
Clark Hill Receives National Tier One Ranking, Update on Immigration Reform, Remembering Roberta Freedman

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Clark Hill PLC Immigration Team Receives National Tier One Ranking

Clark Hill's Immigration Team received a National Tier One ranking in the 2015 edition of U.S. News - Best Lawyers, "Best Firms." For more, see [Clark Hill's press release](#). The "Best Law Firms" rankings are determined by client and lawyer evaluations and peer review. The evaluations address expertise, responsiveness, understanding of a business and its needs, cost-effectiveness, civility, and whether they would refer another client to the firm. We are deeply honored to receive this acknowledgement. See also, Leopard Solutions legal blog on the topic titled [Clark Hill's Immigration Team may be small, but packs a punch](#).

Embassy in Kingston Will No Longer Accept Interview Applications from Third Country Nationals for Certain Visa Categories

Effective October 31, 2014, the Kingston Embassy in Jamaica will no longer accept interview applications from third country nationals for the following visa categories:

- Applicants who changed status with Department of Homeland Security in the U.S. seeking a new visa in the new visa category.
- Applicants who entered the U.S. in one visa category and are seeking to re-enter the U.S. in a different visa category.
- Applicants who have been out of status in the U.S. having violated the terms of their visas or having overstayed the validity indicated on their I-94s.
- Applicants who obtained their current visa in a country other than that of their legal residence.
- Petition-based first time applicants.
- Third country nationals who are not resident in Jamaica and who are applying for a B1/B2 visa (including B1/B2 renewals).

See the [U.S. Consulate's website](#) for more information.

U.S. and China Will Reciprocally Increase the Validity of Short-Term Visas

According to the Department of State, effective November 12, 2014, the U.S. and China will reciprocally increase the validity of short-term business, tourist, student, and exchange visas issued to each other's citizens. According to the Department of State, Chinese applicants who qualify for a B visa may be issued multiple-entry visas for up to ten years. Chinese students and exchange visitors who qualify for F, M, or J visa categories are now eligible for multiple-entry visas for up to five years. U.S. citizens will be given reciprocal treatment when applying for business, tourist, student, and exchange visas to China. Visas for H-1B and L-1 workers will not change. See the [U.S. Department of State's website](#) for more information.

Update: Immigration Reform

On November 20, 2014, President Barack Obama addressed the nation on the issue of immigration reform. Since that time, no regulations have been passed in the area of immigration reform. This means that as of today, there are no changes in employment based immigration law. The proposed changes are expected to take several months. See [Clark Hill's Immigration Alert](#), issued on November 21, 2014, for more details about the proposed immigration reform.

A Remembrance: Roberta Freedman June 22, 1958 to November 2, 2014



On November 2, 2014, the Clark Hill Immigration Team lost one of its own, Roberta Freedman. Roberta was the co-practice group leader of Clark Hill's Immigration Team. We are deeply saddened by the loss of our good friend and colleague. The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) posted the following remembrance on November 7, 2014:

Our beloved friend and colleague, Roberta ("Bertie") Freedman lost a valiant but brief battle against an aggressive form of cancer on Sunday, November 2, 2014. Thousands of us - fellow lawyers, friends, clients, and family members - lost a great friend, confidant, and lawyer extraordinaire. Bertie will be remembered for her wit, humor, intelligence and humanity, as well as her great lawyering for the most vulnerable immigrants amongst us. But more importantly, Roberta was a loyal and fun friend. With her memorable chuckle, she could light up a room. She was always there to help anyone in need and exemplified generosity and kindness.

Roberta was an important influence in many of our lives. She was a role model for all of us. She made life in America possible for thousands of immigrants. She often took on cases others said were hopeless and won them. She was loved and respected by her friends, fellow lawyers, clients and government officials. Roberta most recently was a member in Clark Hill's Washington D.C. office, co-chairing the Immigration Practice Group. Prior to that, she practiced with Duane Morris, Pederson and Freedman and Johnson and Freedman.

AILA was an organization important to her and she instilled that sense in the people who worked with her. She became a member of AILA in 1986, served as Chair of the Washington, DC Chapter between 1991 and 1993, and served on AILA's Board of Governors from 1996 to 1999. She also served as Chair or Member of many AILA committees, including the Health Care Professionals - Physicians Committee, the Department of State Liaison Committee, the Vermont Service Center Liaison Committee, the Physicians Taskforce, and the INS Headquarters Liaison Committee. She also served as a member of the Coordinating Committee on Immigration Law of the ABA from 1999 to 2002. Over her long career, Roberta dedicated her time to many civic and charitable organizations including the Legal Advisory Board of the Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition (CAIR), The American International Recruitment Council (AIRC), and the ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition. She was also an active supporter of Immigrants' List.

Roberta was a frequent speaker at national and regional conferences on various subjects, including J-1 physicians, consular practice, and H-1Bs and employment-based immigration; she also published numerous law articles. She was a lawyer's lawyer and was trusted by untold numbers of lawyers to help solve their problem cases with immigration officials. She had an unmatched expertise in issues related to foreign physicians and an immeasurable number of foreign physicians in America benefited from her tireless advocacy on their behalf over the years. She was frequently recognized by various publications as one of Washington, DC's top immigration lawyers. She also donated her time selflessly to mentoring other lawyers.

Roberta's staff loved and respected her as well because she treated them with the same kindness and compassion she treated everyone else. She was always there to help them and she valued their contributions and gave them recognition at every turn.

The best way we can honor her is to emulate her humanity, generosity, kindness, humor and her wisdom by serving others and reaching out to others in true and lasting friendship. We will miss you Bertie, and each of us will try to commit an act of love and kindness in your memory.