If you've ever searched for legal help with your immigration case, you've probably seen both terms — *immigration attorney* and *immigration lawyer.* Are they the same thing, or is there a real difference?

The short answer: **in the United States, they mean the same thing.** But there are a few nuances worth knowing so you can be confident you're hiring the right professional.

Understanding the Terminology

- **Immigration Lawyer** is a general term for a legal professional licensed to practice law who focuses on immigration matters.
- **Immigration Attorney** is a slightly more formal term, often used when referring to representation before immigration courts or federal agencies.

In practice, when you hire someone called an "immigration lawyer" or "immigration attorney," you are getting the same type of professional: a licensed legal expert who can represent you before **USCIS**, **ICE**, the **Board of Immigration Appeals**, and federal courts.

Immigration Attorney vs. Immigration Lawyer – Comparison Table

Aspect	Immigration Attorney	Immigration Lawyer
Meaning	Formal term used widely in the U.S. to refer to a licensed legal representative, especially in court.	Broad term used worldwide to mean a person licensed to practice law.
Credentials Required	J.D. degree + Bar admission in a U.S. state.	J.D. degree + Bar admission in a U.S. state (same as attorney).
Representation	Can represent clients in USCIS filings, immigration court, BIA appeals, and federal court cases.	Same — no difference in rights to represent.
Common Usage	More common in legal documents, government communication, and formal contexts.	More common in casual speech, search queries, and general public use.
Marketing Impact	Signals authority and professionalism, good for building trust.	Higher search volume keyword, good for website discoverability.

Why This Matters for Immigrants

For someone seeking legal help, the important factor isn't whether they're called an attorney or lawyer — it's whether they are:

- **Licensed and in good standing** with a state bar.
- **Experienced in immigration law** (not all attorneys practice immigration law).
- Able to represent you in court or before USCIS if necessary.

Tip for Finding the Right Legal Help

When searching online, you can use either term, but confirm that:

- The person is licensed to practice law in the U.S.
- They have verifiable experience handling immigration cases similar to yours.
- They offer consultations to discuss your case and strategy.

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