

San Mateo County Immigrant Forum
Meeting Notes
January 16, 2020

1. Welcome & Introductions – Immigrant Services Team

- a. This is the first meeting of 2020 and the first meeting held officially by the County of San Mateo, Office of Community Affairs – Immigrant Services Team.
- b. The Office of Education will be the meeting location until the end of the year.
- c. There is a new section on our website dedicated to the Immigrant Forum where you can find all the agendas, minutes, and pertaining documents.
<https://cmo.smcgov.org/immigrant-services>

2. Presentation: 4Cs – Donna Estipona, Community Programs Manager

destipona@sanmateo4cs.org; www.sanmateo4cs.org

(For more detailed info, please see Powerpoint located on [Immigrant Services website](#))

- a. 4Cs (Child Care Coordinating Council) is a resource that helps parents and families living and working in San Mateo County meet child care needs
- b. 4Cs' mission is to connect and empower families, educators, and child care providers with resources today for a stronger San Mateo County tomorrow
 - Services include family support, provider support, and community support
 - Community Programs include Child Care Resource & Referral Services, Health & Safety Programs, Child Care Initiative Project, Quality Counts, and Inclusion Services
- c. Alternative Payment Program: provides child care subsidies to low-income families that helps them pay for child care services
 - Serves children from 0-13 years of age (or up to 22 if child has a disability)
 - Subsidy ACCESS list: families are ranked on the waiting list based on their monthly income and family size, and must be either working, seeking employment, or have a CPS case or at-risk
 - All families, except those that have CPS case or at-risk, must be at or below the 85th percentile of the State Median Income at the time of admission to be approved for subsidized child care
- d. Parent Voices: 4Cs supports and convenes this statewide, grassroots initiative that includes a day where parents can go to Sacramento and advocate to improve access to childcare for all families in order to try to increase funding and improve quality
- e. Save-the-Date: Family Child Care Preview Fair: Saturday, May 9th, 2020
- f. Q/A:
 - Q: For Alternative Payment Program, do fees go to 4Cs or the provider?
A: 4Cs pays the provider, and depending on the provider, family may still have leftover fees that they must pay to the provider directly. There is also an annual recertification that happens until age 13.
 - Q: How long is the waitlist?

A: There is no specific timeframe. Depending on where families are ranked, parents can be waiting for years.

- Q: Do families need immigration status to be eligible to receive subsidies?

A: No.

3. Presentation: Office of Congresswoman Speier (CA-14) Constituent Services (Immigration and Homeland Security) – Alexandra Carter, Caseworker & Field Representative (155 Bovet Road, Suite 780, San Mateo; (650) 342-0300)

(For more detailed info, please see Powerpoint located on [Immigrant Services website](#))

- a. How they can help: Congressional liaisons with federal agencies that include USCIS, US Customs and Border Protection, ICE, National Passport Center, National Visa Center, US Embassies & Consulates Abroad, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
 - Common requests include obtaining statuses for EAD & AP cards, green cards, naturalization applications, extended processing times, immigrant visas impacted by travel ban (Yemen & Iran), family separation & reunification, emergency passport renewals, US citizens services abroad
- b. What they need: privacy release forms with handwritten signatures; supporting evidence for expedited services (ex: signed letter from physician)
 - Letter from applicant is not compelling enough
- c. What they can't do: complete/submit immigration apps, approve visas or overturn decisions, override or expedite travel ban waiver process, release individuals from ICE, provide legal advice, assist with Real ID
- d. Q/A:
 - Q: When is the office open?
A: 9 AM to 6 PM, accepts walk-ins.

4. USCIS Updates: Nina Sachdev, Community Relations Officer

Nina.K.Sachdev@uscis.dhs.gov

- a. An applicant's information is not generally shared with ICE, except on a case-by-case basis if there's a warrant or a public safety issue.
- b. **New Fee Waiver Rule and new Public Charge Rule are under national injunctions**, so these new rules are not being implemented and USCIS is following the pre-existing policy. For the fee waiver rule, this means USCIS is accepting means-tested benefits as part of the fee waiver application. For the public charge rule, this means the eligibility rules for public benefits have not changed. (<https://www.uscis.gov/policy-manual>)
- c. **There was a proposed rule for the increase/adjustment of fees which also proposed to eliminate the use of the fee waiver for certain immigration applications**. Anyone could have commented on this rule through the Federal Register until December 30, 2019. Now, USCIS is reviewing the comments, and it will take a few months before a final rule is published. (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/12/09/2019->

[26521/us-citizenship-and-immigration-services-fee-schedule-and-changes-to-certain-other-immigration\)](#)

- d. **Liberian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act** was signed into law on December 20, 2019. This means Liberians who have been physically present in the U.S. since 11/20/2014 and meet certain immigration requirements can become lawful permanent residents (green card holders). They will need to apply by December 20, 2020. Census data shows about 65 Liberians living in San Mateo County.
- e. **Reminder for applicants to change their address with USCIS after they move.** Those entering on immigrant visas generally have their permanent resident cards (green cards) mailed to them within 5 weeks of entry. If the post office cannot deliver the card, it will be sent back to USCIS and held for 60 days before it is destroyed. It's important for applicants to update their address by going to <https://www.uscis.gov/addresschange> or calling the USCIS Contact Center at 800-375-5283. Another good tool is *Informed Delivery* by the U.S. Postal Service, where you receive an email of the physical mail received in your mailbox. (<https://informeddelivery.usps.com/box/pages/intro/start.action>)

5. Legal Updates: Allison Kamhi, Supervising Attorney at ILRC akamhi@ilrc.org

New California Laws Went into Effect January 1, 2020:

- a. **AB 32 will eventually phase out all private incarceration in California, criminal and civil (including immigration); but while contractors sign billions of dollars in contracts before enactment.** AB 32 signals an important step in the fight against mass incarceration. But since AB 32's signature, ICE signed billions of dollars of long-term contracts before the law's 1/1/20 effective date. Over twenty congresspeople responded with a letter to DHS, demanding transparency and accountability around this clear effort to circumvent AB 32. Additionally, on December 30, 2019, GEO filed *GEO v. CA* in the Southern District of California, requesting that AB 32 be found unconstitutional and that the contracts that GEO entered into be found valid. There will likely be ongoing litigation on this.
- b. **AB 668 restricts civil arrests of people attending California courts.** Effective 1/1/20, this law clarifies California law to prohibit civil arrests inside California courthouses, absent a judicial warrant, for any person attending a court proceeding or having business in a courthouse. There is a long and detailed introductory section of legislative findings and declarations regarding the constitutional rights associated with attending court, the rights of the states to regulate and protect access to its court buildings and to its legal proceedings, and the historical importance of openness of court proceedings to individual members of the public.
- c. **AB 917 imposes more requirements on local officials to deal with certifying U-Visas and T-Visas.** This bill requires the certifying entity to process U visa and T visa certification forms within 30 days of the request, or within 7 days of the first business day following the day the request was received if the noncitizen is in

removal proceedings. *[Before, this was 90 and 14 days]*. It amends the 2016 U visa bill at Pen C 679.10, 679.11.

(https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB917)

- d. **AB 1563 supports counting noncitizens including undocumented people in the Census.** By Feb 2020, will create a California “Census Bill of Rights” to, e.g., protect confidentiality. Also Pen C 529.6 makes it a misdemeanor to misrepresent self as census-taker to interfere with census or to illegally search. (https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1563)
 - e. **AB 1747 limits the use of California CLETS for immigration info.** CLETS is criminal law telecommunications system. 1747 prevents users accessing CLETS from using non-criminal information for immigration enforcement purposes. Additionally, it will give the CA AG more oversight over how different agencies use CLETS.
- 6. Office of Community Affairs Updates: Census Presentation, Melissa Vergara**
mvergara1@smcgov.org; smccensus.org
- (For more detailed info, please see Powerpoint located on [Immigrant Services website](#))
- a. Census 2020: What’s at stake – health care, social services, housing, education, and transportation
 - b. Invitations will start getting mailed March 12-20, and will be sent to a residence, not a specific person
 - c. The internet questionnaire will have 13 different languages available. Paper questionnaires are only in English and Spanish. 13% of San Mateo County will receive paper questionnaires, determined by the US Census Bureau looking at broadband capacity
 - d. RFP #OCA1004: Host a Census event - \$250 to \$3000 based on event size
 - e. Please remember that we need your support! Place posters at your lobbies & clinics; Use our presentations that have voiceovers; Insert a blurb in your newsletters; The Puente Univision video is a great video to display that highlights the importance of Census
 - f. Census jobs are also available at 2020census.gov/jobs or 1-855-562-2020
 - g. Q/A
 - Q: Is there a live person on the phone number above or is it automated?
A: Live person.
 - Q: Can the US Census Bureau send mail to PO Boxes?
A: US Census Bureau will not be sending to PO Boxes. They will be delivered to physical addresses even if it’s not where they receive mail. Also, you will not be able to request a questionnaire sent to a PO Box.
 - Q: What is the American Community Survey?

A: It's a survey that doesn't go to everyone, only takes a sample population, and it happens every year. It is very detailed and asks questions that include income and educational level.

- Q: Some clinics serve severely mentally ill clients who are homeless. They may not be able to use a computer and some refuse to stay at shelters and may not be at one on April 1st. Can a caseworker help client complete the Census?

A: The state has advised under certain circumstances one can assist an individual in filling out the Census however, they must clearly inform the individual that they are not a US Census Employee and therefore Title 13 protections do not apply to assistor.

- Q: How does a person get a paper questionnaire?

A: By calling the Census Bureau. When on the phone, a person may try to have you complete the Census over the phone. There are no blank forms. Each printed form is tied to a residence by a code.

- Q: Is the survey mobile-friendly?

A: Yes

7. Office of Community Affairs Updates: Immigrant Forum Survey, Jasmine Hartenstein

- a. **New time of Forum:** Many responses indicated that the current time of 9 AM provides time conflicts with other meetings. In addition, we do realize that 9 AM is hard with traffic conditions, dropping children off at school, and sometimes presenters that come from San Jose/San Francisco have a hard time making it at 9 AM. Because of this, we will be changing the time of the Immigrant Forum effective **MARCH to 10-12 PM** to try to allow for more people to attend.
- b. **Conference Call Line:** Majority of responses indicated that they would like a conference call-in telephone line, and the Office of Education is providing us with a Zoom/Go-to meeting in order to increase accessibility. We also received a suggestion to send out the agenda/specific topics well in advance to make sure the right people from an organization attend, and we will try our best to do so.
- c. **Bi-weekly updates:** 60% of responses specified that they would like one email with compiled information on a bi-weekly basis. Our team will be doing this, so please send us all your announcements to either immigrantservices@smcgov.org or smcimmigrantservices@gmail.com, and we will be sure to send them out to the Google Group! Of course, if it is an urgent event/announcement, please feel free to upload to the Google Group directly if there is not enough time to wait for the bi-weekly email.
- d. **Legal Updates:** About 60% of responses designated legal updates as the most important agenda item from the Forum. Due to this response, we will try to prioritize legal updates as one of the first items of the agenda, except for days when the times don't work for the presenters. We also added Nina from USCIS to the agenda to provide us with even more updates!

8. Agency Updates Roundtable

- a. Parent Café in Spanish: January 29th 6-730 pm, at Grand Library in SSF; one in English to come later. Parent Café in Redwood City is on the first Tuesday of every month from 10 AM-12 PM at Shasta Clinic.
- b. Parent Project: 12-week session just started Wednesday, January 15th. It's a parent support group throughout SMC. Can still sign up for SSF & EPA.
- c. Conference for Immigrants & Allies: February 29th, this is the 3rd year that adults and youth are combined.
- d. Catholic Charities: continuing to do DACA renewals. Call the office to make an appointment.
- e. Multicultural Institute: March 5th is the main fundraiser in the peninsula.