

WHAT WORKING PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'PUBLIC CHARGE'

WHAT IS "PUBLIC CHARGE"?

This punitive new rule denies people permanent residence or entry to our country based on how much money they earn and whether they may need support to keep their families healthy. Rather than lifting wages for hardworking people, this rule punishes immigrants for the low wages they are paid for work that is vital but chronically undervalued.

DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT PUBLIC CHARGE?

Immigration services and consular offices will consider public charge criteria when reviewing applications for family and temporary work visas, as well as applications for adjustment of status to attain a green card. The criteria will not be applied to naturalization applications for citizenship. The public charge rule already has had a chilling effect on immigrant families accessing needed services and benefits for which they are eligible, so we all need to worry about the impact of this anti-worker policy.

WHAT CRITERIA WILL IT CONSIDER?

The public charge rule penalizes aspiring immigrants who earn a low income, are in poor health, or have limited assets or educational attainment. Cruelly, it also penalizes immigrants who access public benefits intended to improve their socio-economic and health conditions.

WHICH BENEFITS WILL LIKELY BE A FACTOR IN PUBLIC CHARGE?



YES, will likely be a factor:

- Federal cash assistance
- Federal housing subsidies
- Federal nutrition assistance
- Non-emergency Medicaid



NO, will not likely be a factor:

- COVID-19 cash payments
- Private financial support
- Unemployment insurance
- Emergency rent or mortgage relief
- Food bank support
- Emergency Medicaid
- COVID-19 testing and treatment

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THIS TERRIBLE RULE?

In this time of elevated need and uncertainty, it is important for workers to understand which benefit programs will be considered in a future public charge determination for themselves and their families, and which will not, so please share this fact sheet. In addition, we need to continue to demand that our leaders stop scapegoating immigrants and start raising wages and standards for all working people, which is why we need to suspend and end this public charge rule.

For more information on the public charge rule and the campaign to defeat it, please visit ProtectingImmigrantFamilies.org. If you have specific concerns about how the rule could affect your family, talk to an immigration lawyer or community agency.