**What is Public Charge?**

“Public charge” is a rule that immigration can use to deny an application for permanent residence (“Green card”) or certain other visas if the applicant is likely to depend on certain government programs if approved.

Public charge **does not affect** applicants for U.S. citizenship, asylum, refugee status, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, TPS, VAWA, U or T visas or green cards based on these visas. It **does not** affect DACA or green card renewals.

The Public charge test only looks at certain benefits that the applicant gets (see inside). It also considers his/her current situation: health, age, employment, skills, education, family/sponsor income.

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**For help applying for benefits:**
- Coastside Hope — 650-726-9071
- Fair Oaks Community Center — 650-780-7500
- JobTrain — 650-330-6428

**For immigration questions:**
- Coastside Hope — 650-726-9071
- International Institute of the Bay Area—650-780-7530
- Catholic Charities — 650-295-2160
- Community Legal Services in EPA — 650-326-6440
- Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach — 415-567-6255
- Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County — 650-517-8936

**For legal advice about public benefits or public charge:**
Does Public Charge Affect You?

- Do you already have a green card?
  - **Public charge doesn’t apply.** But, if you use cash benefits and plan to leave the country for more than 6 months, it is a good idea to talk with an immigration attorney.

- Are you applying for:
  - Citizenship
  - Green Card renewal
  - DACA renewal
  - U or T Visa
  - Asylum or Refugee status
  - TPS
  - VAWA
  - Special Immigrant Juvenile Status
  - Green Card based on U/T/SIJ, VAWA or Asylum
  - **Public charge doesn’t apply to you** for these applications. You may use any benefits for which you qualify.

- Do you or your family plan to apply for a green card or visa from inside the U.S.?
  - A public charge test **may apply**, but only a few benefits that the applicant receives count. It is **still safe** to get Medi-Cal and CalFresh/food stamp benefits. Eligible family members can use **any** benefits.

- Does your family plan to apply for a green card or visa from outside the U.S.?
  - A public charge test **applies**, but only some benefits count. Talk to a qualified attorney about this.

**Benefits currently considered for public charge test:**
- Cash benefits
  - SSI
  - CalWORKs
  - CAPI
  - General Assistance
- Long-term care (nursing home) Medi-Cal

**Proposed changes** to public charge would also consider:
- CalFresh/food stamps
- Non-emergency Medi-Cal
- Medicare Part D subsidies
- Federal housing/Section 8

These changes **might never be made**. If they are, you will have time to stop these benefits before they count.

**Timeline for Proposed Rule:**
- Rule Proposed 10/10/18
- Final Rule Adopted
- New Benefits start to count 60 days