



# REDUCE FEAR WITH FACTS!



## Public Charge Information

Updated February 2020

**Know the facts. You have rights.** The complex new federal standards for determining when an immigrant is likely to become a public charge could cause a significant number of individuals that will **not** be impacted by the rule to disenroll from benefits.

**The content in this document is not legal advice.** Each immigration situation is unique. If you have questions about you or a family member's status and/or use of benefits, resources are available to provide free and confidential help.



### **The new federal public charge rules do not affect most immigrants.**

Refugees, asylees, survivors of trafficking, domestic violence, and other serious crimes, and other "humanitarian" immigrants are not affected. Lawful permanent residents (or "green cards") are not affected unless they leave the US for 180 days and seek to reenter. Benefits received when people are in one of those status will not be counted against them.



### **Many public programs are not considered in the federal public charge test.**

Life-saving food and nutrition programs like WIC, CHIP, school lunches, food banks, shelters, child care assistance, state and locally funded health care, and many more programs are not included in the federal public charge test.



### **Use of public programs does not automatically make an individual a public charge.**

Immigration officials must look at **all circumstances** in determining whether individuals are likely to become a public charge in the future. This includes your age, health, income, assets, resources, education/skills, family an individual must support, and family who will support an individual. Positive factors, like having a job or health insurance, can be weighed against negative factors, like having used certain benefits or having a health condition. Individuals will have a chance to show why they are not likely to rely on certain benefits in the future.



**Benefits used by family members will not count in public charge decisions made in the U.S.**

U.S. Citizen family members can use the nutrition, food, or housing programs without fear. Including a parent's name on their child's application does NOT mean they have applied for benefits for themselves.



**There are laws protecting the information on public benefit applications.**

Federal and state laws generally protect the privacy of your information when applying for or receive health care coverage, nutrition, economic support, or other public benefits.

# FREE CONFIDENTIAL HELP

**Help is available for you!** If you have specific questions or concerns about the impact of using public benefits on your immigration status, contact an immigration attorney.

Contact one of the following organizations for help:

- CLEAR Hotline: 1-888-201-1014
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP):
  - NWIRP Seattle Office: 206-587-4009
  - NWIRP Yakima Valley (Granger) Office: 509-854-2100
  - NWIRP Wenatchee Office: 509-570-0054

Resources are also available through one of the organizations listed on the Governor's website:  
<https://www.governor.wa.gov/issues/issues/safe-communities/immigration-and-refugee-resources>