

# Resources for Immigrants and Their Families During COVID-19

**Published: April 14, 2020**

## Can I use Unemployment Benefits?

If you are sick, lose your job, or are caring for someone with the virus, you may be able to get financial or medical help. This guide will help you understand what resources your family may be able to use.

## Will the government send checks to everyone.

### Will I get a check?

It depends. The US Government will send money to people who filed taxes last year with a social security number. If you filed taxes last year with a social security number, you may get a stimulus payment. If you are not married and make less than \$75,000 a year you could receive a check for \$1,200, with an extra \$500 for every child under 17 who you claimed on your 2019 taxes. **The stimulus money will not count against you on a public charge test and will not impact other benefits, like SNAP or AHCCCS.**

If you filed taxes in 2019 using an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), you will not receive a stimulus check.

## How can I find health care for my family during COVID-19?

If you are concerned that someone in your family has COVID-19, you should not feel afraid to see a doctor. The US Government has said that **getting tested or treated for COVID-19 will not count against you on a public charge test** and will not hurt your immigration or green card application.

Your family may be able to get health insurance through AHCCCS or KidsCare. If you are not eligible for AHCCCS or KidsCare, you can still see a doctor at a federally qualified community health center (FQHC) at low- or no-cost. FQHCs will treat anyone, regardless of immigration status.

# What is Public Charge?

"Public Charge" is a test U.S. Immigration uses to decide if a person can get a visa or green card without a lot of help from the government. When the government makes this decision, they look at many different things, including income, work, age, health, education, skills, family, and whether a U.S. citizen or resident has agreed to support the person.

In the past, only using cash assistance or long-term care funded by the government would hurt someone's visa or green card application. On February 24, 2020, the federal government changed how they make public charge decisions. Now, using some types of Medicaid/AHCCCS\*, EBT or food stamps, or federal housing could also harm your green card application.

Not all immigrants are subject to a public charge test. **Using benefits not listed above will not hurt your green card application.** Every situation is different. If you have specific questions, you should speak to an immigration attorney.

*\*Medicaid used in an emergency, or by children under 21, or by pregnant women up to 60 days after giving birth does not count against someone's public charge test.*

## Benefits That Do Not Count Against Your Green Card Application

- Public benefits used by your family members
- Emergency Medicaid/AHCCCS
- Medicaid/AHCCCS used by children under age 21
- Health care provided by community health centers
- Using unemployment benefits

## Contact Information

To make an appointment with someone who can help you find low or no-cost health insurance, call **1-800-377-3536** or visit **coveraz.org/connector**

To find federally qualified community health center (FQHC) near you, visit **aachc.org/communityhealthcenters/map**

For free and low-cost immigration resources, visit **immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory**

This document provides general information. This is *not* legal advice.

