

CIMH December 2020 General Meeting
Policy Workgroup Updates
Overall Policy Climate: what to expect in the first 100 days of Biden Administration

DACA

- On Nov 14th a NY district court judge ruled that the regulatory guidelines that were instated on July 28th were unlawful (because DHS Director Chad Wolf was unlawfully acting as DHS secretary)
- SCOTUS June ruling should be in effect but no initial guidance was issued. Response brief was released on 12/2. <https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/daca-class-action-lawsuit/>
- Biden Administration has stated intent to reinstate DACA, but still need Congressional support for long-term forecast

Refugee Resettlement (Aimee)

- Biden administration will look at increasing the refugee ceiling through an Executive Order with the intent of building infrastructure to receive 125k refugees annually.
- Getting the channels back open to help get infrastructure back in play to allow for strong resettlement program. (8-10 months to see refugees arriving)

Public Charge (Sarah)

- On Nov. 2, a federal judge in Illinois vacated the public charge rule. But on Nov. 3 the circuit court of appeals suspended that ruling while they review the case. On Dec. 2, the ninth circuit court of appeals upheld two preliminary injunctions on the public charge, but limited them to only 5 states.
- Biden administration has stated its intent to end the new Public Charge Rule.
- PIF national is submitting a 50-page memo to help guide litigation options; future of Public Charge changes will be dependent on litigation efforts and timelines

Asylum (Aimee)

- No updates on public comment to asylum rule change
- UACs were being denied entry at the border and recent D.C. District Court injunction was filed to state that they cannot be denied access to seek asylum
<https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2020-11-18/federal-judge-blocks-trump-administration-from-expelling-migrant-children-at-border>

Benefits/ Updates on Services

- Medical coverage for immigrant seniors (see Listserv information sent by Claudio Rivera)
 - Does not affect public charge test because it is fully state-funded
- Immigration unit in Cook County Public Defenders' Office was passed, which will provide immigration lawyers to assist and counsel immigrants on immigration consequences in criminal court proceedings

Covid-19 Pandemic

- HANA Center funds for Covid-19 relief (see Listserv message from Taneka Jennings)
- How can CIMH mobilize to support vaccine public awareness and community outreach (i.e., dispelling myths)?
 - creation/dissemination of multilingual resources and multimedia content
 - access to the vaccine for I/R communities and distribution for essential workers

TPS Update

- Rep. Nydia Velazquez (NY) is introducing a TPS bill in Congress related to recent devastation from hurricanes Eta and Iota (Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala)

<https://velazquez.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/velazquez-introduces-bill-grant-tps-protections-multiple-central>

Other

- As of Dec 1, 2020, the civics test portion of the naturalization test has changed. Individuals have to answer 12 out of 20 questions, before was 6 out of 10 questions; used to be out of 100 possible questions, now it is out of 128 questions. Questions are harder and require more specific answers. Applicants before Dec 1, have old exam format, after Dec 1 have new exam format. Here is the USCIS guidance: <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/find-study-materials-and-resources/study-for-the-test>
- 14 new Welcoming Centers have been added for FY21.