



Some people who apply for a green card or a visa to enter the U.S. must pass a “public charge” test. In those cases, immigration officials look at whether the person will mostly depend on the government for support in the future. Four important things immigrant families need to know about public charge are:

## THE HARSH TRUMP PUBLIC CHARGE RULE IS REVERSED

1

The Biden Administration ended the 2019 public charge rule enforced by the Trump administration. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has restored the longstanding 1999 public charge policy. **Immigrants can access important health, nutrition and housing benefits without fear of a negative impact on their immigration status.**

2

## MOST PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT PUBLIC CHARGE AT ALL

Public charge only applies when a person is seeking a green card through a family member or wants to enter the US from outside the country. It **does not apply** when a refugee or asylee applies for a green card or when a Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) seeks to become a US citizen.

## MOST GOVERNMENT BENEFITS DO NOT COUNT

3

Only 2 kinds of government benefits are considered:

1. Monthly cash support - Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and RI Works benefits.
2. Long term nursing home care paid for by Medicaid.

Immigration officials **cannot** look at any other benefits you may have received, like SNAP, Medicaid, Child Care Assistance or subsidized housing. If you applied for benefits for a family member (for example, a parent applies for RI Works for her children) this is not counted either.

4

## PUBLIC CHARGE IS NOT JUST ABOUT RECEIVING GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

**Immigration officials must look at a person as a whole, not just whether the person used government benefits.** That includes whether a family member or another person with enough income or resources has promised to support you. That “affidavit of support” and other positive factors can help even if you have used government programs in the past. In most cases, using government programs will not affect immigration applications.

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If you have public charge or other immigration concerns, contact Dorcas International Institute: 401-784-8607  
or contact Progreso Latino: 401-728-5920