

Against the backdrop of Pride month and in anticipation of celebrating our Independence, we should remember that many LGBTI and HIV+ individuals are persecuted in their home countries simply for being who they are. **George Tenreiro**, a gay immigration attorney who has successfully represented clients obtain asylum, says many LGBTI and/or HIV+ individuals remain unaware that they may qualify for a special immigration status with work authorization by applying for asylum if they are within the United States (legally or otherwise). Worse still, many otherwise eligible applicants lose the opportunity for asylum on a technicality by not filing within the 1-year filing deadline (though exceptions to this deadline exist). Mr. Tenreiro urges anyone who thinks he or she is eligible for asylum to contact

an immigration attorney experienced in asylum claims without delay. If someone cannot afford an attorney, Mr. Tenreiro suggests contacting nonprofit organizations that provide a lot of information on this topic and may even provide a pro bono attorney to represent the asylum applicant. "Every case is different, and conditions for LGBTI and HIV+ individuals in other countries are always changing, so it is important to seek advice from an attorney or an organization that specializes in this area."

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