

**PRESS RELEASE
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**NEW COALITION OF COMMUNITY AND LEGAL GROUPS LAUNCHED TO PROTECT
IMMIGRANT WORKERS**

LOS ANGELES - Amid growing anti-immigrant and anti-refugee rhetoric, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA) and the Wage Justice Center are launching a new coalition to protect the rights of vulnerable and low-wage immigrant workers.

The Immigrant Workplace Justice Coalition (“Coalition”) will focus its work on east Los Angeles County, including the greater San Gabriel Valley, and is composed of nine community organizations, legal service groups, and worker centers: Advancing Justice-LA, Asian Youth Center, California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative, CLEAN Carwash Campaign, Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance, National Day Laborer Network, Pilipino Workers Center, Restaurant Opportunities Center - Los Angeles, and Wage Justice Center.

Immigrants comprise more than one-third of residents in Los Angeles County and nearly half of the labor force. Asians and Latinos make up the majority of the San Gabriel Valley; more than 500,000 Asian Americans and 700,000 Latinos live there, most are first generation immigrants. A large portion of immigrants in the region work in agriculture, repair and personal services, and manufacturing industries. Despite this fact, legal and community resources to serve immigrant workers have been scarce.

With reports of immigration raids occurring in workplaces, such as [the recent raids of Asian restaurants in Mississippi](#), in which over 50 immigrants were detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, it is now more important than ever for low-wage, immigrant workers to not only know their rights as employees, but to know their rights as immigrants as well.

“According to a community needs assessment that we recently conducted in the San Gabriel Valley among low-wage immigrant Chinese workers, the number one reason why workers do not demand better treatment at work is because they do not know their rights as employees,” said Nicole Gon Ochi, supervising attorney at Advancing Justice-LA. “Workers also stay silent because they fear retaliation or not being able to secure another job. Immigrant workers are particularly vulnerable because their status is often tied to their employer

and their employment options are relatively narrow if they do not have work papers. Through our coalition, we will invest significant resources into East Los Angeles County region to educate immigrant workers about their workplace rights and provide them with the tools to enforce their rights regardless of status, which has never been more crucial than it is today.”

In 2017, the Coalition will conduct 15 trainings for low-wage workers and three trainings for small business owners across east Los Angeles County and the San Gabriel Valley. The first workshop, targeted at workers, is Sunday, March 12 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm at the Asian Youth Center. This workshop will address workplace rights as well as immigration issues.

For more information about presentations and clinics, contact one of Advancing Justice-LA’s helplines:

888-349-9695 (English)
800-520-2356 (Chinese)
800-267-7395 (Vietnamese)
855-300-2552 (Tagalog)
800-867-3640 (Korean)
855-300-2552 (Thai)
800-867-3126 (Khmer)

Spanish-speaking callers may reach the Wage Justice Center at 213-294-2622.



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Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles (Advancing Justice-LA) is the nation’s largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (NHPI). Through direct services, impact litigation, policy advocacy, leadership development, and capacity building, Advancing Justice-LA focuses on the most vulnerable members of Asian American and NHPI communities while also building a strong voice for civil rights and social justice.