



Permanent Block of Public Charge Rule Ensures that Immigrants Can Access Critical Nutrition Programs

Starting immediately the 2019 U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) public charge rule that kept immigrants and their families from accessing public benefits, including SNAP, is no longer in effect.

DHS can no longer consider an individual's use or potential use of SNAP as a factor in a public charge test. This will provide immediate relief in many hard-hit communities as the public charge regulation effectively denied millions of immigrant families the help they need, contributing to rising hunger, poverty, and unmet health care needs, even before the COVID-19 pandemic began.

What Has Changed

On March 9, the 2019 DHS [public charge rule](#) was permanently blocked nationwide. This news comes after a recent decision by the Department of Justice (DOJ) to stop defending the 2019 public charge regulations and court dismissals of pending appeals by the U.S. Supreme Court and others.

The announcement came just weeks after 500 nonprofit organizations, including Hunger Solutions New York, and others affiliated with the [Protecting Immigrant Families](#) coalition [sent a letter](#) urging President Biden to act quickly. President Biden has also directed the relevant agencies, the U.S. State Department and DHS, to reconsider the regulations.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 2019 public charge rule was confusing and overly broad. It created [fear among immigrants and their families](#) when needing to access vital public benefits that safeguard their nutrition, health, housing, and economic security. This led to immigrants and their families avoiding public benefits during the public health and economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Next Steps

The [Protecting Immigrants Families \(PIF\) Coalition](#) is hopeful that DHS and the White House will soon release information to explain to immigrants and their families that the public charge policy has been reversed and that it is safe to access health and nutrition programs for which they are eligible without fear of immigration consequences. They also expect to see DHS quickly develop and issue new public charge regulations.

To help immigrants and their families begin to feel safe accessing nutrition and food programs, community organizations should reach out to local immigrant communities to share this important news.

Hunger Solutions New York is in the process of updating our SNAP and Immigrants page to reflect this change.

Additional Resources

- Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) [Statement](#)
- Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF) [Fact Sheet: What Advocates Need to Know Now](#)

Hunger Solutions New York will continue to send email updates, post updates to our website, and use Facebook and Twitter to share information. Thank you for your continued efforts to help New Yorkers with needed access to food during this time.



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