

San Mateo County Immigrant Forum

May 21, 2026

Meeting Summary

Immigrant Legal Resource Center Updates

USCIS Processing Delays and Fingerprint Re-Runs

- Legal providers report pauses and delays in the processing of certain immigration benefit applications as USCIS conducts expanded background checks and reruns fingerprint screenings.
- No action is required from applicants at this time, though longer processing times are expected.

Asylum Filing Fee Update

- Effective May 29, asylum applications submitted without the required filing fee will be rejected.
It is recommended to keep receipts/proof of payment in your records.

“Mega” master calendar hearings:

- Immigration courts are increasingly scheduling large master calendar hearings involving dozens of individuals at a time as part of broader efforts to accelerate case processing.
- It is a good idea to [check the EOIR website](#) often to ensure you know of upcoming hearings.

DACA

- No formal DACA policy changes have been announced at this time. However, legal providers report increased efforts to advance deportation proceedings for some individuals with pending appeals or other unresolved matters. Advocates note that DACA status alone may not be sufficient to prevent someone from being placed in removal proceedings.

Other Brief Updates

- **CA Mask Law:** The Ninth Circuit blocked enforcement of California's mask restriction for immigration agents, meaning federal officers may continue wearing masks during enforcement activities while the case proceeds.

- **Due to the Ebola outbreak in South Sudan**, individuals who have recently traveled through South Sudan and certain neighboring countries may face additional screening requirements or entry restrictions when traveling to the United States.

Positives:

- The **Circumvention of Lawful Pathways** asylum rule is no longer in effect, removing a barrier that previously limited access to asylum for some applicants.
- **TPS for Yemen:** A federal court blocked efforts to terminate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for approximately 3,000 Yemeni beneficiaries
- The **DOJ-accredited representative** program has been preserved following advocacy efforts, helping maintain access to low-cost legal representation.

Guest Presentations

Tahirih Justice Center

- **Organization or Program Contact:** Miriam Camero, miriamc@tahirih.org
 - Immigrant Forum members can also reach out to Priscilla Contreras at the SF office.
- **Program Mission:**
 - Organization operates 5 offices across the country focused on ending violence against women and girls by providing legal and social services
 - Offers six core direct services: immigration legal support, family law assistance, civil legal services, forced marriage protection, social services, and connections to medical care
 - Goal is to help survivors access both immigration and family law relief so they can safely move forward with their lives
- **Other services / approach**
 - Prospective clients can call a hotline and are screened to determine eligibility for services and programs. From there, a holistic approach through needs assessments is used to better understand and respond to individual client needs
 - Strong partnerships with pro bono clinics to help clients understand their legal options, what to expect in their cases, and how to make informed decisions.
 - Promote “enhanced safety planning” (which includes family preparedness, Know Your Rights (KYR) education, and emergency planning components) via clinics and partnerships.

- conduct Know Your Rights trainings, including instruction on how to use red cards and how individuals can advocate for themselves in enforcement situations
- Tahirih Bay Area is open to collaboration and thought sharing with Immigrant forum partners, please reach out using the contacts listed above. Further resources will be shared via e-mail.

American Red Cross

- **Organization or Program Contact:** Jill Hofmann, jill.hofmann@redcross.org, 831-566-8841
- **Program Mission:** Disaster response and emergency management, education about international humanitarian law.
- **Jill** joined the Immigrant Forum to share about key American Red Cross programs, such as **Restoring Family Links (RFL)** and the organization's **Measles-Rubella outreach partnership**.
 - For further information about these services, please reach out to Jill directly.
 - Additionally, a **24/7 helpline** is available at 844-782-9441. Messages are monitored, and while a response may take 1–2 days, callers can expect follow-up.

OCA Updates

- Creating messaging for FIFA World Cup focused on rapid hotline response; will be requesting feedback on what community members are needing and wanting.
- Photovoice campaign: inviting participants to share positive experiences and reflections about San Mateo County. Look out for event invite from OCA team.

Agency Updates

American Red Cross — Jill Hofmann

- Refugee Day celebrations planned in the San Jose Immigration Forum and East Bay Refugee Forum. For more info, contact: jill.hofmann@redcross.org

California Department of Social Services (CDSS) — Ferdaws Faye

- Inviting partners to submit Immigrant Heritage Month events for posting on the CDSS Immigrant Heritage Month webpage