

Immigrants & Public Benefits: Public Charge

Here is what immigrants should know about using public benefits.

**Have you applied for or already have
VAWA, U or T Visa, or SIJS?
Are you a Refugee or Asylee?**



Right now, you can use all public benefits.



Your ability to get a green card under these programs will not be affected- even if changes are made.

**Are you a
Lawful Permanent Resident (green card holder)
and want to become a citizen one day?**



The government CANNOT cancel your green card just because you or your family members use public benefits.



You CANNOT be denied citizenship for lawfully receiving public benefits.



You may have a problem if you leave the U.S. for more than 6 months. Speak with an attorney before you leave the U.S.

**Do you want to
sponsor a relative
that wants a green card?**



Using public benefits does not prevent you from sponsoring a relative who applies from within the United States.



If you want to sponsor a relative who is living outside of the U.S. you should talk to an attorney.

**For free, legal information and help, contact
Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles:
1-800-433-6251**

Don't qualify for a VAWA, U or T Visa, Asylum or SIJS?

Want a green card one day?

Right now:



You can use all non-cash programs. Some examples are Medi-Cal, CHIP, My Health LA, CalFresh, WIC, public housing, Section 8, childcare, and job training.



You may have a problem getting a green card if YOU use CalWORKs, GR, SSI or Medi-Cal long-term care services.



If your citizen children use cash benefits, it is only a problem for you if their cash benefits are your ONLY source of income.

No changes have been made yet!

If the proposed changes happen:



Your use of non-cash benefits before the rules are changed WILL NOT count against you. So, there is no reason to stop these non-cash benefits now.



You will have 60 days to decide if you want to continue using public benefits.



After the 60 days, you might be denied a green card if YOU get CalFresh (food stamps), non-emergency Medi-Cal, Medicare Part D Subsidies or Public Housing/Section 8.



Speak to an attorney for information about how the changes will impact you.



Avoid Notario Fraud!

In the United States, a “notario” or “notary public” CANNOT give legal advice or provide immigration legal services.

A “notario” or “notary public” is only allowed to witness the signing of official documents.

If you need legal help or legal advice, please speak with a licensed attorney.



Neighborhood Legal Services
of Los Angeles County

Free, legal help!
1-800-433-6251