

Immigrant Access to Health Care & Benefits in Time of Emergency

UPDATED: March 13, 2020

*Families should access the health and benefit programs they need
in times of health emergencies or economic downturn.*

ACCESSING HEALTH AND BENEFIT PROGRAMS:

- All people can access federally-funded community health centers statewide with or without immigration status:
 - For a list of community health centers near you, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2wTkXXH>
 - For the latest information about where and how to obtain coronavirus testing, please visit the NC Department of Health and Human Services website [here](#).
- Using **ANY** of the following health or benefit programs has **NO** effect on **any** immigrant's ability to get a green card in the future:
 - Programs open to all immigrants with or without lawful status:
 - Emergency Medicaid
 - Free/sliding scale health clinic services
 - Women, Infant and Children's Nutrition Program (WIC)
 - Free/reduced price school lunch
 - Programs open to some immigrants, depending on status:
 - Health coverage under the Affordable Care Act/Obamacare
 - Medicaid for pregnant women and children under age 21
 - Unemployment insurance
- On March 13, USCIS announced that testing, prevention, or treatment for COVID-19, also called Coronavirus, would NOT be used against immigrants in a public charge test, so families should seek the care they need.
- If your children or family members are citizens or already have green cards, they should continue to use the benefits for which they are eligible. Only benefits used by the immigrant him or herself who is seeking a green card will be counted negatively.

ACCESSING HOSPITALS:

- ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) has had a policy in place since 2011 limiting ICE enforcement at or near hospitals. While this policy has some exceptions, it is a general policy for ICE not to conduct immigration enforcement in health care settings. You can read more about the policy here: <https://cliniclegal.org/file-download/download/public/145>

YOUR MEDICAL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL:

If you apply for a health benefit program such as Medicaid, or access health services, your information will be and must be kept private and confidential even if your family has members with different immigration statuses. Your information cannot be used for immigration enforcement purposes. The law protects you and your family's information and privacy.