ABOUT THE PUBLIC CHARGE TEST

The federal government uses the public charge test in immigration proceedings to determine whether an applicant is likely to become primarily dependent on certain types of government assistance. This information is used to decide whether a green card or temporary status will be granted.

A rule change currently under consideration would impose income limits, consider any use of public programs, and greatly expand the number of programs reviewed - potentially having a devastating impact on Idaho families.

IF YOU WORK WITH IMMIGRANT FAMILIES, HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The rules governing public charge determinations in the U.S. have not yet changed. There may be no advantage to disenrolling from programs now. Refugees, asylees, people fleeing violence and others are not subject to public charge determinations and would not be affected. Neither is public charge a consideration when lawful permanent residents (green card holders) apply.

Proposed Rule Change Would Discourage Parents From Seeking Help For Their Children

Idahoans should never be put in a position where they have to choose between a path to immigration and getting help with food or medical care.

An unofficial proposed regulation called public charge would penalize Idaho immigrant families of modest means for using assistance for health care, food, and housing, harming children especially. It would favor prospective immigrants with wealth over our neighbors who contribute taxes, work towards a better life, and reside lawfully. Idahoans who seek help going to the doctor or buying groceries would risk having it held against them in immigration proceedings - forcing them to make an impossible choice between staying together or meeting the family’s basic needs for things like health care and food.

As many as 34,000 Idaho children could be at risk of foregoing critical assistance that supports their nutrition, shelter, and healthcare.

Idaho Children Would Be Impacted

The rule change proposed in September 2018 would broaden what the government takes into account in public charge determinations for immigration proceedings, penalizing Idahoans who lawfully access public benefits. If the changes are imposed, immigration officers would now consider past, present, and likely future receipt of:

- **FOOD** through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps).
- **AFFORDABLE HOMES** through rental assistance programs like Section 8 or public housing.
- **MEDICAL CARE** through programs like Medicaid or Medicare Part D. The Department of Homeland Security has also asked for input on whether use of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) should be counted against someone on the path to citizenship.

Steps You Can Take Today to Help Idaho Families

1. Submit a public comment today at protectingimmigrantfamilies.org

2. Will your family be impacted by this rule change? Are you a service provider? Share your story with us. We have licensed social workers that value protecting your privacy. Contact Hillarie at hhagen@jannus.org

Based on an estimate of Idaho children in benefits-receiving families with immigrant parents.