

New American Integration Program



Resources available in Boston

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Available Benefits During Covid-19

Greater Boston Area

Available Food Benefits

[Interface Social Services](#)

Food pantry provides free food, diapers, and pet food.

Hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. and Wednesdays 5-7 p.m.

105 Adams St, Quincy, MA 02169

Tel: 617-773-6203

Web: <https://interfaithsocialservices.org/>

[YMCA Local Food banks](#)

Reach out to your local YMCA to see if they are offering free food and for their hours. Each YMCA may have different hours and you should go to the one closest to your home. You can search for the nearest location by zip code.

Web: <https://www.ymca.net/covid-19-emergency-services-food-distribution>

[Project Bread Food Source Hotline](#)

Project Bread will help you enroll in state and federal nutrition programs.

They will also direct you to the nearest local food resources.

Tel: 1-800-645-8333

Web: <http://www.projectbread.org/get-help/>

[Chelsea Collaborative](#)

Food Pantry- ¡Unidos Por Chelsea Combatiendo COVID19!

318 Broadway, Chelsea, MA 02150

Te: 617- 889-6080 ext. 101

Email: gladysv@chelseacollab.org

Web: <https://www.chelseacollab.org/>



Rent Assistance and Other Financial Resources

[The RAFT Program](#)

The RAFT Program helps families who are homeless or may become homeless. They can assist with moving costs and utility bills.

Tel: 1-800-224-5124

Web: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/learn-about-residential-assistance-for-families-in-transition-raft>

[National Domestic Workers Alliance](#)

Qualifying homecare workers, nannies, and house cleaners may be eligible for a one time \$400 payment to assist with financial hardship.

Tel: 646-360-5806

Web: <https://domesticworkers.org/coronavirus-care-fund>

[Eviction and Displacement Hotline](#)

If you are worried about being evicted, you can call City Life eviction hotline, or attend one of their meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday at 6:30 pm, 284 Amory Street in Jamaica Plain.

English: (617) 934-5006^{SEP}; Spanish: (617) 397-3773

Web: <http://www.clvu.org/>



Legal Resources

[Greater Boston Legal Services](#)

GBLS provides civil (non-criminal) legal matters for Boston residents. They will help you no matter your legal status.

197 Friend Street, Boston, MA 02114

Tel: 617-371-1234

Web: <https://www.gbls.org/>

[Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation](#)

Contact them for legal help. They will use their network to connect you with someone who will be able to assist you. Some of their services include: providing information on the Family Medical Leave Act, filing domestic violence restraining orders, providing guidance on parenting plans under the stay at home order, immigration cases, and education plans.

Office is currently closed but they are available by phone.

Tel: 617-367-8544

Web: <https://mlac.org/>



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Other

[2-1-1 Coronavirus](#)

Call 2-1-1 on your phone if you need help with finding food, paying rent, or other essential services. You can also use their website if you prefer. Type in your location and they will connect you with local resources.

Tel: 211

Web: <https://www.211.org/services/covid19>

[3-1-1 Boston Services and Information](#)

Call 3-1-1 on your phone if you need information or assistance with a non-emergency city service. These services include paying a parking ticket, asking for a pothole to be filled, and many others.

Tel: 311

Web: <https://www.cityofboston.gov/311/>

[Massachusetts Advocates for Children](#)

All children have a right to free public education during the coronavirus outbreak.

English: 617-357-8431 Ext. 3224, Espanol: 617-357-8431 Ext 3237

Address 25 Kingston ST. Boston, 2nd Floor, 02111

Web: <https://www.massadvocates.org/covid19>

[Quest Laboratories](#)

Voluntary testing for Covid-19 Antibodies. The test could be free if ordered by a doctor or authorities.

There are 20 separate locations with different phone numbers.

Beacon Street, Boston location: 617-232-5733

Web: <https://questdirect.questdiagnostics.com/products/covid-19-immune-response/b580e541-78a5-48a6-b17b-7bad949dcb57>



[Check with Your Local Town hall!](#)

Your local town hall will be able to tell you about resource options that are specific to your town and neighborhood. The above link can help you find the phone number for your town.

Web: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cistel/telidx.htm>

[Diaper Hotline:](#)

Family & Children's Services diaper hotline. Call the number to schedule a delivery.

Tel: 781-715-3005

Web: <https://www.fcslynn.org/>

[Filing For Unemployment](#)

Click on the language below to be linked to the unemployment application portal in that language.

[English](https://www.mass.gov/unemployment-insurance-ui-online): <https://www.mass.gov/unemployment-insurance-ui-online>

[Spanish](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/informacion-de-desempleo-de-massachusetts-sobre-el-virus-covid-19): <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/informacion-de-desempleo-de-massachusetts-sobre-el-virus-covid-19>

[Chinese](https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=zh) : <https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=zh>

[Vietnamese](https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=vi) : <https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=vi>

[Haitian Kreyol](https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=ht) : <https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=ht>

[Portuguese](https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=pt) : <https://unemployment.mass.gov/start?lang=pt>



Resources for Undocumented Immigrants

Greater Boston area

Food Access and Emergency Covid-19 Aid

Boston Food Resources Map

Website: [Map of COVID-19 food resources in Boston](#)

Information: Location of food pantries in Boston

Project Bread

Website: <http://www.projectbread.org/>

Information: Food assistance and connect people to other food programs according to their eligibility

MassUndocuFund

Website: <https://www.massundocufund.org/>

Information: Fund for undocumented immigrants who have been impacted by the pandemic.

Legal Referrals

Protections for Immigrant Communities in MA

Website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/information-for-immigrant-workers-about-their-rights>

Information: Immigrant workers' rights, immigrant students, etc.

The PAIR Project

Website: <https://www.pairproject.org/>

Information: Free legal services to asylum seekers and immigration detainees



The Rian Center

Website: <https://www.riancenter.org/>

Information: Legal counsel, Referral services

Greater Boston Legal Services

Website: <https://www.gbls.org/>

Information: Legal assistance to low-income individuals

DACA Funds

Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition

Website: <https://www.miracoalition.org/our-work/dreamers/>

Information: MIRA helps with filing DACA Renewals and fees, however funds are limited, but when you call ask if funds are available.

Phone:(617)350-5480 Ext. 200

Golden doors

Website:<https://www.goldendoorscholars.org>

Information: Must have DACA, TPS or meet the immigrant eligibility criteria

Hispanic heritage foundation Youth awards

Website:<https://hhfawards.hispanicheritage.org/2019/forms/welcome.php>

Information: For LPR and DACA

Healthcare and MassHealth

Residents of Massachuttes have the right to access essential healthcare regardless of immigration status. Even if you are undocumented you may qualify for certain forms of public healthcare through MassHealth.

MassHealth is a state-funded program, so you will need to meet income guidelines to qualify.



MassHealth Standard

Undocumented pregnant women and infants are eligible for MassHealth standard if they meet certain income requirements.

MassHealth Standard services include:

- Inpatient hospital services
- Outpatient services: hospitals, clinics, doctors, dentists, family planning, vision care
- Medical services: lab tests, X rays, therapies, pharmacy services, eyeglasses, hearing aids, medical equipment, and supplies

MassHealth Limited

MassHealth Limited provides *emergency health services* to undocumented people or people with an immigration status that keeps them from getting more services. For MassHealth Limited you can get care only for medical emergencies (conditions that could cause serious harm if not treated).

MassHealth Limited services include:

- Inpatient hospital emergency services, including labor and delivery
- Outpatient hospital emergency services and emergency visits to emergency rooms
- Certain medical services provided by doctors and clinics outside of a hospital
- Pharmacy services for treating an emergency medical condition
- Ambulance transportation for an emergency medical condition only

MassHealth Coverage for U.S. Citizen Children

Children who are U.S. citizens or have legal status may qualify for MassHealth Standard regardless of their parents' immigration status.

It is important to remember that when you are applying for your own coverage, you will need to disclose your immigration status. However, if you are applying for coverage for someone else in your household (such as a child with U.S. citizenship), you only need to disclose the immigration status of whoever is seeking coverage (not yourself or anyone else in the household). If



you apply for MassHealth for your child, you do not need to disclose your immigration status, only theirs!

Healthcare Centers and ICE: Know your Rights

ICE cannot detain you at a hospital or similar places such as doctors' offices, health clinics, and urgent care centers. Health care centers are sensitive locations where enforcement activities like searches and arrests are not allowed. The only time when ICE can engage in enforcement activities at sensitive locations is under special circumstances or if they have prior approval.

Health care providers do not have to verify your immigration or citizenship status and can help you regardless. Emergency departments can also provide emergency care without asking about immigration, citizenship, or insurance status. You are not required to disclose your immigration status to any hospital or healthcare professional.

For more information on the types of healthcare you or your family may qualify for visit mass.gov/masshealth

Scholarships

Hispanic Scholarship Fund

Website: <https://www.hsf.net/scholarship>

Information: The HSF Scholarship is designed to assist students of Hispanic heritage to obtain a university degree. Awards are based on merit; amounts range from \$500 to \$5,000, based on relative need, among the Scholars selected.



The Dream Us

Website: <https://www.thedream.us/scholarships/national-scholarship/>

Information: It is a National Scholarship Award that will cover tuition and fees up to a maximum of \$14,500 for an associate degree and \$29,000 for a bachelor's degree, at one of their Partner Colleges.

MALDEF

Website:

<https://www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources/>

Information: The MALDEF Scholarship Resource Guide is a free, informative resource guide for students, parents, and educators with an extensive list of scholarships, including many that do not inquire about immigration status.

Immigrants Rising

Website: <https://immigrantsrising.org/2020scholarships/>

Information: A list of scholarships and fellowships available to students regardless of status



ENGLISH RESOURCES:

CONTINUE LEARNING ENGLISH DURING COVID-19

These are resources to help you continue learning English online through online classes or apps and websites. Click on the [blue link](#) to learn more.

City of Boston:

[YMCA of Greater Boston \(International Learning Center, Boston\)](#)

100 Franklin St. Boston, MA 02110
mmendez@ymcaboston.org
617-927-8244

[Jewish Vocational Services](#)

75 Federal St., 3rd Floor Boston, MA 02110
lsevigny@jvs-boston.org
617-529-0366

[Literacy Services-Boston Public Library](#)

700 Boylston St. Boston, MA 02116
literacyservices@bpl.org
617-859-2446

[Julie's Family Learning Program](#)

133 Dorchester Street, South Boston, MA 02127
617-269-6663 ext.34

Greater Boston:

[Community Learning Center](#)

5 Western Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139
617-349-636



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[BHA Charlestown Adult Education](#)

76 Monument Street 2L, Charlestown, MA 02129
617-635-5221

[BEST Hospitality Training Center](#)

101 Station Landing, Medford, MA 02155
617-542-1177

[Smart from the Start](#)

255 Medford Street, Charlestown, MA 02129
617 635 5170

[Intergenerational Literacy Program](#)

99 Hawthorn Street, Chelsea, MA 02150
617-466-5154

[East Boston Harborside Community School- Adult Learning Program](#)

312 Border Street, East Boston, MA 02128
617-635-5115

[Revere Community School](#)

101 School Street, Revere, MA 02151
781-333-2061 x51424

[First Congregational Church of Revere](#)

230 Beach Street, Revere, MA 02151
781-284-4158

[Women Encouraging Empowerment](#)

50 Walnut Avenue, Revere, MA 02151
781-284-4251

[YMCA of Greater Boston \(International Learning Center, Woburn\):](#)

523 Main Street, Woburn, MA 01450
international-woburn@ymcaboston.org
781-935-6499



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South Shore:

[Immigrants' Assistance Center](#)

58 Crapo St. New Bedford, MA 02740
508-996-8113

[Adult Basic Education \(ABE\) program at Massasoit Community College](#)

1 Massasoit Blvd. Brockton, MA 02302
508-588-9100

[Stoughton Public Library Adult Education Program](#)

84 Park Street, Stoughton MA 02072
781-344-2711

[Literacy Program at Plymouth Public Library](#)

132 South St. Plymouth, MA 02360
plymouthlit@gmail.com
(508) 830-4260

[The Literacy Center - Attleboro](#)

80 North Main Street, Attleboro, MA 02703
508-226-3603



Online Learning:

SPEAK:

[Mango Languages App](#)



- English lessons in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese (Brazilian), Somali, Spanish and **many more**
- Sign up using your local library card

[Duolingo App](#)



- English lessons in Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese (Brazilian), Spanish and **many more**

[Wordreference](#)

- Dictionary with translations and conjugations for English words and phrases from Spanish, French, German, Dutch, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and **many more**

LISTEN:

[We Speak NYC](#)

- Watch videos and check your understanding

[ESL Lab](#)

- Listen to conversations and test your understanding

[Intergenerational Literacy Program](#)

- USA Learns
- Khan Academy- Grammar
- ACT WorkKeys



PUBLIC CHARGE

HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME?

What is Public Charge?

The public charge rule is a test used to help determine who should be granted a green card or visa.

Who is considered a “public charge”?

- An individual is considered a public charge if they are likely at any time in the future to receive certain public benefits.

Who does public charge apply to?

- Public charge applies to individuals who are applying for a green card or a U.S. visa.
- Public charge does not affect citizenship applications, green card renewals, or refugees/asylees.

What factors are used to determine if an individual is a public charge?

- Age, income, health, education, skills, sponsor’s affidavit of support, and the person’s receipt of certain public benefits.

Are all public benefits a problem?

- Only certain public benefits are considered for public charge (e.g., non-emergency Medicaid, SNAP, federal housing)



subsidies, government cash benefits) and almost all individuals subject to the “public charge” requirement are not eligible for these benefits.

- Public benefits received by family members are not considered.
- Public charge does not apply if you are receiving certain benefits, i.e. Emergency Medical Assistance, National School Lunch Programs, The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for women, infants, and children; The Children’s Health Insurance Program, Energy Assistance, and Food pantries.

(For the full list visit <https://www.uscis.gov/news/public-charge-fact-sheet>)

How does public charge affect me?

I’m applying for a green card or a visa. Should I stop receiving my public benefit?

- Generally, no. Most benefits you are eligible for are not considered for “public charge” purposes and you should use benefits you and your family need.

I want to petition for a family member. Should I stop receiving my public benefit?

- Generally, no- the “public charge” requirement applies to your family member, not you.



What can I do to improve my chances of not being a public charge?

- Take an English class, get your GED, job training,
- Find a job with health insurance
- Improve your credit score
- Save money...

How has COVID-19 impacted public charge?

Will getting medical treatment for COVID-19 be a negative factor?

- No. Medical assistance related to COVID-19 will not count toward the public charge determination.

I lost my job due to COVID-19. If I receive unemployment benefits, will that be a negative factor?

- No. You should apply for and receive unemployment benefits.

If I receive P-EBT (cash assistance for food) benefits for my children, will that be a negative factor?

- No. P-EBT benefits will not count toward the public charge determination.



PUBLIC CHARGE LESSON:

FOR ESL/CIVICS TEACHERS AND THEIR STUDENTS

Here is the Link to the Slideshow We Made About Public Charge: [CLICK HERE](#)

Here is the [link](#) to the slideshow you can use with your students. With this link, you can simply go to View > Present to present the slideshow. If you would like to keep it for yourself or edit it, you can click File > Download. When you edit your copy, it will not impact the slides for other teachers who hope to use this resource with their students. Please note, sometimes it looks like a text bubble blocks the whole slide, but those pop-ups are designed to come at the end of the slide. When you present the slideshow, they will not block the slide. (For example, on slide 5, there is a cloud that says, “Public Charge is about the future”. That cloud will pop up at the end of the slide when you try to move to the next slide. These pop-ups are designed to summarize an important takeaway for the students). We hope this helps!

To the Teacher:

This slideshow and the accompanying notes are intended to help you inform your students about the new public charge rule. We hope that this lesson will help dispel the fear and harmful misconceptions about this rule. Please use the attached resources to educate yourself as much as possible about the new rule, so you can anticipate your students’ questions. We designed this slideshow with intermediate level ESOL students in mind. Please feel free to modify the slideshow to fit the needs of your class.

We estimate that teaching this slideshow will take between 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the amount of class discussion. If you like, you can break the slideshow up into multiple lessons. The slides are color-coded by section, so you can teach one or two sections at a time. You might also want to do a “pre-lesson” where you introduce students to the relevant vocabulary. Read the slides with an eye out for words your



students might find challenging, make note of them, and teach them before presenting the slideshow.

Suggested teacher dialog is in *italics*. Adjust the language level as needed to match the level of your students.

Slide 1: Public Charge

Have you heard of Public Charge? What do you know about Public Charge? If no one is talking, ask the students to tell you what they see in the pictures.

Slide 2: What is Public Charge?

The Public Charge Test helps decide if you can get a visa or a green card. For some people, when they apply for a visa or a green card, the Public Charge Test is one part of their application.

Slide 3: What is Public Charge?

“Public Charge” means that someone depends on support from the government. It means that they use some government benefits. Ask for examples of government benefits. Give an example to get students started if no one volunteers. Explain that there are many different kinds of government benefits. Some help people get money, food, housing, health insurance, etc. If you lose your job, you get unemployment benefits. Old people get special benefits. Veterans get special benefits.

Public Charge means that someone uses certain benefits. So the Public Charge Test is to see if an immigrant will probably use these benefits in the future. Only some government benefits are part of the Public Charge Test. We will talk about those benefits later.

Make it clear that only certain benefits are part of the public charge test.

Is “likely” the same as “definitely”? No. What does “likely” mean? Likely means probably.

Write: Definitely =100%, Likely= >50%



When is someone likely to use government benefits? Someone might use benefits when they don't have enough money. They might use benefits to help pay rent and buy food. A sick person might use benefits to go to the doctor.

Slide 4: What is Public Charge?

Someone applies for a green card or visa. The immigration officer wants to know if this person is likely to use certain benefits in the future. So the officer looks at the person's circumstances.

Have students read the circumstances out loud together. Check for comprehension with each item: *What is your age? What is employment? What are job skills?*

Have a student read the questions in the thought bubble.

Slide 5: What is Public Charge?

After the officer looks at the person's circumstances, they think: "Is this person likely to use these government benefits?" If the officer thinks "Yes, this person is likely to use these benefits", then the person fails the public charge test. The person can't get a visa or green card. If the officer thinks "No, this person is not likely to use these benefits", then the person passes the public charge test. The person can get a visa or a green card.

The Public Charge Test is about the future. Using certain public benefits in the past may make it more likely that someone would use public benefits in the future, but there are a lot of other factors that could be just as important, such as education, age, or employment. Even if you used government benefits in the past, you can still pass the public charge test.

Slide 6: Who is Tested for Public Charge?

Who is tested for Public Charge? Only some immigrants have to think about Public Charge. Many immigrants are not tested for Public Charge. There are only three times someone is tested for Public Charge. 1. Someone is applying for a green card for the first



time. 2. Someone is applying for a visa. 3. Someone with a green card has been outside of the U.S. for six months or more, and now they want to come back. Everybody else is NOT tested for Public Charge. People with green cards are never tested for Public Charge, unless they leave the U.S. for more than six months. There are many kinds of immigrants who are not tested for Public Charge. Have students read the list.

Hit Enter and wait for the yellow bubble to pop up. You are not tested when you renew your green card. You are not tested when you apply for citizenship.

Slides 7 and 8: Who is tested for Public Charge?

Ask students to number a piece of paper from one to ten. Hit Enter and read each example out loud, one at a time. After each example, ask students, *Is this person tested for Public Charge? Write Yes or No on your paper.* Then, go back through the examples and ask students to give you their answers. If there is disagreement, let individual students explain their reasoning. Provide the answers when necessary.

- 1. Walter is NOT tested for Public Charge. Walter has a green card and he is applying for citizenship. There is no Public Charge Test when you apply for citizenship.*
- 2. Masami is tested for Public Charge because she is applying for a green card.*
- 3. Richard is tested for Public Charge because he is applying for a green card.*
- 4. Lucia is NOT tested for Public Charge because she is applying for TPS. There is no Public Charge Test when you apply for TPS.*
- 5. Jamel is NOT tested for Public Charge because he is a refugee. If you are a refugee, there is no Public Charge Test, even if you apply for a green card.*
- 6. Nuno is tested for Public Charge because he is applying for a green card.*
- 7. Josephine is tested for Public Charge because she is applying for a visa.*
- 8. Lukas is NOT tested for Public Charge because he has a U visa. If you have a U visa or a T visa, there is no Public Charge Test, even if you apply for a green card.*
- 9. Emmanuel is NOT tested for Public Charge. There is no Public Charge Test when you apply or reapply for DACA.*



10. Sun Li is NOT tested for Public Charge. There is no Public Charge Test when you renew your green card.

Slide 9: Am I tested for Public Charge?

Are you applying for a visa? Are you applying for a green card? Then you might be tested for Public Charge. You are only tested for Public Charge if 1. You are applying for a visa, 2. You are applying for a green card, or 3. You have a green card but you left the U.S. for more than six months. Read the red box. Look at the red box. The groups in the red box are NOT tested for public charge, even if they apply for a visa or a green card. For example, a Special Immigrant Juvenile applying for a green card IS NOT tested for public charge. A VAWA self-petitioner who applies for a green card is NOT tested for public charge. If you get a conditional green card when you get married, and then you apply for a new green card, you are NOT tested for Public Charge.

Slide 10: Public Charge Test Factors

In the Public Charge Test, the immigration officer tries to predict if you will probably use certain benefits. The officer looks at many things about you. Each thing is called a factor. Age is one factor. How old are you? Employment is another factor. Do you have a job? Have students read the remaining factors. The officer must look at every factor. All of the factors together are called your circumstances. The immigration officer will use all of these factors to predict if you will probably use certain government benefits in the future.

Slide 11: Positive Factors

These are the positive factors. Positive factors will help you in the Public Charge Test. Have a student read the two bolded factors. Point out that the bolded factors are VERY positive. If you have a high income, that will help you a lot in the test. If you have private health insurance, that will also help you a lot in the test. Have students read out loud the rest of the positive factors.



Slide 12: Negative Factors

These are the negative factors. Negative factors will hurt you in the Public Charge Test.

Point out that the bolded factors are VERY negative. Have a student read the first factor. *Unemployment is a very negative factor. If you don't have a job, that will hurt you a lot in the test, unless you don't have a work permit, or you are going to school.*

Have a student read the next factor. *This is also a very negative factor. If you have bad health problems, but you don't have private health insurance, that will hurt you a lot on the test.* Have a student read the next factor. *This is another very negative factor. After 2/24/20, if you use certain benefits for twelve months, it will hurt you a lot on the test. We will talk about these benefits later. Most immigrants aren't allowed to use those benefits anyway.* Have students read the next factors. *Cash benefits are money from the government that you get every month. If you have ever used these cash benefits, that is a negative factor. But most immigrants aren't allowed to get cash benefits anyway. Any other benefits you used before 2/24/20 will NOT hurt you on the test.*

Slide 13: Liam's Circumstances

Have a volunteer read about Liam. Ask students to write down Liam's positive factors and his negative factors. Remind students that positive factors are things that will help Liam on the Public Charge Test, and negative factors are things that will hurt Liam on the test. Point out to students that they are given the number of positive factors and negative factors. Give students a few minutes to do this. Ask students to share their answers and type them onto the slide if you can.

Positive: Owns a house, has money in the bank, native English speaker

Negative: 65 years old, unemployed, health problems, no private health insurance

Slide 14: Angela's Circumstances

Follow the instructions for slide 13.

Positive: 27 years old, healthy, college degree, good job, private health insurance

Negative: bad credit score, no savings



Slide 15: Juan's Circumstances

Follow the instructions for slide 13.

Positive: Healthy, goes to school, affidavit of support

Negative: 16 years old, large family, low income

Slide 16: What about you?

What if you had to take the Public Charge Test? What are your positive factors? What are your negative factors? Give students a few minutes to write down their answers.

Assure students that they will not be sharing their answers with anyone.

Slide 17: Improving your circumstances

Most people have some positive factors and some negative factors. Having some negative factors does not mean you will fail the Public Charge Test. The officer will look at all of your factors together. Have a student read the words in the thought bubbles.

Slide 18: Improving your circumstances

If you are worried about public charge, add positive factors. Have students read the examples. Ask students if they can think of any other ways someone taking the public charge test could improve their circumstances.

Some people think that Public Charge means they should never use benefits. But that is not true. Public Charge does not care if you use most benefits. If using benefits will help you improve your other factors, you should use them.

Slide 19: Public Charge and Benefits

Reminder: Public Charge is a test to see if an immigrant is likely to use certain benefits in the future. It is not a test to see if they will use any government benefit or program. Only certain benefits. Not all government benefits are negative factors. So which government benefits does the Public Charge test care about?

Slide 20: Which benefits are negative factors?

The Public Charge Test only cares about the benefits on this page.



- *All income-based cash benefits are part of Public Charge. Cash benefits mean a person with low income gets money every month from the government. Examples of cash benefits are Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and Supplemental Security Income. (Unemployment and Social Security don't count).*
- *SNAP, or food stamps, helps people buy food.*
- *Section 8 Housing, Rental Assistance, and Federal Public Housing are all benefits where the government helps people find a place to live and pay their rent. (State and local housing don't count as negative factors).*
- *Medicaid is health insurance from the government. **Medicaid in Massachusetts is called MassHealth.***

The Public Charge Test is to see if an immigrant is likely to use any of these benefits. No other benefits are part of the test. Using other benefits will not hurt you in the Public Charge Test.

Slide 21: Public Charge and Benefits

If you are an immigrant applying for a green card or a visa, you probably can't use these benefits anyway. Only some immigrants are qualified to use these benefits. Of all the immigrants who are tested for Public Charge, only a small number are qualified to use these benefits.

Slide 22: Family members using these benefits

If someone in your family uses one of these benefits, it is not a negative factor. The Public Charge Test does not care about the benefits your family members get, only benefits you get. For example, if your daughter is a U.S. citizen and she gets SNAP (food stamps), it will not be a negative factor on your Public Charge test.

Slide 23: Public Charge and Benefits

Important: Public Charge does not change what benefits you are qualified to get. Your eligibility for benefits is the same.



Slide 24: Which benefits are not part of Public Charge?

Before class, if you know one of your students uses a government program (that isn't part of Public Charge) that they might be worried about, add it to the list. Have students read the list. Emphasize that MassHealth for emergencies, children, or pregnant women (up to 60 days after they give birth) is NOT part of Public Charge. Tell students that this is not a complete list. All government benefits and programs not listed on slide 20 are NOT part of Public Charge.

Slide 25: COVID-19

Tell the students this is important. *The government has said that any medical care for COVID-19 will NOT be a negative factor in the Public Charge test. You can use MassHealth to pay for COVID-19 testing and treatment if you get sick. When there is a COVID-19 vaccine, you can use MassHealth to pay for it. If you need to use MassHealth or any other benefit because of COVID-19, it will NOT hurt you in the Public Charge test. Your health is the most important thing. Get the healthcare you need!*

Slide 26: COVID-19 Benefits

Some special benefits are available because of COVID-19. If your child used to get free or reduced-price meals at school, your family can get a P-EBT card. You can use the card to buy food at any store that accepts SNAP. Food banks are another resource. If you lost your job because of COVID-19, you qualify for special unemployment benefits. NONE of these benefits are part of the Public Charge Test. You do not need to be afraid of using these benefits. You should use what your family needs.

Slides 27 and 28: Yes or No

Have the students number a piece of paper from one to ten. Tell the students they will hear ten sentences. If the sentence is correct, write "yes". If the sentence is wrong, write "no". Read each sentence one at a time and give students a few moments to think and write their answers.

1. Yes.
2. Yes.



3. No. These immigrants are not tested for public charge.
4. Yes.
5. No. Having one negative factor does not mean you will fail the Public Charge test. The officer must look at all factors together.
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes.
9. No. Treatment for COVID-19 is not a negative factor in the Public Charge test, even if you use MassHealth to pay for it.
- 10.No. If someone in your family uses one of the “bad” benefits, it’s not a negative factor.

Slides 27-31: For more information

Use the slide(s) most relevant to your area. Please supplement these slides with any local organizations you know of.