

KEEPING YOUR CHILDREN HEALTHY, SAFE AND SCHOOL-READY

3 FACTS IMMIGRANT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE PUBLIC CHARGE

01 SERVICES RECEIVED BY CHILDREN AT AND THROUGH SCHOOL ARE NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC CHARGE.

Services and programs such as school based medical services, counseling and therapy, breakfast and lunch, Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), and academic & behavior assessments do NOT count for public charge.

02 YOUR CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH INSURANCE, NUTRITION AND HOUSING PROGRAMS HELPS TO KEEP THEM HEALTHY, SAFE AND SCHOOL-READY.

These state and federal programs and services for your children and family do NOT count for public charge. If your children are eligible for these programs, they should remain enrolled in them:

- Head Start
- Pell grants, student loans, student financial aid
- Emergency Medicaid
- All Kids (Medicaid for children under 19 years)
- Moms and Babies (Medicaid program for pregnant women and their babies 60 days post-partum)
- Services received under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Healthy Start
- WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children)
- Food Banks and food pantries
- Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)
- Emergency Assistance (Including COVID-19 emergency cash, rental mortgage & utility assistance)
- School breakfast & lunch programs (free & reduced school meals)
- Child care services
- **COVID-19 vaccine, testing & treatment**

03 APPLYING ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN FOR ANY PUBLIC BENEFIT OR PROGRAM WILL NOT COUNT AGAINST A PARENT FOR PUBLIC CHARGE.

This is true even if you as a parent or guardian are filling out the application on behalf of your child for a public benefit included in the public charge. This is true regardless of the immigration status of the child.

Only public benefits included in the public charge that the parent applies for and receives in their name will be counted.

What is public charge?

Public charge is a law that applies to certain immigrants applying for a green card (legal permanent residency) or a visa to enter the U.S, to see if they are likely to use specific public benefits in the future. Immigration officials review a person's age, income, health, education, skills, financial sponsor, and personal use of certain public programs to determine if they are likely to become a public charge. *If a person is found to likely be a public charge, their green card application could be denied.*

Who is subject to public charge?

Public charge mostly affects those applying for a green card through a family-based petition. It does not apply to persons with a U or T visa, VAWA visa, asylum or refugee status, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, or to those applying for U.S. citizenship, green card renewal, DACA, or TPS.

The public charge ONLY counts

- **Federal, State and Local cash programs for income maintenance** (ex. TANF, SSI, General Assistance)
- **Public Housing**
- **Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance** (including Section 8 moderate Rehabilitation)
- **Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher**
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**
- **Certain Medicaid with exceptions**

RESOURCES

There are resources and programs with trained staff that can help you make the right decision for your family.

Public Charge & Public Benefits

Protecting Immigrant Families Illinois Coalition has updated information and resources on public charge, available in English and Spanish:

WWW.PROTECTINGIMMIGRANTFAMILIESILLINOIS.ORG

ICIRR Immigrant Family Support Hotline connects callers with confidential and trusted public charge and immigration information, resources, and legal services. Available in English, Spanish, Korean, and Polish:

1(855) 435-7693

List of Public Charge Information Centers:

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/FILE/D/1AAYK72NEV5IAUIB79RAWGIDWJNQOJPM/VIEW](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AAYK72NEV5IAUIB79RAWGIDWJNQOJPM/VIEW)

WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) provides pregnant women, women who just had a baby, and their infants and children up to 5 years assistance to purchase food:

WWW.DHS.STATE.IL.US/PAGE.ASPX?ITEM=30513

WIC does NOT count for public charge and is available regardless of immigration status.

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) is a special benefit available for children who would receive reduced or free breakfast and lunch at school, but who are currently not attending school because of the COVID-19 pandemic:

[HTTPS://WWW.DHS.STATE.IL.US/PAGE.ASPX?ITEM=124142](https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=124142)

This program does NOT count for public charge and is available regardless of immigration status.

All Kids is the Medicaid health coverage program for Illinois children regardless of immigration status. It is available for children whose families meet the income and insurance requirements:

WWW.ILLINOIS.GOV/HFS/MEDICALPROGRAMS/ALLKIDS/PAGES/ABOUT.ASPX#INSURANCE

Medicaid for children under 21 years of age is excluded from public charge.

Legal Help

Legal Service Directory with organizations that provide free or low-cost legal services, available in multiple languages:

WWW.IMMIGRATIONADVOCATES.ORG/NONPROFIT/LEGALDIRECTORY

Education

Abriendo Puertas has updated information and resources for parents on COVID-19 and remote learning:

[HTTPS://DOCS.GOOGLE.COM/DOCUMENT/D/1IE9WWZR_J4BQXSEQDWWYN6UVJSOKZFFR4PLZIN3TBAXI/EDIT?PLI=1](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IE9WWZR_J4BQXSEQDWWYN6UVJSOKZFFR4PLZIN3TBAXI/EDIT?PLI=1)

Latinx Therapy has mental health resources to support the well-being of families:

WWW.LATINXTHERAPY.COM

Sesame Street in Communities has developed their Cope, Care, Connect resources for children between 2 and 6 who may be experiencing community stress:

WWW.SESAMESTREETINCOMMUNITIES.ORG/TOPICS/TRAUMATIC-EXPERIENCES