

PUBLIC CHARGE RULES MAY CHANGE:

A week ago the Trump administration released a proposed regulation that seeks to penalize legal immigrants for accessing programs that help working families with health care, housing and nutrition, or for holding low-wage jobs that don't enable them to meet an arbitrary income threshold.

The draft regulations would vastly expand the definition of “public charge” – someone who is deemed to be dependent on government benefits and thus may be denied a green card – to include not only people who receive cash benefits or need long term care, but also those who participate in “safety net” programs used by millions of working Americans. It would also make it easier to deny permanent residency to anyone earning less than 250% of the federal poverty line (\$62,750 for a family of four).

To learn more please click here:

<https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/resources/>

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW NOW?

- *You are not alone.* **There's a nationwide movement fighting to stop this proposal, including dozens of organizations here in MA**
- There is still time to fight back as groups are doing around the US. **PLEASE take action by following the link:** <http://miracoalition.org/pif>
- **This is ONLY a proposal. Nothing has changed yet.** Now that the draft is posted, the federal agency must accept comments on it until December 10, and then respond to the comments. We expect the process to take some time, and then there will be a 60-day grace period. The absolute earliest that the rule could be implemented would be February, but it's likely to be later.
- The **public charge test looks at all of the person's circumstances**, weighing positive factors against any negative ones. **Not all immigrants are subject to the public charge test.** This is only a factor if you're applying for a green card or certain types of visa, or if you have a green card but left the country for over 6 months. Check this list if you're unsure <http://www.miracoalition.org/images/Documents/Public-charge-applicability-Sept26-2018.pdf>
- **If the proposed rule becomes final, noncash benefits (other than long-term care) used before that time will not be considered.** Using benefits now can help you or your family members become healthier, stronger, and more employable in the future. If you are thinking of dis-enrolling yourself or your children from a program, consult first with an immigration attorney or a representative accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals. **For most immigrants, dis-enrolling now is neither necessary nor helpful.**

IF YOU'RE A SERVICE PROVIDER OR A CONCERNED CITIZEN:

- We need you with two crucial tasks: gathering and submitting comments, and helping to ensure that immigrants have the information they need to make decisions for themselves and their families.
- You don't need to be an expert to submit a comment. We need comments from immigrants and children of immigrants, community advocates, service providers, business owners, elected officials and concerned citizens. Use this form to submit a comment easily, with built-in guidance: <http://bit.ly/PIF-MA> (also available in Spanish: <http://bit.ly/PIFesp>). You can find lots of helpful resources at <http://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/resources/> or for Massachusetts-specific information, see <http://www.miracoalition.org/PIF>.
- If you want to help gather comments, or if you need informational materials or handouts to help you answer immigrant community members' questions, please fill out this Google form: <https://goo.gl/forms/QvHSPT7AGNkumm1e2>.