



Quick Guide¹

Using KIND's SIJS Video Series with Clients

This guide focuses on considerations most relevant to undocumented children and youth in the United States.

I. Background

Some of the most frequent questions practitioners hear from clients who are applying for legal status in the United States as special immigrant juveniles are “Why is my case taking so long?” and “When will I have my green card?” Although practitioners explain these concepts during client meetings, the process is complex and can be difficult to remember. To empower clients with knowledge about their cases, KIND’s Seattle office sought to create a visual tool to explain complex legal concepts to children and youth. Through funding from the American Bar Endowment, KIND’s Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) team built on KIND’s Seattle office’s work to create a three-part video series aimed at immigrant children and youth eligible for or granted Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). Practitioners can share these short videos with clients to facilitate and reinforce conversations in preparation for the years-long wait for adjustment of status based on SIJS.

II. Overview of the Videos

The three videos, currently available on [KIND’s YouTube channel](#) in Spanish and with Spanish subtitles, explain what SIJS is, how it relates to lawful permanent residence (LPR), why the wait to adjust status after SIJS approval is lengthy, and how to tell when the wait is over. Each video builds on concepts introduced in the previous videos. Here is a link to the playlist channel: [KIND SIJS Video Series - YouTube](#). QR Code to SIJS Video Series:

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A. Video 1: ¿Qué es el estatus especial juvenil (SIJS) y cómo te puede llevar a la residencia permanente? (“What is Special Immigrant Juvenile Status?”)

This 3:49 minute-long video:

- Can be shared with children and youth at any stage of the SIJS process.
- Defines SIJS as a type of humanitarian protection for children and youth who have experienced abuse, abandonment, and/or neglect.
- Outlines the required state court findings and the I-360 petition.
- Clarifies that SIJS approval creates a path to LPR but is different from LPR status.
- Briefly describes the rights and responsibilities of an LPR.

B. Video 2: ¿Qué pasa cuando mi estatus especial juvenil es aprobado? (“What happens when my SIJS is approved?”)

This 2:46 minute-long video:

- Is most appropriate for children and youth who have already applied for or received SIJS, but can be useful for older children who are in earlier stages of the process to understand the potential waits.
- Explains that after SIJS approval, youth must wait for a visa to become available before filing for LPR.
- Uses the analogy of waiting for a turn to buy a special apple that is in high demand in a store to illustrate the likely very long wait for a visa to become available to adjust status.
- Introduces the concept of a priority date, comparing it to a ticket number in the store.
- Briefly references SIJS-based Deferred Action, encouraging children to consult with their attorneys because of recent changes to the program.

C. Video 3: ¿Cómo sé cuándo puedo solicitar la residencia? (“How do I know when I can apply for a Green Card?”)

This 3:39 minute-long video:

- Is most appropriate for children and youth who have already received SIJS and are in the process of waiting for and monitoring visa availability to be able to apply for adjustment of status.

- Continues building on the apples analogy to introduce the visa bulletin and how to know when a visa is available for adjustment of status.
- Shows clients how to find their priority date on their USCIS notices and teaches them how to compare it to the relevant date on the visa bulletin to see if it is current.
- Encourages clients to reach out to their attorneys for help confirming their priority dates and to access the visa bulletin.

III. Sharing the Video Series

A. Why Should Practitioners Share These Videos with their Clients?

The SIJS process is long and involves state courts, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and, in many cases, immigration court. As practitioners represent their clients through the various stages of the SIJS process, clients may struggle to understand what the steps in the process are, how long they will take, and where they are in the process. Conversations with counsel help clients' knowledge and understanding of the steps. Resources that clients can access themselves – such as these three videos – will further solidify clients' understanding and help make legal information more accessible to clients.

Goal #1: Provide a resource clients can refer to after a legal appointment

After meeting with their legal representatives, children can have a difficult time remembering what their attorney said or may have forgotten to ask a particular question. These videos are a resource for clients to refer to after meeting with their attorneys, at their own free will, to refresh their general understanding of the SIJS process and of why completing parts of the process does not guarantee them immediate access to lawful permanent residence. These videos can also provide reference points for clients to formulate questions about their specific circumstances.

SIJS cases can take years to complete. It is important for clients to have agency over their cases, so they are truly in the driver's seat. This happens when clients have a solid understanding of how a process works and how their case is progressing. KIND hopes these videos will help clients feel confident to do things like check the visa bulletin themselves and see where their priority date falls in the processing times. Practitioners should continue to provide their clients with regular updates about their client's case and encourage clients to reach out to them with any questions.

Goal #2: Develop tools that meet various learning styles of clients

KIND clients are diverse in age, education, exposure to legal processes, and learning styles. It is important to have different tools available that explain or reinforce legal concepts in a way that meets the various learning styles of our clients. These videos create a visual learning tool that is trauma-informed and child-centered and should be used in conjunction with any other learning materials practitioners may already be using with their clients to encourage comprehension and ownership of their legal process.

B. How Should Practitioners Use These Videos?

Practitioners are encouraged to share these videos directly with clients. However, practitioners should not use these videos as a substitute for one-on-one conversations explaining the concepts and answering any case-specific questions their clients may have. On the contrary, these videos should be used as a tool before, during, and after such meetings, rather than as a substitute for legal advice or counseling. Practitioners are encouraged to:

1. **Share the videos during in-person meetings with clients:** Practitioners may watch the videos with their clients and answer any questions that arise in real time. Depending on the child's age, immigration case posture, or interest, practitioners could show all videos in one session or split them up to show only those most applicable to the status of their client's SIJS case at any given time.
2. **Share the links to the videos virtually before and after meetings:** Practitioners can send the links to the videos to allow the client to either review the videos before a meeting or to save as a reference after a meeting.
3. **Share the links with their clients' sponsors, family members, caretakers, or other trusted adults:** Ensuring that those individuals who form part of the children's support network also have access to and an understanding of the legal concepts presented in the videos can help reinforce the information for the child and can provide additional support when they seek to access information themselves (for example, to check their priority date and the visa bulletin).
4. **Share the videos widely with community organizations and partners:** Organizations and individuals who work with special immigrant juveniles or children and youth who could be eligible for SIJS can use the videos in their work or present the videos in group settings such as know your rights presentations, legal training sessions, school events, or other community outreach events.

REMEMBER: These videos do not constitute legal advice. Practitioners need to counsel their clients according to their specific circumstances.

IV. Sharing Feedback on the Video Series

KIND's Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) team seeks to develop tools to support practitioners provide excellent legal representation to unaccompanied children and youth. To assess the effectiveness of this video series and inform future projects, TTA would appreciate it if viewers, including practitioners and their clients, could provide feedback through this survey: [KIND SIJS Video Survey | Encuesta de la Serie de Videos KIND SIJS](#). The survey will also be linked under each video on YouTube.

KIND thanks you for your work on behalf of unaccompanied children.