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### DOJ OIG Releases Report on the Executive Office for Immigration Review's Recognition and Accreditation Program

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a report examining the Executive Office for Immigration Review's (EOIR) Recognition and Accreditation Program (Program). This Program, administered by EOIR's Office of Legal Access Programs (OLAP), authorizes eligible organizations (recognized organizations) and their representatives (accredited representatives), who are not attorneys, to practice immigration law before the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and EOIR.

The DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) determined that OLAP implements controls for approving or rejecting Program applications, monitoring accredited representative activities, and investigating allegations of misconduct against accredited representatives. However, we identified varying degrees of weakness in these controls, as well as opportunities for OLAP to improve its oversight and administration of the Program. Some of the specific findings in the report released today include:

- EOIR was unable to fully demonstrate that Program approval or rejection decisions as well as participant monitoring were made in accordance with federal or other Program requirements. For example, we found that many applications had incomplete training records, which are required by statute.
- More than one-third of the application files did not contain a recommendation from DHS, which is a best practice relied upon by OLAP when making Program eligibility decisions. We believe that a lack of recommendation from DHS poses an increased risk that ineligible applicants will be admitted into the Program.
- OLAP did not conduct criminal history checks for Program participants, which, if conducted, could have assisted in assessing an applicant's character and fitness to perform their duties.
- EOIR did not review complaints about accredited representatives in a timely manner, potentially increasing the risk that unqualified representatives continue to practice immigration law.

Today's report makes six recommendations to assist EOIR in improving its oversight and administration of the Program. EOIR agreed with all six recommendations.

**Report:** Today's report is available on the OIG's website under "Recent Reports" and at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/audit-executive-office-immigration-review-recognition-and-accreditation-program>

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