The V-Visa:

In 2000, The United States Congress created the U-Visa under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in order to provide relief to eligible immigrants who are victims of certain crimes. The intent of Congress was: (1) to strengthen the ability of law enforcement agencies to detect, investigate and prosecute case(s) of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, etc. (refer to the crimes list below); and (2) to offer protection to the victims of such crimes.

Types of Crime Cases:

Rape, torture, incest, domestic violence, Sexual assault, abusive sexual contact, forced prostitution/trafficking, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, involuntary servitude, slave trade, trafficking, unlawful criminal restraint, being held hostage, kidnapping, abduction, false imprisonment, blackmail, extortion, manslaughter, murder, felonious assault, witness tampering, obstruction of justice, perjury, conspiracy or solicitation to commit any of these crimes.

Benefits of possessing a U Visa:

If approved for a U-Visa, the crime victim applicant is permitted to live and work legally in the United States for the duration of the U-Visa (not to exceed four years). At the end of the third year, U-Visa recipient may be eligible to apply to adjust his or her status to lawful permanent residence (commonly known as a "green card"). Receiving a U-Visa does not directly or necessarily lead to lawful permanent residency for U Visa victims.

Qualifications for a U-Visa:

Crime victims must meet **all** of the following qualifications to apply for aU-Visa:

- Must be a victim of serious crimes resulting in physical or mental abuse.
- Must possess information about the crime.
- Must be cooperative or likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of serious crime(s).

The crime(s) must have violated U.S. laws (including violations of the California Penal Code) or have occurred within the U.S.

If you have questions about U-Visas, please notify the Special Victims Unit during business hours. (415) 553-9225