

Resources to Help Understand the New Public Charge Rule

Coronavirus and Public Charge –March 24, 2020 Update

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has encouraged individuals with symptoms that resemble coronavirus (COVID-19) (fever, cough, shortness of breath) to seek necessary medical treatment or preventive care and has confirmed that testing, treatment, and preventive care related to COVID-19 (including vaccines, if one becomes available) will not be considered as part of a Public Charge determination, even if this treatment is provided or paid for by one or more public benefits. Additionally, if an individual is prevented from working or attending school due to social distancing, quarantine, school or work closures due to COVID-19, and must rely on public benefits during the COVID-19 outbreak and recovery phase, they may provide an explanation and relevant supporting documentation, and to the extent relevant and credible, USCIS will take all such evidence into consideration in the totality of the individual's circumstances. [Learn more.](#)

Feb 27 Update: The new rule took effect February 24, 2020.

- We understand that you may have concerns about the impact of your health care or other public assistance benefits. State and federal laws are still in effect that entitle you and your family to health care coverage and assistance for which you are eligible. Our role is to help you receive the health care and other types of assistance you and your family are eligible to receive.
- Nothing has changed regarding current benefit eligibility standards, processes, your coverage, or how we use and protect your personal information. We continue to process your applications and renewals and provide benefits to you just as we did before.
- If you have questions about the impact on your immigration status of applying for or receiving public benefits, we encourage you to consult reliable sources such as trained immigration attorneys and reputable nonprofit immigration service providers to discuss your specific situation. Among the resources available, the California Department of Social Services maintains [a list of all CDSS-funded legal services providers](#) as well as [a list of providers who can provide legal consultation and/or education and outreach services specifically related to public charge](#). Locally, there are several organizations listed, including Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), El Concilio Family Services and Líderes Campesinas.
- The State of California has also created a [website on Public Charge](#) as well as a [Public Charge Guide](#) that provides additional information.