Visalaw.ai MCP Server

Technical specification of the Ask Visalaw Model Context Protocol connector

Last updated: 13 October 2026 · Server version 1.0.0

Introduction

Visalaw.ai is an AI research and drafting platform for U.S. immigration attorneys. The Visalaw.ai MCP server lets an attorney connect an MCP-capable AI assistant to their Visalaw.ai account and research against Visalaw's curated immigration law library, case law, and statutes and regulations, with the authority ranking and citation checking the Visalaw.ai application itself uses.

This document covers:

Endpoint and MCP version: transport and supported protocol revisions.
Authentication: how the server authenticates users and clients.
Access controls: scopes, organization entitlement, and data isolation.
Tool catalog: every tool the server exposes.
Tool reference: arguments, datatypes, limits, and return shape for each tool.
Data handling: logging, retention, and third-party services that process queries.

Every tool on this server is read-only. No tool creates, modifies, or deletes data in Visalaw.ai or anywhere else. Tool definitions are also published at runtime via `tools/list`; this document is the durable reference.

Endpoint

URL	`https://mcp.visalaw.ai/mcp`
Transport	Streamable HTTP over HTTPS (TLS). `POST` only; each request is a single JSON RPC 2.0 message and each response is a single JSON body (`application/json`). The server does not open SSE streams, send server initiated messages, or issue `Mcp-Session-Id` headers. It is stateless per request.
Server name	`visalaw-mcp` (title: "Visalaw.ai")
Server version	1.0.0
Protocol revisions	`2025-06-18` (preferred), `2025-03-26`, `2024-11-05`. The server echoes the client's requested revision when supported, otherwise responds with `2025-06-18`.
JSON-RPC methods	`initialize`, `tools/list`, `tools/call`, `ping`. Any other method returns error `-32601`.

Authentication

Immigration matters are confidential, so every MCP request must be tied to a known Visalaw.ai user. The server authenticates all connections with **OAuth 2.1 Authorization Code flow with mandatory PKCE** (RFC 7636, S256 only). Requests without a valid bearer token get HTTP 401 with a `WWW Authenticate` header pointing to the protected-resource metadata, and no protocol methods are processed.

Flow	Authorization Code + PKCE (S256 only; `plain` is rejected)
Grants supported	`authorization_code` . Refresh tokens are not issued; when the access token expires, the user re-authorizes.
Client type	Public client. Token endpoint auth method `none` ; PKCE binds the code to the client.
Client registration	Allowlist. Each MCP client platform is registered with Visalaw by exact `client_id` and exact `redirect_uri` . Requests with an unregistered `client_id` , or a `redirect_uri` that doesn't match exactly, are rejected. Dynamic client registration is not supported. `client_id_metadata_document_supported: true` is advertised for clients that use a metadata-document URL as their `client_id` .
User sign-in	A Visalaw-branded sign-in page served from `mcp.visalaw.ai` , using the user's existing Visalaw.ai credentials (email/password, Google, or magic link). Visalaw never shares passwords or session tokens with the MCP client.
Protected resource metadata	`GET https://mcp.visalaw.ai/.well-known/oauth-protected resource/mcp` (also served without the `/mcp` suffix)
Authorization server metadata	`GET https://mcp.visalaw.ai/.well-known/oauth-authorization server`
Authorization endpoint	`https://mcp.visalaw.ai/oauth/authorize`
Token endpoint	`https://mcp.visalaw.ai/oauth/token`
Bearer usage	`Authorization: Bearer <token>` header only. Tokens in query strings are not accepted.

Token security

Component	Lifetime	Notes

Authorization code	10 minutes	Single use. It is atomically marked consumed when exchanged, so a replayed code fails. It is bound to the `client_id` , `redirect_uri` and PKCE challenge it was issued for.
Access token	90 days	Opaque random token (256 bits of entropy). The server stores only a SHA-256 hash for lookup (plus an encrypted copy for internal permission bookkeeping); the plaintext token is never logged. Expired token records are deleted automatically.
Refresh token	Not issued	

Visalaw can revoke a user's token on request. Disconnecting the connector in the client stops the client from using it.

Access controls

Scopes

Scope	Purpose	Notes
`mcp:law library:read`	Read-only access to all tools on this server.	The only scope. If the client requests no scope, this one is granted by default. `tools/call` is refused for any token that doesn't carry it.

Organization entitlement

MCP access is enabled per Visalaw.ai organization. A user can complete authorization only if their organization has the MCP connector enabled; otherwise the authorization step fails with an explanatory message and no code is issued. Users with no organization membership are also refused.

Data isolation

> The law library, case law and statute tools search Visalaw's shared reference corpus of public legal materials. They do not read any firm's uploaded client documents, chats or drafts. `list_prompts` and `get_prompt` return only prompt templates in the authenticated user's own organization that the user owns, that were shared with them, or that are organization-wide, plus Visalaw's platform-provided templates. Another user's private prompt can't be fetched by ID, and nothing crosses organizations.
> No tool can write, upload, send, or delete anything.

MCP features

Element	Provided	Description
Tools	Yes	7 read-only tools; see Tool Catalog.
Tools: input schema	Yes	JSON Schema for every tool.
Tools: title and annotations	Yes	Each tool has a `title` and `annotations` (`readOnlyHint: true` , `destructiveHint: false` , and `openWorldHint` set per tool).
Tools: output schema	No	Results are returned as a Markdown `text` content block, with the same data as JSON in `structuredContent` where applicable. Shapes are documented per tool below.
Resources	No	
Prompts (MCP primitive)	No	Saved prompt templates are exposed through the `list_prompts` / `get_prompt` tools, not the MCP prompts primitive.
Sampling / elicitation / roots	No	The server never makes requests to the client.

Errors

Protocol errors come back as JSON-RPC `error` objects: `-32600` invalid request, `-32601` unknown method or unknown tool, `-32602` invalid parameter (for example a malformed or unknown prompt ID), `-32000` generic server error. Internal details such as stack traces or database messages are never returned.

Tool execution failures (for example an upstream search timeout) come back as a normal tool result with `isError: true` and a short message naming the tool and suggesting a retry or a narrower query.

Tool catalog

Tool	Title	Quick description	Open world
`search_immigration_library`	Search immigration law library	Semantic search over Visalaw's curated immigration library, authority-ranked and citation-checked.	No

get_document	Get library document	Full text of one library document by ID.	No
list_categories	List library categories	Browse the library's practice-area taxonomy to scope searches.	No
lookup_statute_regulation	Look up statute or regulation	Authoritative text of a specific INA section or CFR provision by citation.	Yes
search_case_law	Search case law	BIA, AAO, unpublished EOIR, and federal court immigration decisions.	Yes
list_prompts	List saved prompts	The user's organization's saved prompt templates.	No
get_prompt	Get saved prompt	Full content of one saved prompt template.	No

"Open world" tools send the query to an external legal data provider; see Data handling.

Tool reference

Each tool page lists the name, a summary, a full description, the required scope, the arguments, and the result. Every tool requires `mcp:law-library:read`. All results are a `CallToolResult`: `content` holds one `text` block of Markdown (numbered results, citations, and links), and `structuredContent` holds the JSON fields listed. Every URL in a result is restricted to `http` / `https`.

search_immigration_library

Semantic search over the Visalaw.ai immigration law library.

Full description

Searches Visalaw's curated library of U.S. (and optionally Canadian) immigration law: USCIS Policy Manual and guidance, BIA and AAO decisions, the INA, 8 CFR, EOIR materials, and practice advisories. Results are authority-ranked, so statutes and the USCIS Policy Manual rank above secondary sources. If no category is given, the whole library is searched. Statutory and regulatory citations that appear in the query and the top five excerpts are checked against the library catalog. Each citation is reported as verified, with the library document it resolved to, or unverified. Citation checking is best-effort: if it fails, search results are still returned without it.

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`query`	string	Required.	Natural-language immigration research question.
`categoryId`	string	Optional. Must be an ID from `list_categories`.	Restricts the search to one library category. Omit to search the whole library.
`limit`	number	Optional. Default 10; clamped to 0–20.	Maximum number of excerpts returned.
`source`	string (enum)	Optional. One of `uscis`, `bia`, `aao`, `ina`, `cfr`, `eoir`, `aila`, `canada`.	Restricts results to one source. `canada` switches to the Canadian immigration corpus.
`includeUnpublishedBia`	boolean	Optional. Default false.	Include unpublished BIA decisions.

Return results (`structuredContent`)

Attribute	Type	Description
`results`	array of objects	Up to `limit` excerpts. Each has `content` (string), `source` (string), `documentId` (string or null, usable with `get_document`), `category` (string or null), `citation` (string or null), and `score` (number or null).
`total`	int	Number of results returned.
`scope`	object	`categoryId` (string or null), `isCanada` (bool), `usedDefaultScope` (bool), `categoryCount` and `subCategoryCount` (int).
`citationCheck`	array of objects	Up to 25 entries, each with `raw` (string), `type` (string), `verified` (bool), and `libraryName` (string, only when verified).

get_document

Retrieve the full text of one library document.

Full description

Returns the title, full text and metadata of a Visalaw.ai law library document. It is normally called with a `documentId` returned by `search_immigration_library`. It only reads the shared law library and cannot retrieve a firm's own uploaded documents. An unknown ID returns a "Document not found" result rather than an error.

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`documentId`	string	Required.	Library document ID from `search_immigration_library`.

Return results

Attribute	Type	Description
`documentId`	string	Echo of the requested ID.
`title`	string or null	Document title.
`content`	string or null	Full document text.
`citation`, `source`, `category`, `url`	string or null	Document metadata.
`error`	string	Present only when the document was not found.

list_categories

List the categories and subcategories of the law library.

Full description

Returns the library's practice-area taxonomy (for example employment-based, family-based, removal defense). The returned IDs can be passed as `categoryId` to `search_immigration_library`. Call it with no argument for top-level categories, or with a category ID to list that category's subcategories.

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`parentId`	string	Optional.	Category ID whose subcategories to list. Omit for top-level categories.

Return results

An object with `success` (bool), `message` (string), and `data` : an array of categories, each with `id` , `name` , and nested `subCategories` (each with `id` and `name`).

lookup_statute_regulation

Fetch the authoritative text of a specific INA section or CFR provision.

Full description

Use this when the user names an exact provision, for example "INA 212(a)(9)(B)" or "8 CFR 214.2(h)". It skips semantic search and retrieves the provision text directly from a statutes-and-regulations source (U.S. jurisdiction). Only the citation string is sent to that provider.

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`citation`	string	Required.	Statutory or regulatory citation, e.g. `INA 245(i)` or `8 CFR 204.5(h) (3)` .

Return results

Attribute	Type	Description
`results`	array of objects	Each has `content` (provision text), `citation` , `source` , and `url` (string or null).
`total`	int	Number of results.

search_case_law

Search immigration case law.

Full description

Searches BIA decisions, AAO decisions, unpublished EOIR/BIA decisions, and federal court immigration opinions. The query is classified to tell case-name lookups (for example "Matter of A-B-") apart from topic searches, and is routed accordingly. By default it covers the BIA and all federal circuits; state courts are excluded unless explicitly requested. Federal court opinions come from CourtListener, a third-party legal research API. Statutory and regulatory citations named in the top results are checked against the Visalaw library catalog.

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`query`	string	Required.	Case name, topic, or legal question.
`includeUnpublished`	boolean	Optional. Default false.	Include unpublished BIA decisions.
`jurisdiction`	array of strings	Optional. Court identifiers, e.g. `["9th-cir", "bia"]`.	Limit to specific courts. Defaults to BIA plus all federal circuits.
`filedAfter`	string	Optional. `YYYY-MM-DD`.	Only cases filed after this date.
`filedBefore`	string	Optional. `YYYY-MM-DD`.	Only cases filed before this date.

Return results

Attribute	Type	Description
`results`	array of objects	Each has `content` (excerpt), `caseName`, `citation`, `court`, `dateFiled`, `source`, `url`, and `documentId` (strings or null).
`total`	int	Number of results.
`citationCheck`	array of objects	Same shape as in `search_immigration_library`.

list_prompts

List saved prompt templates available to the user.

Full description

Returns metadata for prompt templates in the user's organization prompt library that the user can see: prompts they own, prompts shared with them, and organization-wide prompts. Optionally it also includes Visalaw's platform-provided templates. Archived prompts are excluded. Results are sorted with default templates first, then by name. Prompt content is not included; use `get_prompt` for that.

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`search`	string	Optional.	Case-insensitive text match on prompt name and description.
`mode`	string (enum)	Optional. One of `researchChat`,	Filter by the chat mode the

		`aiChat` , `caseLaw` .	prompt is meant for.
`includeSystem`	boolean	Optional. Default false.	Also include Visalaw platform templates.
`limit`	number	Optional. Default 20; clamped to 1– 50; must be finite.	Maximum prompts returned.

Return results

Attribute	Type	Description
`prompts`	array of objects	Each has `id` (string), `name` (string), `description` (string), `mode` (string or null), `tags` (array of strings), `isDefault` (bool), and `isSystemPrompt` (bool).
`total`	int	Number of prompts returned.

get_prompt

Retrieve the full content of one saved prompt template.

Full description

Returns the full instruction text of a prompt template so the assistant can apply the firm's standard for a document type or task. The same visibility rules as `list_prompts` apply: a prompt the user can't see in Visalaw.ai can't be fetched by ID. An invalid or unknown ID returns JSON-RPC error `-32602` .

Call arguments

Argument	Type	Restrictions	Description
`id`	string	Required. 24-character hex ID from `list_prompts` .	Prompt to retrieve.

Return results

Attribute	Type	Description
`id` , `name` , `description`	string	Prompt identity.
`content`	string	Full prompt text.
`mode`	string or null	Intended chat mode.
`tags`	array of strings	
`variablesList`	array	Template variables the prompt expects.

`isDefault` , `isSystemPrompt`	bool	

Data handling

Logging. For each tool call the server logs the tool name, user ID and organization ID for security and abuse monitoring. Tool arguments (queries, citations, document IDs) and error messages that could echo them are not written to logs. Tool-call logs are kept for 30 days. **Token storage.** Access tokens are stored as SHA-256 hashes and expire after 90 days, at which point the record is deleted.

No training. Queries and results are not used to train models.

Third-party processing. To answer a query, search text may be processed by the services that power Visalaw.ai search: an embedding and query-classification model provider, the vector search database, CourtListener (for `search_case_law`), and a statutes-and-regulations provider (for `lookup_statute_regulation`). No Visalaw.ai account information is sent to CourtListener or the statutes provider.

Privacy policy. `https://www.visalaw.ai/mcp-connector` , which supplements the general Visalaw.ai privacy policy at `https://visalaw.ai/privacy` .

Example: tools/call

```
POST https://mcp.visalaw.ai/mcp
Authorization: Bearer vl_mcp_…
Content-Type: application/json

{"jsonrpc":"2.0","id":1,"method":"tools/call",
  "params":{"name":"search_immigration_library",
                                                  "arguments":{"query":"unlawful presence bar waiver eligibility","limit":5}}}

→ {"jsonrpc":"2.0","id":1,"result":{
      "content":[{"type":"text","text":"1. **INA 212(a)(9)(B)(v)** …"}],
      "structuredContent":{"results":[…],"total":5,"scope":{…},"citationCheck":[…]}}}
```

Contact

support@visalaw.ai