

Contact Us

Please contact us if you would like to attend one of our free legal clinics or seminars, require a legal referral, or you need help with an employment dispute.

Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)

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About AALDEF

Founded in 1974, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) is a national organization that protects and promotes the civil rights of Asian Americans. By combining litigation, advocacy, education, and organizing, AALDEF works with Asian American communities across the country to secure human rights for all.

AALDEF focuses on critical issues affecting Asian Americans, including:

- Immigrant rights,
- Civic participation and voting rights,
- Economic justice for workers,
- Language access to services,
- Census policy,
- Affirmative action,
- Youth rights and educational equity, and
- The elimination of anti-Asian violence, police misconduct, and human trafficking.

AALDEF welcomes all forms of support for its ongoing activities.



**Defending the civil rights of Asian
Americans since 1974**

New Jersey Asian American Legal Project



**Asian American Legal Defense
and Education Fund
(AALDEF)**

About the NJ-Asian American Legal Project

The New Jersey Asian American Legal Project (NJ-AALP) is an initiative of the Asian American American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) to address the legal needs and civil rights concerns of the burgeoning Asian American community in New Jersey.

Although there are close to 700,000 Asian Americans living in New Jersey, few resources are available to assist them in overcoming the cultural and linguistic obstacles they face when accessing legal services.

Many Asian Americans are unable to obtain legal help because they either do not speak English well or encounter cultural barriers that discourage them from doing so. Moreover, many Asian Americans are unaware of their legal rights and responsibilities under U.S. law. And those who are aware often do not exercise their rights due to fear of how it would affect their immigration status, their jobs, or their families. Undocumented workers can be especially vulnerable because of their employers' express or implied threats to report them to authorities if they complain about workplace violations. Despite this, there are few community resources available in the state to assist Asian Americans with their legal needs.

NJ-AALP seeks to address this gap in legal services by providing community education and serving as a bridge to the legal system.

Know Your Rights!

WORKERS RIGHTS

You are protected by most **labor laws**— **regardless** of your **immigration status**.

You must be paid at least the NJ minimum wage of **\$7.25/hr**.

If you work **more than 40 hours** in any week, you are entitled to **1.5 times** your regular pay.

It is **illegal** for an employer to **discriminate** against anyone because that person is Asian, a woman, or because of their religion or national origin.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Most workers are protected by **NJ's unemployment benefits program**, which serves as insurance to support workers who are unemployed and looking for work.

In order to be eligible for unemployment benefits, you must have either (1) worked **at least 20 "base weeks"** in which you earned more than **\$143** each week OR (2) earned **at least \$7,300** in a **52-week "base year"** period.

The amount of benefits you receive each week is about **60 percent of your average wage** during your employment. In 2010, you may receive up to **\$600** per week in benefits.

Your eligibility for these benefits also depends on the **reason you left your job**. For example, you are likely to get benefits for being laid off, but **NOT** if you quit your job without a good work-related reason or are fired for committing a crime at work.

Project Services

Free Legal Clinics

We offer monthly legal clinics, providing **free legal advice** on issues of **employment or immigration**.

Community Education

We conduct **education workshops and "Know Your Rights" trainings** to inform and educate Asian Americans about their basic legal rights.

Legal Referrals

We provide and facilitate **legal referrals** to local attorneys and legal service providers who can communicate with you in your own language.

Legal Representation

We provide **legal representation** for **employment claims** such as **unpaid wage/hour claims**, and **hazardous conditions** to low-wage Asian American workers.

Community Organizing

We will help you and your co-workers **fight against your employer** to win any wages you are owed, and **improve conditions at your job**.

Policy Advocacy

We will help you **advocate for better state laws and local policies**, such as improved language access at government offices. This advocacy can lead to greater information and services for the Asian American community