



SERVING LGBT+ ASYLEES: LEGAL & SOCIAL SERVICES SUPPORT

PRESENTED BY ARI JONES, RESIDENCY & NATURALIZATION PROGRAM MANAGER

Pronouns They/Them



oasis
LEGAL SERVICES™

Est. 2017



Oasis Legal Services: An Introduction

- **Our mission:** Oasis Legal Services proudly provides quality legal immigration services to under-represented low-income groups with a focus on LGBT+ communities. By acknowledging, respecting, and honoring their struggles, we empower immigrants so that dignity grows and integrity blooms.
- We are a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization providing comprehensive legal services to assist LGBTQIA+ immigrants:
 - Screening for immigration relief
 - Affirmative asylum & VAWA applications
 - Residency (limited to LGBTQ asylees)
 - Citizenship (limited to LGBTQ asylees)
 - Family petitions (limited to existing clients)

Limited Case Management



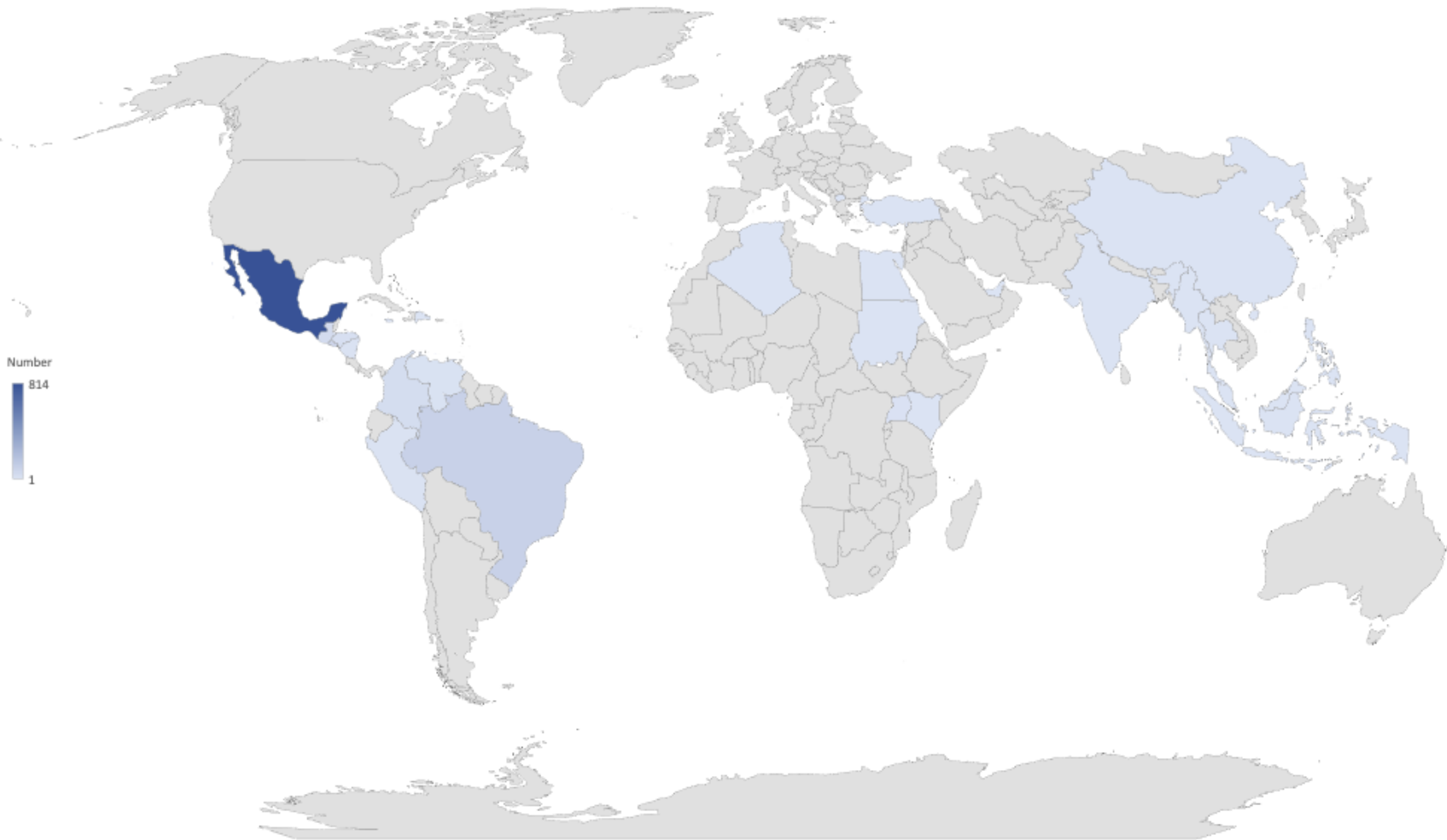
The Process:
Milestone Meetings
Surveys
Resource Gathering
Referrals
Follow up



Our Clients

- Approximately 10,000 undocumented LGBT+ people living in the Bay Area
- Living anywhere served by the San Francisco Asylum Office
- Speak English, Spanish, and Portuguese
- Countries of Origin —

Oasis Asylum Clients by Country of Origin



Clients' County of Residence

- Current and former clients are currently living in 11 states & 45 counties
- **Top 10 counties of residence:**
 1. Santa Clara 18%
 2. Alameda 18%
 3. San Francisco 11%
 4. Contra Costa 11%
 5. San Mateo 8%
 6. Sacramento 5%
 7. Fresno 4%
 8. Sonoma 3%
 9. Stanislaus 3%
 10. Tied at 2%: San Joaquin, Solano, and Monterey

Program Accomplishments



Served over 700 clients in 2021
(121 new asylum cases)



Won 108 residency
& 48 naturalization cases



99% success rate
for asylum cases

A vibrant rainbow flag with horizontal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, waving in the wind. The text is overlaid on the green and blue stripes.

LGBT+ Case Management

WHY OASIS FOCUSES ON LGBT+ ASYLEES?

Barriers for LGBT+ Asylees

Legal Issues

- One-year-bar
- Proving sexual orientation and/or gender identity



Social Issues

- Isolation from immigrant community
- Past and ongoing trauma
- Difficulty self-affirming or coming out

Mental Health Issues

- PTSD, anxiety, depression
- Telling story is re-traumatizing
- Difficulty trusting authority & seeking help

Primary Needs

WHAT ARE CLIENTS
REQUESTING HELP WITH?

Support for Job Training/Job Search

Accessing English Classes

Signing up for Health Insurance

Enrolling in Public Assistance

Finding Affordable Housing



Referrals accepted

CURRENT CAPACITY & REFERRAL PROCESS

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Cases accepted generally

General requirements:

- Client is LGBTQ+
- Not currently in removal proceedings
- Lives within jurisdiction of San Francisco Asylum Office

Special Legal Issues:

- Not previously deported
- Did not just exceed one year within the U.S. since last entry

Grants for free asylum representation

- Residents of Santa Clara County
- Applicants who are HIV+
- California residents making 200% of Federal Poverty Level (limited availability)

Note: We do received funding to provide free representation for SMC residents, but no one will be turned away for inability to pay.

Referral process

- Call 510-666-6687
- Email legal@oasislegalservices.org
- Fill out “Get Help” form on our website:
 - English: <https://www.oasislegalservices.org/get-help>
 - Spanish: <https://www.oasislegalservices.org/obtenga-ayuda>

Questions?

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