EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative (HILSC) is a member-driven network of more than 40 immigrant-serving organizations that provide resources to low-income immigrants in the Greater Houston region.

When Harvey hit, our partners inundated our listserv with detailed questions specific to immigrants such as, ‘My home was flooded and I had to relocate. immigration court is closed. How do I find out when my appointment will be rescheduled?’ HILSC began to identify and fill the gaps in information and resources. In March 2019 we published the Humanitarian Action Plan, which formed the basis of our strategy and recommendations for increased disaster equity.

More recently, COVID-19 has forced us to find new ways of working, but also given us the time to develop these methods. It has allowed us to build and evolve disaster mitigation systems that will likely prove valuable in future disasters when it is not possible for people to physically be at sites where services are offered.

This report highlights what HILSC learned about immigrant disaster equity between August 2017 and October 2021. It describes our goals, key learnings, and continuing pressing issues in Greater Houston as we build towards immigrant disaster equity.

HILSC’S MISSION

We advocate for immigrant inclusion, equity, and justice by uniting and strengthening diverse allies, developing holistic immigration legal services, and supporting creative initiatives through principled, values-based collaboration.