

Firm News | February 14, 2025

Troutman Pepper Locke Helps Secure Asylum for Pro Bono Clients

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BOSTON – Troutman Pepper Locke recently secured asylum for a family of three from Honduras, who had fled gang violence and endured the challenges of the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) program in Mexico. The family, consisting of a married couple and their minor daughter, initially applied for asylum on their own but faced multiple legal hurdles before Troutman Pepper Locke took on their case.

The family's asylum claims were initially denied by an immigration judge due to the third-country transit ban, which precluded immigrants from securing asylum in the U.S. if they had traveled through another country and not sought asylum protections there. In 2020, Troutman Pepper Locke associate [Christine Emello](#) took on the case for an appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals, which was also denied. However, with the termination of the MPP program, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agreed to reopen many cases, including those of the mother and daughter. The father's case remained closed as he had gone missing in Matamoros, Mexico, a region known for its extreme dangers.

In 2021, the mother and daughter's case was reopened and moved from Texas to Massachusetts. About a year later, the father reappeared in Texas after being kidnapped and released upon paying a ransom. Troutman Pepper Locke then moved to reopen his case and transfer it to Massachusetts.

Emello worked diligently to address the legal complexities. The family's asylum claims were reconsidered by a new immigration judge in Boston after the third-country transit ban law changed. In July 2024, the judge verbally indicated an intention to grant asylum, and a formal decision was provided in September. However, due to DHS' determination that there were no biometrics on file, the case had to be reopened. The clients completed their biometrics appointment in mid-January, and the court entered the decision on January 24, 2025.

"It was a privilege to assist this family in securing asylum after their harrowing journey," Emello said. "This outcome was made possible through the collaborative efforts of our team."

Each year, Troutman Pepper Locke attorneys dedicate thousands of pro bono hours in support of nonprofits, immigrants, military veterans, children, the wrongfully convicted, civil rights and social justice initiatives, and many other causes. Learn more at troutman.com/pro-bono.

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