



### **Update to Public Charge and COVID-19, March 19, 2020**

We know that working with all our community members is necessary to achieve health and well-being during these challenging times. Every Oregonian is affected by the coronavirus - through social distancing, loss of income, or worries about health. The only way to stop the spread of the coronavirus is to work together and make sure we all can get the services we need for treatment and prevention.

On March 15, 2020, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) made changes to the Public Charge rule that would let immigrants seek services for treatment, testing and the prevention of the Coronavirus.

These services will NOT be counted toward the Public Charge test :

- Testing for COVID-19,
- Treatment for COVID-19,
- Preventative services for COVID-19. For example, a vaccine for COVID-19, when one is available.

As a reminder, “Public Charge” is a test used by USCIS to decide who they will let into the U.S., who can renew certain temporary visas, and who can get Lawful Permanent Residency (LPR)—also known as a green card. Public charge is a test for the use of public programs and benefits. There is no public charge test when you apply for naturalization.

This can be a scary time for many of us. More so for those of us that already are fearful of seeking medical care that may put our families at risk. These new exceptions to the rule can lessen the worry and stress and help protect our loved ones and community members in the fight to end the spread of the coronavirus.

If you have questions, please reach out to legal aid resources. You may also contact Antonio Torres at the Oregon Department of Human Services.

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