

Request for Mental Health Evaluation

Introduction:

My name is _____ and I am an immigration attorney representing _____ in an immigration case. I hope that you will consider writing a letter of support for my client's case. I have explained to the client the nature of this request and **am attaching a signed release of information** so that we can best work together. My client has given me permission to share their intake, affidavit, and legal forms upon request. I hope to be able to speak with you before the assessment to answer any questions you might have. Some mental health providers worry the letter may harm the client's legal case, I want to assure you I will only use it if it serves my client. If the client at any point inquires about their legal case, please re-direct them to me.

Suggested Structure of letter:

Most letters of support are between three and eight pages in length. Please begin by introducing yourself, your educational backgrounds, licenses, qualifications, and length of experience working in this field. Explain your relation to the client (including how long you've worked together and the nature of that work), and then begin your clinical assessment with a summary paragraph of your findings. Please also include a CV.

The General Purpose of the letter:

The purpose of this letter would be to provide an assessment of the client's current mental state and assess how past trauma may still affect them today. It would serve as evidence to corroborate my client's personal story for their legal case. Please include:

- a) Specific ways past trauma currently impacts the client
- b) Any mental health diagnosis or condition
- c) Any mental health symptoms that might be consistent with a diagnosis or condition
- d) Any scores and interpretation of scores for the diagnostic criteria (with or without a diagnosis)
- e) The severity of the condition or symptoms, and length of time it has affected the client
- f) Any other information that would be helpful in documenting the condition
- g) An explanation of how the client communicates or presents in a way that is consistent with a diagnosis, or having experienced traumatic events
- h) Any suggestions for treating the mental health condition, including medication, counseling, family and/or community support

The specific, underlying issues we hope can be addressed:

Most specifically, I hope that you can speak to any clinical reason why the client:

was unable to file an asylum application by the one-year deadline

has difficulty speaking chronologically, or consistently, about past events

may have failed to disclose relevant information to border patrol, or asylum officers at arrival into the United States

may be unable to discuss past trauma, or is too fearful or anxious to give details of trauma

minimizes their trauma, or has affect not traditionally associated with trauma survivors

seemingly unrelated experiences of trauma compound to affect a client's mental health

may have engaged in behaviors that are perceived as unhealthy as a result of childhood trauma

Other

As a way of background, the client's case type asylum, U-Visa, VAWA, Hardship waiver, other

Currently in the client's case we are:

- Assessing eligibility for immigration relief
- Opening a case
- Preparing for a final hearing on _____
- Preparing for a master calendar hearing on _____, when we will know more about the case timeline
- Scheduled for an Asylum interview on _____
- Trying to reopen a closed case
- Other

The following are my proposed deadlines for communication and completion of the letter of support:

If possible, I would like to discuss this process further over the phone by _____

I would like to review a first draft by _____

I can commit to providing you with feedback by _____

The final draft of the letter should be completed by _____

We also request you also testify during the court hearing. No Yes , on _____

The best days, times, and methods to reach me are:
