

## Resources to Help Understand the New Public Charge Rule

### September 23, 2022 Update

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has finalized a new public charge rule set to go into effect December 23, 2022, which provides additional protections for immigrants to access health care, nutrition, and housing programs. The new rule **does not** count Medi-Cal (except for long-term care), CalFresh, WIC, COVID prevention and treatment, Section 8, and other “non-cash” federal programs as part of the public charge test. Under the new rule, only two types of programs could potentially impact an applicant’s consideration as a public charge: cash assistance for income maintenance such as CalWORKs, SSI, or General Relief and long-term care at government expense. Consideration of these will be balanced, and no single factor alone will make someone likely to become a public charge.

Community members with questions about the impact of applying for or receiving public benefits on their immigration status are encouraged to **consult reliable sources such as trained immigration attorneys and reputable nonprofit immigration service providers to discuss their 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 offering free legal consultation and/or education and outreach services specifically related to public charge](#). Several local organizations are listed, including Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), Mixteco Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), El Concilio Family Services and Líderes Campesinas.

### Community Resources to Learn More About Public Charge

- [California Health and Human Services Agency Public Charge Guide](#)
- Protecting Immigrant Families’ (PIF) [Public Charge: Does this Apply to Me?](#) available in nine languages, can help answer common questions for individuals and families.