**Potential Recommender Guidelines**

**Instructions for Completing the Potential Recommender Guidelines Template**

Although not required, we advise completing and submitting our "Potential Recommender Guidelines" template when reaching out to recommenders to request they sign letters for your case. This document should give your recommenders a better idea of what agreeing to your request to sign a letter entails. This should increase the chance that these individuals, especially potential independent recommenders who you have never met, will agree to sign letters.

To make this document more approachable, we have included a prompt for your honorific (Mr., Ms., Dr.) and last name. To complete this prompt:

1. Please open the Recommender Q & A file in Microsoft Word.

2) Please select the "Replace" option.

3) In the "Find what" field, please write "[Client Name]". In the "Replace with" field, please write your honorific and last name (ex. "Dr. Wu").

4) Please select "Replace All".

5) If possible, we suggest printing this file as a PDF to make it look more professional before sending it on to your recommenders.

**We at North America Law Group would like to thank you for considering [Client Name]’s request to serve as a recommender for their I-140 immigration case**. Although we will be submitting many other evidentiary materials, your recommendation letter, which will serve as a subjective advisory opinion, will play an important and irreplaceable role in the success of [Client Name]’s case. Please note that we will provide the first draft of this letter, which you can then revise for accuracy and comfort level before signing. Additionally, if you are ultimately uncomfortable with the drafted letter, you will of course be under no obligation to sign it.

We realize that deciding whether or not to recommend a peer in the field for an immigration petition is not always easy, especially when one is unfamiliar with USCIS procedures and expectations. **To help with your decision, we outline the recommendation letter process, discuss our qualifications for drafting these letters, and address some frequently asked questions below.**

**The Process**

Overall, we will strive to make this process as quick and easy for you as possible while ensuring that your letter strengthens [Client Name]’s case. The steps are as follows:

1. Once you and [Client Name]’s other recommender(s) have agreed to sign letters, we will draft the necessary documents within 10-15 business days.
2. [Client Name] will email you the first draft of the letter along with a guide for revising the letter without harming their case.
3. You can either sign the letter as drafted or suggest revisions using track-changes. Then, please send the signed or revised letter to [Client Name], who will send it to us for review. When signing the letter, please do so either by hand, by adding a verified digital signature (such as with Adobe Sign or DocuSign), or by photocopying/copying and pasting an image of your handwritten signature (ideally making sure that the paper color of the original document matches the recommendation letter to make the signed letter appear more seamless – this should help minimize the risk of the USCIS officer questioning the validity of the signature). Signing the letter in one of these ways should help ensure that your signature meets certain USCIS standards of acceptability. If possible, please also add your institutional letterhead to your signed letter, although this is not a requirement.
4. If you have suggested changes, we will carefully review your revisions within 1 to 3 business days to ensure no harmful language has been added or especially important language removed. [Client Name] will then send you the revised draft. We are happy to revise your letter to address your concerns.
5. If you wish to contact our firm directly, you may email us at [attorneys@chenassociates.com](mailto:attorneys@chenassociates.com). However, due to attorney-client confidentiality, after we receive your email, we have to request our clients to sign a waiver of confidentiality before we are able to communicate with you. As such, please expect a couple of days of delay before we can respond to your questions.
6. Once the recommendation letters have been signed, we will use them as subjective advisory opinions to support our arguments in [Client Name]’s petition letter.

**Our Firm**

North America Immigration Law Group has successfully filed over 28,000 U.S. immigration cases for experts working in virtually every scientific field, including biochemistry, theoretical physics, neuroscience, materials science, and environmental engineering. **In 2021 alone, we received 4,979 I-140 approvals.**

With each USCIS decision, we have learned which approaches work and which do not, lessons that have contributed to our strategies. These include best practices for drafting recommendation letters, which remain an important piece of subjective evidence for such cases. While recommendation letters make up only a small part of the evidence we submit for a case, we have found that they must be drafted in a very particular way in order to ensure they are an asset rather than a liability. **This is why we strongly prefer to prepare the first drafts of these letters ourselves**.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **Why shouldn’t I draft this letter myself?**

These letters will serve a very specialized purpose; namely, we will use them to support [Client Name]’s petition letter to help us emphasize the fact that they meet all necessary criteria for their case. Consequently, each line needs to be carefully drafted to ensure the letter supports our arguments in the petition letter. We also want to be sure that all necessary material is covered in the full letter set so that our arguments can be properly supported. Since there are many ways to inadvertently include harmful or unnecessary information in these letters, we have found it best that we prepare the first drafts and recommenders revise the letters for accuracy while keeping the most important components intact.

1. **What exactly will be discussed in this letter?**

Within a standard set of 2-4 recommendation letters, we will try to discuss the following topics in at least 1-2 letters: [Client Name]’s academic and professional background; [Client Name]’s publication record; and [Client Name]’s peer review record, if applicable. Every letter will include discussion of at least one of [Client Name]’s research projects. Most letters will also include brief discussion of how [Client Name]’s work serves the interests of the United States or the greater field. If you have any reservations or preferences regarding any of this content, please let [Client Name] know and we will try to accommodate you.

1. **How can I contact you if I have any questions about this process?**

Please feel free to contact us at [attorneys@chenassociates.com](mailto:attorneys@chenassociates.com) if you have any questions. Please note that [Client Name] will need to sign a waiver of confidentiality before we can address your questions.

1. **What are the legal repercussions of submitting a recommendation letter for [Client Name]’s case? Will I be contacted by the USCIS?**

In our experience, submitting a letter on [Client Name]’s behalf should not affect your life in any way. While possible, it is very unlikely the USCIS will contact you.

1. **I have never worked with [Client Name] or met them in person. Why is my letter important?**

Letters from both close associates of [Client Name] and independent researchers who [Client Name] has never met are invaluable in supporting their case. As an independent recommender, your advisory opinion is considered more objective and illustrative of the larger field’s views of [Client Name]’s accomplishments. This is why we always advise submitting at least 1-2 letters from fully independent recommenders.

1. **How are you able to draft these letters when you are not experts in the field?**

We specialize in discussing highly technical work in layperson’s terms, which we have found to be the best approach when describing the importance of a client’s work to USCIS adjudicators with limited background understanding of these fields. This said, if we do not get everything right in the first draft, we welcome your feedback.