wish to join the Coalition by completing and submitting the membership form to one or both co-chairs. The form indicates that the organization agrees with the Coalition's Guiding Principles, Legislative and Campaign Objectives and Goals, and the Operating Principles. The co-chairs will confirm receipt of the form and notify the organization of its membership status upon approval by the steering committee.

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General Coalition members may withdraw from the Coalition at any time provided the co-chairs receive written notice of the member's intent to withdraw. Members are encouraged to provide the steering committee with a short written explanation for the withdrawal. However, such feedback is not mandatory.

Steering committee members may also withdraw from the steering committee and the Coalition provided the member organization gives written notice of its intent to withdraw at least 10 business days prior to the effective date of withdrawal. The withdrawing member must also agree to participate in an exit interview with the remaining steering committee members, and must work with the Committee to develop a communications strategy regarding the withdrawal..

COMMUNICATIONS

All documents produced by the steering committee will be issued on NCIWR letterhead. Coalition members may distribute or post such documents on their organization's website and listserv as long as the document remains unaltered and on NCIWR letterhead. NCIWR steering committee members may also speak on behalf of the Coalition during media inquiries and interviews.

Coalition members are encouraged to sign-on to letters produced by the steering committee. To sign-on to a NCIWR letter, members must notify a steering committee member in writing before the deadline for the sign-on process has passed. Members that have signed-on to a NCIWR letter will receive a copy of the final letter.

On occasion, steering committee members may issue statements regarding particular legislative bills or government activities. Such statements will not undergo the usual sign-on process, but will be subject to a notice and comment period where NCIWR members are encouraged to review and submit comments about the statement to the steering committee. The steering committee will carefully consider member comments and make every effort to incorporate the perspectives of each contributing member. However, the steering committee reserves the right to maintain sole discretion over the statement's final content.

FUNDRAISING

As co-chairs of the Coalition, NAPAWF and NLIRH, are seeking funding to support the coordination efforts of the NCIWR. The co-chairs will develop a budget and a fundraising plan, and will seek input from steering committee members.

The steering committee is committed to maintaining transparency in all its fundraising activities. Thus, the steering committee will keep the Coalition informed of all fundraising activities and strives to complement, and not to compete, with its members for funding. NLIRH is the fiscal sponsor and will provide stipends to offset costs relating to Coalition activities reasonably incurred by steering committee members or member groups.

STEERING COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Steering committee members have:

- Reviewed and adopted NCIWR's mission, guiding principles, goals, and values

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- Agreed to the operating principles outlined above, including decision-making and fundraising structure
- Discussed and agreed on subcommittee and role assignments
- Committed staff and resources to the Coalition
- Agreed to share credit and responsibility for NCIWR outcomes

Steering committee members will:

- Be on time and attend every meeting
- Keep communications confidential among steering committee members
- Develop a well thought out action plan, and modify the plan as needed
- Continue to invest resources and time
- Demonstrate a cooperative spirit and check-in with one another
- Build relationships with Coalition members and ally organizations
- Make a good faith effort to engage Coalition members in the decision-making process

NCIWR MEMBER GUIDELINES

- NCIWR seeks a diverse membership that includes organizations based on racial/ethnic identity, gender identity, religious affiliation, geography, and issue focus.
- Membership in the Coalition is voluntary and without dues or fees.
- Members agree to the Coalition's mission, values, and operating principles.
- Members acknowledge that steering committee members may represent the Coalition at meetings, conferences, media interviews, Congressional office visits, etc.
- Members agree to actively participate in at least one Coalition subcommittee.
- Members will make a good faith effort to participate in NCIWR calls and activities.

Updated October 2007

National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights

(NCIWR)

2007-2008 Legislative and Campaign Objectives and Goals

The members of NCIWR recognize that the needs and rights of immigrant women and children are often overlooked and under-played. We assert that a gender perspective must be incorporated into the immigration debate, and the opportunity for taking action on behalf of immigrant women and children is now. NCIWR, in the 2007-2008 Congressional legislative session and campaign debates, hopes to accomplish the following:

- 1) **Bring together** diverse feminist and progressive organizations that directly and indirectly work on issues impacting the lives of immigrant women, and collectively work on a shared agenda.
- 2) **Issue statements**, write to policy decision makers, talk to the media and provide analyses, public education and trainings that incorporate, identify and demand just and equitable treatment of immigrant girls and women.
- 3) **Organize** member organizations and supporters to demand that Congress call for a **moratorium on immigration raids** which are destroying families, creating an environment of racial and ethnic profiling and adversely affecting the right to legal and health access of immigrant women.
- 4) **Launch** the *Immigrant Women's Liberation Campaign: Defending and Protecting the Human Rights of Detained Immigrant Women and Children*, to bring to light the abusive and inhumane treatment of immigrant women and children during immigration raids and detained in intolerable and prison-like detention facilities.
- 5) **Promote** the passage of the Legal Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act and other proactive health policy legislation that will address the health needs and concerns of immigrant women and children.

Contact Information: Please contact Aishia Glasford at aishia@latinainstitute.org or 212-422-2553 if your organization is interested in joining or if you have any questions about the Coalition.

Steering Committee

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Organization for Women

National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights

Coalition Membership Agreement

Date:

Organization's Name:

Address:

City/State:

Telephone:

Website:

Contact Person:

Title:

Office Phone (direct line or extension):

Cell:

Email:

My organization is committed to advancing equality and human rights for all immigrant women, children and communities. We support the goals of the NCIWR that are stated in the Guiding and Operating Principles. I and my colleagues are aware of, have read and agree to the principles espoused in the following documents:

- NCIWR Guiding Principles
- NCIWR Operating Principles

We understand that the steering committee encourages and welcomes member input, manages and funds the Coalition, operates on a consensus model and represents the Coalition in statements, with Congress, at conferences and other coalition meetings and media appearances.

We understand that membership in the Coalition is voluntary, and that we will provide written notice to the NCIWR co-chairs if we intend to withdraw. We will alert other organizations about possible membership in the Coalition, provided that they are aware of and support NCIWR principles.

We pledge to promote and support fair and just immigration policies that will bring dignity and respect to the millions of hardworking immigrants in our country. We understand that the Coalition will focus on ending violence against immigrant women and families and promote reproductive justice, economic justice and equality under the law. To that end, we will make a good faith effort to respond to the Steering Committee's calls for action and participate in Coalition calls, activities and the following subcommittee:

- Action
- Advocacy
- Media and Public Relations
- Education and Outreach

Signature: _____

(if different than the contact person listed above, please fill out the following)

Title:

Email:

Phone:

Please return signed agreement to Aishia Glasford:

Email: aishia@latinainstitute.org **Fax:** 212-422-2556 **Postal Mail:** 50 Broad Street, Ste 1825, N.Y., N.Y. 10004

Steering Committee Signature _____

Date received _____