Children and families have become the target of the current administration’s border enforcement strategies, raising significant legal and moral questions about America’s immigration enforcement regime. Please join our expert panelists for an in-depth discussion on the latest issues resulting from the forced separation of migrant families at the southwest border. Although incidents of family separation occurred in the past, the practice became a key element of the Trump administration’s implementation of its “zero tolerance” policy, requiring prosecution of all those apprehended crossing the border between ports of entry. As a result, the numbers of separated families increased exponentially. Following weeks of bipartisan outrage, on June 20th, President Trump signed an Executive Order to end this systematic policy. Nonetheless, the order has raised a host of new concerns including the prospect of prolonged family detention and the failure of an effective system to reunite those families already divided. In response, a federal district judge in California issued a class-wide preliminary injunction halting the separation of families in most instances and ordered the reunification of children with their parents within a specified time frame. Seventeen states also filed a lawsuit challenging this policy and its ongoing effects on families and states' rights. This panel will discuss these policies and the legal ramifications on parental rights, children’s rights, the immigration court system, and the ongoing failure of the government to return separated children to their parents unless they submit to deportation. We will also discuss the ABA response and what concerned lawyers can do to help.

This program takes place during ABA Annual Meeting 2018 in Chicago.

If you have any questions regarding this program, feel free to reach out to nicole.gasmen@americanbar.org.