

San Mateo County Immigrant Forum

September 18, 2025: Meeting Summary

Immigrant Legal Resource Center Updates:

Unaccompanied Children (UACs):

- The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is now sharing data with ICE, which families seeking reunification should be aware of.
- Recent policy changes may impact how minors and families are held in detention, including the possibility of longer stays, and additional physical exams (i.e. to check for gang-affiliated tattoos). Family detention centers may receive funding without state licensing requirements.

New Citizenship Test:

- A new version will take effect in mid-October. Applicants will need to answer **12 of 20 questions correctly** (from a pool of 128). Questions include more definitions and reworded prompts. For more info, click [here](#). For a side-by-side comparison of the old vs. new tests, click [here](#).

Immigration Judges:

- As of August 28, the DOJ has relaxed requirements for temporary immigration judges. Some are now military judges without immigration law experience.
- Existing immigration judges have been removed, which could affect case outcomes and processing times.

Other USCIS Updates:

- **Public Charge:** USCIS released a memo in early September with updated guidance on the agency's priorities and determinations. At this time, said memo does not change the existing Biden-era public charge rule.
- **Naturalization Ceremonies:** Nonprofits are now prohibited from doing voter registration at ceremonies.
- **Fees:** Starting **October 28, 2025**, USCIS will no longer accept checks or money orders. Payments must be electronic (ACH debit). This may create challenges for low-income applicants. Please alert ILRC if community members face barriers.
- **Processing Times:** These vary by case type and service center. Applicants can check USCIS' online tool for updates.
- **New Authorities:** Beginning in October, USCIS will gain more power to investigate and issue warrants during benefits adjudication.

Supreme Court – Enforcement Case (Perdomo v. Noem):

- Case challenged ICE raids in Los Angeles, arguing that enforcement based only on factors like race, language, or occupation amounted to profiling.
- On September 8, the Supreme Court allowed ICE actions to continue. This decision currently applies only to California’s Central District but could move to the national level. Litigation is ongoing.

Mission Asset Fund (MAF) Presentation

- Staff from the Mission Asset Fund (MAF) joined the IF to share information about key programs they offer. MAF is a San Francisco–based nonprofit, and some of their services are available to San Mateo County community members.
- For questions about eligibility or program details, please contact the Mission Asset Fund directly at programs@missionassetfund.org or **(888) 274-4808**.

Office of Community Affairs (OCA) Updates

- Share **Red Cards** and the **Rapid Response Hotline** with community members.
 - Request Red Cards [here](#). Find more Rapid Response info [here](#).
 - Rapid Response Hotline: **203-666-4472**.
- **Staffing Change:** Our team remains available to support partners and community members. The fastest way to reach us with any questions, concerns, or needs is by emailing **ImmigrantServices@smcgov.org**.
- **United Against Hate Week Oct. 19-25:** Save the date – **3rd Annual Unity Walk, Thursday October 23, 4pm**, 500 County Center, Redwood City (Courtyard). Open to community partners.

Agency & Partner Updates

- **IIBA:** Recruiting volunteers to help develop naturalization test study materials. Contact Glen if interested.
- **KARA’s 20th Annual Walk’n’Run to Remember** will take place **Saturday, October 18, 2025** at Mitchell Park, Palo Alto. Details: [Event Link](#)
- **KARA Support Groups:**
 - General Loss: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 6:30–8pm (virtual). [More Info](#)
 - Child Loss: Starts **October 9**, 10 weekly sessions, Thursdays 6:30–8pm (virtual). [More Info](#)