



PUBLIC CHARGE: KEEP GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED

WHAT IS PUBLIC CHARGE?

“Public charge” means immigration officials can keep a person out of the U.S. or deny them a “green card” if they believe the person may depend on the government as their main source of support. Officials can only look at certain benefits that the applicant has used and also consider current income, employment, health, and skills.

PROPOSED CHANGES

The government wants to change how it makes public charge decisions. If that plan becomes final, immigration officials will look more closely at certain factors like health, age, English language skill, and use of public programs, including:

- Some health care under Medicaid
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, “EBT” or “Food Stamps”)
- Medicare Part D (medicine costs) subsidies
- Some Federal housing programs

Immigration officials handling visa and green card applications in other countries have already been asking more questions about immigrants and their sponsors. But those changes do not affect immigration decisions made in the U.S.

THE CHANGES ARE NOT FINAL YET

We don’t know when the government will make this plan final. **It may never happen.** If the rule is finalized, there will be at least a 2 month period for you to make a decision about whether or not to stay enrolled in critical public programs

If you are applying for a green card in the U.S. now, use of benefits listed in the proposed changes cannot be used against you. And programs used by your U.S. citizen children will never be used against you unless it’s your family’s main source of income. ***Right now, there is no reason to drop health care, food assistance, or housing your family needs.***

GET HELP MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR YOUR FAMILY

Every family is different, and the programs that help your family might not even be covered by the government’s proposal.

There are lots of organizations that can help. An immigration attorney familiar with this issue can give you advice based on your specific situation. Local nonprofits may also be able to provide help and legal advice.

To find help in your area , visit:

<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/>

TIMELINE OF PUBLIC CHARGE



PUBLIC CHARGE: DOES THIS APPLY TO ME?

Do you and your family members already have green cards?

Public charge and any changes under this rule **WILL NOT** impact you. However, if you plan to leave the country for more than 6 months, it is a good idea to talk with an immigration attorney.



Are you applying for one of the following statuses?

U.S. Citizenship, Green card renewal, DACA renewal or TPS, U or T Visa, Asylum or Refugee status, or Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

The public charge test does **NOT** apply to some immigrants, including the categories listed here. If you already have or are in the process of applying for one of these immigration statuses, you can continue to use any government programs that you qualify for.



Does your family plan to apply for a green card or visa from inside the United States?

Right now, **nothing has changed**. We recommend that you continue to use the health, housing, and nutrition programs that help your family. For example, if you or your children are enrolled in Medicaid or SNAP (food stamps), we recommend that you stay enrolled.



Does your family plan to apply for a green card or visa from outside the United States?

You should talk with an expert for advice on your case before making any decisions. For free or low-cost options near you visit: www.immigrationadvocates/nonprofits/legaldirectory.



You can still fight back by speaking up! If you think that this rule could impact you or your family, you can help policymakers understand how this policy would hurt families. Please go to <http://bit.ly/PIFstory> for more information on how to share your experience.

For more information and resources visit www.protectingimmigrantfamilies.org