



Public Charge

Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

City Council Meeting
December 4, 2018



Update



- Current Issues
- Context and Background

Public Charge



- U.S. immigration label for people who are receiving public assistance that might affect their immigration application for lawful permanent residency, often called a “green card.” Currently, the following categories of public assistance affect immigration applications:
 - Cash assistance
 - Long-term care (nursing home or mental health institution)

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Public Charge



- The new rule would add the following categories:
 - Medicaid
 - Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program(SNAP)
 - Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers
 - Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance
 - Public Housing

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Why is this issue important?



Approximately 250,000 Immigrants who receive Medicaid could be affected

Approximately 100,000 Immigrants who receive food assistance could be affected

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Why is this issue important?



We, as a country, are not living up to the label of being “Welcoming”

Beyond hurting individuals, these kinds of changes are attempts to change the entire personality and spirit of our laws and policies

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Why is this issue important?



Criminalization of an application process that is supposed to consider the totality of circumstances

This change turns that process of consideration into a weapon, targeting the most vulnerable by using basic needs against them

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How does this affect Tacoma's communities?



Fear into communities, denying people benefits and services that they are eligible for, even if they are following all the rules.

Silent suffering – when people are too afraid, we don't even know they are suffering.

Changes how immigrants feel about this country and the future it offers. Changes everyone's understanding of U.S. laws.

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What can people do about this issue?

- Educate yourself and others
- Submit public comment
 - December 10th
 - <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/10/10/2018-21106/inadmissibility-on-public-charge-grounds>
- Inform others, encourage them to submit comment
- Help out where you can

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What can the City of Tacoma do?

- Promote public information
- Connect people to channels where they can have a voice
- Explore more responsive solutions that match the urgency of this time

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••• Thank You



Email:

TacomaCIRA@Gmail.com

Phone Number:

(253) 591-5045