



**CATHOLIC  
MIGRATION  
SERVICES**

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

*Changes to the "Public Charge" Test Will Impact Who Can Enter the U.S. and Who Will be Eligible for a Green Card*

For some immigrants, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") will consider whether an immigrant is likely to become a "public charge" when it reviews the immigrant's request for a visa or green card. A "public charge" is someone who may rely on public benefits for a significant period of time. If USCIS determines an immigrant is likely to become a public charge, it may deny an immigrant's entry into the United States or their green card application.

The Trump administration recently issued new rules that redefine the term "public charge" in a way that will result in many more people being denied entry or a green card. The new rules will go into effect October 15, 2019 unless legal challenges stop or delay them. It is important for immigrants to understand whether they might be impacted by these new rules.

Catholic Migration Services would like to inform the immigrant community that the new public charge rules does not mean everyone should stop receiving any public benefits that they need for their family. Therefore, before withdrawing from any public benefits you are currently receiving, we encourage you to speak with a trusted immigration attorney.

## The New Rule – Who it Applies To:



If the new rules affect you, USCIS may count it against you if you use any of the following benefits for a lengthy period: Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), state general relief or general assistance, Medicaid institutionalization for long-term care, non-emergency Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps), Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance, and public housing.

The government will not consider receipt of the following types of benefits when determining public charge: emergency medical assistance, disaster relief, national school lunch or school breakfast programs, foster care or adoption, Head Start, Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP), WIC, the Earned Income Tax Credit, or the Child Tax Credit.

## For Free Help

All immigrants who may apply for an immigration benefit in the future should seek advice about whether receipt of public benefits may impact their ability to apply for that future benefit. For free assistance, call the New Americans Hotline at 1-800-566-7636 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Catholic Migration Services is an affiliate agency of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens.

<b>Catholic Migration Services is located at:</b>	
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For more information visit our website at [www.catholicmigration.org](http://www.catholicmigration.org)

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