San Mateo County Immigrant Forum

September 17, 2026

Meeting Summary

Check-in Question:

As we celebrate Latino Heritage Month, what's one tradition, food, song, saying, or family memory that makes you feel connected to your heritage and reminds you of home?

Guest Presentation

Josephine Cosino, Human Services Supervisor

Cash Assistance for Immigrants (CAPI)

- **What is CAPI?** A state-funded program that functions very similar to SSI (Supplemental Security Income – which is a federal program that many immigrants are not eligible for). CAPI provides a financial benefit: the amount depends on things like household size, marital status, and income.
- **Has CAPI been impacted by HR1?** No, as it is a state funded program.
- **Who administers CAPI:** SMC Human Services Agency (HSA).
    - Services are offered in: Spanish, Cantonese, Tagalog
    - HSA/CAPI office address may change in December as they move to a new office space in South San Francisco. Please stay tuned for updates.
- **Who is eligible:** Client must be aged (65), blind or disabled immigrant or qualified alien, meaning
    - green card holders, asylum, refugees, T-visa, U-visa are potentially eligible
    - must also be a resident of California
    - There property limits, which include– cash in the bank, cash on hand, second vehicle, etc. $2000 for one person household or $3000 for 2 person household, for example.
    - There are other requirements (spouse deeming, parental deeming, and sponsor deeming) that may determine eligibility, it is best to speak to a worker to clarify these aspects.
- **How to apply:** SOC 804 A 16-page form – rely on partners to help clients complete form
    - No interviews are required unless need additional information
    - Persons under 65 applying for disability their application take longer due to verification
    - Clients can submit an application by phone 1-800-648-0954, by fax 650-301-8458 or by mail to P.O. Box 25030, San Mateo, CA 94402-9807
- The Program Overview slide deck shared by Josephine can be found here

OCA Social Media – World Cup Campaign Recap

Presented by Isabella Remolina, Outreach Coordinator for the Office of Community Affairs

- Isabella shared a brief summary of our World Cup outreach efforts
- The campaign had 2 aspects – in-person canvassing and a social media campaign
- **Canvassing**: Distributed 760 postcards across San Mateo County through in-person outreach.
    - Canvassing was focused on cities with watch parties and immigrant communities
    - 10 contracted outreach and education partners also circulated materials/messaging.
- **Social media component:**
    - Created 12 graphics that were posted on Instagram from June to July, once a week. Posts were in English, Spanish, Chinese.
    - Had a 48% engagement which was great compared to the typical 4% engagement
    - 4 posts were boosted
    - Information was also shared via communications calendar
- You can find more info about this campaign (and other work we do) on our Office of Community Affairs website -- we have also posted a flyer recapping the campaign here.

Immigrant Legal Resource Center Updates

Public Charge

- New Public Charge regulations will take effect September 18th.
- The ILRC has a webpage dedicated to public charge here, including 1) a page with the latest updates, and 2) an explainer on "What You Need to Know Now About Public Charge" here.
- It is very important to understand who **is** and **is not** subject to public charge (explained there ^) , because IF someone is subject to public charge, the new regulations can impact their shelter, food, health care, etc. -- It is very important to contact a legal professional to understand one's specific situation.
- Multiple jurisdictions (cities, counties, states) have filed lawsuits challenging the new public charge guidance. The concern is what more they can deny or delay the filing.

Naturalization Process

- Neighborhood visits - as of August 2026, USCIS formally updated guidance in their policy manual saying that they reserve the right to do neighborhood visits for any naturalization applicant.
- USCIS first announced this practice in August 2025, and the ILRC explained it here.
- It is unclear how these visits will play out. In their policy alert (here) USCIS did state there could be a possibility to waive these. Good to consider "GMC" (good moral character) evidence in anticipation of these, for example two letters from US citizens who know you.

Visa ban updates

- **Good news:** a federal judge struck down the visa ban affecting nationals of 75 countries, having found that it violated federal immigration law by discriminating on the basis of nationality.
    - However, the 39 country visa travel ban (enacted on 1/1/26) based on national security remains in place. A list of impacted countries can be found on the Dept. of State site here.

General reminder: the ILRC has a "Community Resources" page here full of useful links, information, and explainers about policy changes.

OCA Updates

- We are preparing for **United Against Hate Week** (October 18-24)! Save the date!
    - **Social media campaign:** If you are interested in sharing a picture of your staff/team holding a United Against Hate Poster, please email immigrantservices@smcgov.org with your picture. We are looking for at least 10-15 organizations to participate.
        - If you would like to print out United Against Hate posters, download them here.
    - **Further info:** Here is a toolkit put together by Not in Our Town, LA vs Hate, CA vs Hate and CA Stop the Hate – it contains many resources and ideas for community action.

        - Learn more about United Against Hate Week here.
- **HSA public charge videos**: please share these informative videos widely.
    - Here is a link: https://www.smcgov.org/hsa/2026-public-charge-changes.
    - You can also download the videos in Spanish here or English here

Agency Updates

- **KARA** is offering a grief support workshop at the end of the month on Sept 26th from 11am-12:30pm via zoom. A flyer will be circulated to the immigrant forum e-mail list.
- **Immigration Institute of the Bay Area (IIBA)** would like to encourage you to apply for naturalization by sharing their link on consultations - please share widely. Though some other legal agencies have stopped offering support for the naturalization process or have long waitlists, IIBA has capacity to help with any questions or walk clients through the process.
- **Annalicia from Stanford Health** – If anyone needs volunteers for their events, please reach out to annalicia.pickering@stanford.edu. Her team also does health education workshops, if there are any topics you'd like us to teach, please email Annalicia
- **API Legal Outreach** would like to share their 51st Gala in Daly City, link with more info here