

Proposed Public Charge Rule Change

On October 10, 2018, the Trump Administration proposed sweeping new changes to what is commonly referred to as the 'public charge' rule. If they are adopted, these new regulations would make it harder for families who are following all the rules of legal immigration to enter the U.S. or obtain a green card to become a legal, permanent resident. This means people trying to become new Americans legally would risk their status simply by turning to available services of Medicaid (and possibly CHIP/KidsCare), SNAP, Medicare Part D, and housing assistance. You can learn more about what public charge is [here](#). **While CHIP (KidsCare) hasn't been included in the proposed list of benefits that will count against families, the proposal draft seeks comments about whether CHIP *should* be included.**

An estimated 200,000 Arizonans will be impacted directly and many more may avoid using services they need due to fear and misinformation. The good news is that your voice matters! The public comment period is the best, *and only*, period for us to weigh in and fight back!

Submit your comments by **December 10, 2018**.

Why do Comments Matter?

- Federal law requires that the government read and consider every *unique* comment before issuing a final rule.
- A large number of comments could slow down the process and give policymakers more time to reconsider the final rule change.
- Comments give our communities a chance for their voice to be heard.
- Comments can later provide an opportunity to challenge the regulations in court.

Tips for Submitting Comments

It is fine to use sample comments, but the administration will group all identical comments and count them as one comment. To make the most impact, **it's important to add your own words and ideas to your comments so it can be counted as a *unique* comment.** Take a moment to highlight how the change would affect you or your neighbors or your expertise or experience. Below are example comments for you to consider using or modifying, **along with your own words**, and step by step instructions on how to submit your comments on the regulations.gov website.

- *I strongly oppose the Department of Homeland Security's proposed rule change to "public charge." The policy will undermine access to essential health, nutrition, and shelter for immigrants and their family. One in four children in Arizona, and nearly 20 million children nationwide, live with at least one immigrant parent. By forcing choices no family should have to make, it puts our whole country at risk. This will policy is short-sighted and will only create costs shifts to states as well as create, bigger more expensive problems down the road. DHS should immediately withdraw its proposal.*

- *A community's overall health depends on the health of all of its members. The proposed rule change will undoubtedly lead to higher rates of uninsured adults and children. Without insurance, families may delay care or forego it altogether. This means there will be more children in school, and adults in the workplace, without needed preventive services and untreated illnesses. Treatment for life-threatening conditions such as asthma keeps children in school. More people delaying care until the last possible moment will strain emergency resources. Hospitals' and clinics' uncompensated care burdens will increase. Children with Medicaid and CHIP have better health as adults, with fewer hospitalizations and emergency room visits; they also earn more and pay more in taxes.*
- *CHIP (KidsCare in Arizona) is designed especially for working families and should not be considered a public charge. Including CHIP would be a double hit to families who work hard and play by all the rules of our immigration system only to have the American dream become that much more unattainable.*
- *The loss of access to SNAP would further exacerbate food insecurity. SNAP is a critical source of support for struggling households; research shows how SNAP lifts people out of poverty, reduces hunger and obesity, and improves school attendance, behavior, and achievement. The consequences of food insecurity are especially detrimental to the health, development, and well-being of children.*