

MLP ALERT

“Public Charge” and COVID-19: Updates for Immigrant Patients

All immigrant patients should seek COVID-19 services without fear for their immigration status.

The government announced they will **NOT** consider **testing, treatment, or preventative care (including future vaccines) related to COVID-19** as part of the "Public Charge Rule," even if it is paid for by "public benefits," like Medicaid.

For the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announcement: <https://www.uscis.gov/archive/archive-news/final-rule-public-charge-ground-inadmissibility>

What is the public charge rule?

- The rule **only** affects applications:
 - 1) for lawful permanent residency (a green card), or
 - 2) to enter the United States
- The government can say “no” to those applications if they decide you will use a “public benefit” for a period of time in the future. Public benefits include: food stamps (SNAP), Section 8 and subsidized housing, most Medicaid, and cash assistance (SSI, TANF, General Assistance).
- WIC, CHIP, emergency services, and Medicaid for children and pregnant women do **NOT** count! Benefits to family members do **NOT** count!
- This rule does **NOT** affect deportation! This rule does **NOT** affect application for citizenship if you already have a green card!

