



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AAPCHO Health Care Providers Condemn Latest Proposal Threatening the Health and Well-Being of Families
Proposed rule would force families to choose between basic needs and keeping families together

WASHINGTON – The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) opposes the Trump administration proposed regulation to expand the definition of “public charge.” A draft of the proposed regulation was released by the Department of Homeland Security on Saturday and will be published officially for comment in the next few weeks. If finalized as proposed, the regulation could deny permanent resident status (green cards) to individuals residing legally in the United States for using Medicaid, public housing, and other health and nutrition programs.

“The proposed change to ‘public charge’ is an attack on Asian American, Pacific Islander and all immigrant families,” said Jeffrey Caballero, executive director of AAPCHO. “If this reckless regulation goes through, families will be torn apart for getting the health care and nutrition they need. We urge the public to join AAPCHO and a wide range of civil rights leaders who oppose this ugly ‘public charge’ proposal by submitting comments.”

Under current immigration law, only the potential use of cash-assistance programs (e.g., TANF, SSI) or long-term care can be used as a basis to deny someone permanent residency. The administration’s proposal is a dramatic shift in U.S. family immigration policy to consider use of non-cash assistance programs to deny permanent residence status. If enacted, use of Medicaid, certain Medicare programs, public housing, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) would become a reason for officials to deny permanent residency to a family member even if they are in the U.S. legally on a visa, and could even result in deportation. The proposed regulation does not apply to refugees or asylees.

“Families are justifiably frightened. Some families are choosing to not address medical issues that require immediate or continued attention from health care providers,” said Darrin Sato, COO of Kalihi-Palama Health Center in Honolulu and AAPCHO board president. “Now that people are hearing about this harmful ‘public charge’ proposal, many are worried that going to the doctor or other provider could lead to separation from their kids. Patients are canceling visits or dropping insurance altogether. This proposal is taking America’s problems, like the lack of health coverage and child poverty, and making them worse. We would like to work with those responsible to make a positive impact on those we serve in the community.”

Once the proposed regulation is posted on the Federal Register, these changes are open for a 60-day public comment period before they become final and can take effect. AAPCHO urges the community to oppose the changes and to submit comments during the upcoming comment period. Sign up to receive an alert and link to submit comments [here](#).

About AAPCHO

AAPCHO is a national association of community health organizations dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration and leadership that improves the health status and access of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. For more information on AAPCHO, please visit www.aapcho.org.

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