

San Mateo County Immigrant Forum
Meeting Notes
6/17/2021

1. Welcome & Introductions – Immigrant Services Team

- a. Thank you to all for joining us on Zoom. The Immigrant Forum will be held virtually until further notice.

2. USCIS Updates: Nina Sachdev, Community Relations Officer, USCIS

- a. USCIS has a [Citizenship and Integration Grant Program](#) open; deadline to apply is July 16, 2021
- a. TPS Registration for Burma has opened
- b. USCIS Mask Policy: If you're fully vaccinated, you don't need to wear a mask in the offices anymore
 - USCIS employees can't ask to see vaccine card
- c. Lockboxes: There's been delays in receiving an acceptance or rejection receipt for people filing forms by mail
 - If someone's letter was rejected (due to timing out), they do have to pay the new fee cost, but the receipt will be backdated to the original date
 - Also applies to children who have aged out due to the lockbox delays
- d. U visa process: Due to increases in the volume of U visa petitions and a growing backlog (only 10,000 granted every year, but there are currently 270,000 pending), USCIS has decided to exercise its discretion to conduct bona fide determinations and provide employment authorizations and deferred action to noncitizens with pending, bona fide petitions who meet certain discretionary standards

3. Legal Updates: Andrew Craycroft, ILRC

- a. [Central American Minors \(CAM\) Program](#) Expansion: two-phase reopening of CAM program
 - First phase will include applications that were pending when CAM was terminated in 2018
 - Second phase of CAM reopening will expand eligibility to broader category of applicants
 - Legal guardians will be able to apply in addition to parents
 - Categories of eligible status include: LPRs, TPS holders, parolees, people with deferred action, DED, Withholding of Removal, as well as people with pending asylum or U visa applications filed before 5/15/21
- b. Prosecutorial Discretion (PD) Memo: the memo keeps the enforcement priorities announced by the Biden administration on February 18, 2021 for:
 - People considered a threat to national security
 - People considered a threat to public safety
 - People who entered the United States on or after November 1, 2020
 - Beyond the priorities, the memo gives a list of aggravating and mitigating factors, including:
 - o Mitigating:

- Length of time in the U.S.
 - Military service
 - U.S. family and community ties and contributions to the community
 - Manner of entry and current immigration status
 - U.S. work and education history
 - Being a witness, victim, or plaintiff in a civil or criminal case
 - Eligibility for immigration relief
 - Other humanitarian factors (including age/being a child, pregnancy, health, and being a caregiver for a seriously ill relative in the United States)
 - Aggravating
 - Criminal convictions
 - Persecution of others and human rights violations
 - Immigration violations
- The memo makes it clear that PD should be considered for cases even if the person has not requested it
 - The memo identifies 5 categories of people for whom cases should be generally dismissed if the person is not considered an enforcement priority and if there are no serious negative factors:
 - People who have served in the military or whose immediate relative is in the military (if honorably discharged)
 - People likely to get permanent or temporary relief
 - Compelling humanitarian factors
 - People who are witnesses or otherwise assisting law enforcement
 - Long term LPRs
- c. The Attorney General vacated 3 cases in light of the administration's upcoming rulemaking on particular social group: [*Matter of A-B- I and II*](#) and [*Matter of L-E-A- II*](#)
- *A-B- I* invalidated the particular social group of "Salvadoran women unable to leave their domestic relationship in which they have children in common with their partner" contained a lot of negative language concerning private actor violence
 - Both *A-B- I* and *II* also attempted to raise the government protection standard in such cases. The statutory standard was that the home country's government must be "unwilling or unable" to protect the applicant. The vacated rulings had attempted to heighten that standard to "complete helplessness," redefining the inability prong of the test and reading the "unwilling" prong out of the standard completely
 - *Matter of L-E-A- II* had attempted to end the cognoscibility of particular social groups of nuclear family members
 - Title 42 remains in effect preventing all asylum seekers who do not meet the narrow exceptions from accessing asylum procedures in the U.S.

4. The Immigration Detention System for Unaccompanied Children: Andrew Craycroft, ILRC

- a. See PowerPoint for information
- b. Q/A
 - Q: Does a sponsor need to have immigration status?

A: No, but ICE can choose to go after a sponsor (became much more of a risk due to prior administration)

Q: Does a sponsor get any help after they have the unaccompanied child?

A: Limited help is available. Sometimes ORR can be involved, but most of the help will come from local non-profits

Q: Does public charge have any implications on unaccompanied children?

A: No, they are not related

Q: Is there any accountability for prolonged detention?

A: Not much, unfortunately

5. Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) Presentation: La Trice Taylor, Samaritan House

a. See PowerPoint for information, but additional key points include:

- A person can apply for April, May, and June of this year (not just through March of 2021)
- Citizenship does not matter
- The application has shortened significantly (from 30 pages to about 30 minutes)
- The landlord application is much easier than the tenant application – only 3 or 4 questions
- There is a possibility that the amount of rent covered will be changed from 80% to 100%, but everyone should still be encouraged to apply now
- Q/A

Q: Can you use text messages to turn in documents?

A: This process is being looked at

Q: Is there a proof of income option for people who get paid in cash?

A: There is a self-certification option available (under penalty of perjury)

Q: What about subleases?

A: Refer to CORE agencies

6. Office of Community Affairs Updates

- a. Efforts are underway in finalizing the survey that will be distributed to immigrant residents as part of the San Mateo County Immigrant Integration and Inclusion Strategic Plan. Partners are still welcome to sign on as a Community Engagement Team <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G4GTeams>
- b. The mask mobile has shifted to assist residents with signing up for vaccine clinics in low vaccinated areas in Redwood City, NFO and East Palo Alto. Places include Mi Rancho Market (Redwood City) on Tuesdays AND La Tiendita Market (East Palo Alto) on Wednesdays. Postcards were mailed via a targeted approach (attached)
- c. Our office sent out postcards warning NFO residents about fines associated with fireworks for 4th of July (attached)
- d. Our office is giving out masks. Email lperezavila@smcgov.org if you would like masks

7. Agency Update Roundtable

- a. **Multicultural Institute:** Hiring
- b. **Legal Aid Society:** The San Mateo County immigrant relief fund is officially closed. \$16 million was disbursed. Mission Asset Fund will be publishing a report in July. Also, save-the-date for August 10, 5:30-7pm for LIBRE Project's in-person/virtual client forum