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Proposed Changes to Immigration Rules Could Cost California Jobs, Harm Public Health

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Changes to “public charge” rules proposed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security could lead to losses of up to \$1.67 billion in federal benefits for California and even greater economic losses across the state.

What is the “Public Charge” Test?

When a person applies for lawful permanent residency (a “green card”) or for a visa to enter the United States, U.S. immigration officials conduct what is called a “public charge” test to determine if that person may become primarily dependent on the government to meet their basic needs.

What Changes are Proposed to the Public Charge Test?

Currently, only two public benefits—cash assistance and long-term institutional care—are considered for the public charge test. Under the proposed changes to federal immigration

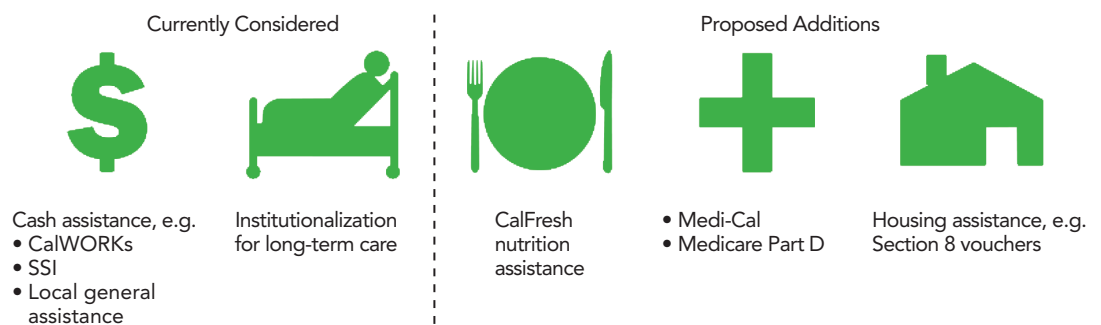


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rules, people could be denied status as lawful permanent residents if they’ve received certain health care, housing or nutrition assistance benefits (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Public Programs and Public Charge



Take Action: Submit a Public Comment

Public comments about the proposed changes to the public charge test can be submitted through December 10, 2018; all comments must be counted and considered by public officials before a final rule is issued. Visit the Protecting Immigrant Families website at <https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/> to learn more. Any individual, agency, or organization can submit a comment, and commenting on the proposed rule is not considered lobbying.

In addition, the proposed rule adds harsher standards for personal circumstances that make someone less likely to receive a green card, such as having limited English proficiency, limited educational attainment, low income, being a child or being a senior.

Negative Effects on Health and Hunger

The proposed changes to immigration rules are complex and could lead to misinformation, confusion and fear about enrollment in public programs. Analysis indicates that this “chilling effect” could impact up to 2.2 million Californians in immigrant families, most of whom would not actually be legally subject to the proposed new public charge test.

If just 15 to 35 percent of those Californians in immigrant families disenroll from public programs, that is a loss of federal benefits for up to 765,000 people across the state.

Disenrollment would increase poverty, hunger and poor health in communities statewide by reducing the resources that California residents have for health care, food and other basic necessities.

Regardless of employment, among California’s immigrant adults potentially impacted by the proposed rule:

- Medi-Cal enrollees are 1.8 times more likely to have a usual place to get health care, and are 1.5 times more likely to have had a preventive care visit in the past year, compared with people who are uninsured, but eligible for Medi-Cal.
- More than 400,000 adults are food insecure, which means that they lacked consistent access to enough food at some point in the past year. Disenrollment from CalFresh could increase food insecurity in California.

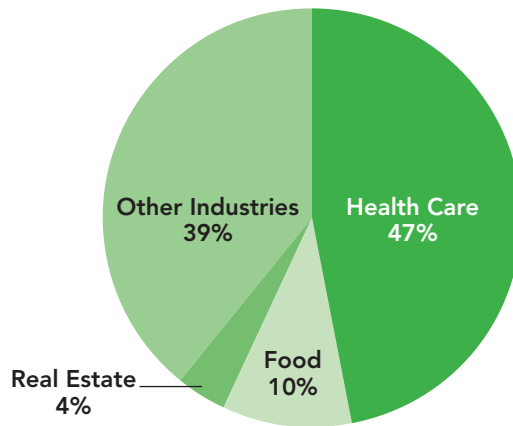
Nearly 70 percent of California residents projected to disenroll from health care and nutrition assistance benefits would be children.

Across California, disenrollment from CalFresh and Medi-Cal would most significantly impact Latinos (88 percent) and Asians (8 percent).

“California could lose up to \$1.67 billion in federal benefits, yielding an even greater loss of spending throughout the broader state economy – \$2.8 billion – as the loss of those federal dollars has an economic ripple effect across multiple industries.”

Figure 2

Lost Jobs



If proposed changes to the 'public charge' test go into effect, up to 17,700 jobs across California will no longer exist.

Negative Economic Effects Across California

Analysis shows that if just 35 percent of those touched by the “chilling effect” disenroll from Medi-Cal and CalFresh:

- California could lose up to \$1.67 billion in federal benefits, yielding an even greater loss of spending throughout the broader state economy—\$2.80 billion—as the loss of those federal dollars has an economic ripple effect across industries.
- As many as 17,700 jobs could be eliminated statewide (Figure 2). An estimated 57 percent of the job losses would come from California’s health care sector (8,400 jobs) and food-related industries (1,800 jobs).

Proposed Changes to Immigration Rules Could Cost California Jobs, Harm Public Health: Data Tables

The following data tables contain state, regional and county estimates from our analyses on the potential effects of proposed changes to the “public charge” test. These findings focus on potential effects to CalFresh nutrition assistance and Medi-Cal health insurance enrollment, related economic impacts, hunger and health.

Chilling Effects of Proposed Changes to the Public Charge Test

The proposed changes to immigration rules are complex and could lead to misinformation, confusion and fear about enrollment in public programs. Analysis indicates that this “chilling effect” could impact up to 2.2 million Californians in immigrant families enrolled in CalFresh nutrition assistance and/or Medi-Cal health insurance, most of whom would not actually be legally subject to the proposed new public charge test.

Table 1. Chilling Effect Population

Location	CalFresh	Medi-Cal	CalFresh and/or Medi-Cal
California statewide	860,000	2,116,000	2,185,000
Northern and Sierra region*	12,000	39,000	39,000
Sacramento region	14,000	63,000	63,000
Sacramento County	11,000	38,000	39,000
El Dorado, Placer and Yolo counties (grouped)**	3,000	25,000	25,000
Bay Area region	131,000	279,000	289,000
Alameda County	25,000	46,000	46,000
San Francisco County	35,000	58,000	58,000
San Mateo County	17,000	43,000	43,000
Santa Clara County	28,000	58,000	58,000
Solano County	5,000	9,000	10,000
Sonoma County	12,000	21,000	30,000
Contra Costa, Marin and Napa counties (grouped)**	9,000	45,000	45,000
Central Coast region	42,000	134,000	141,000
Monterey County	11,000	39,000	39,000
Ventura County	22,000	37,000	44,000
San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz counties (grouped)**	9,000	58,000	58,000
San Joaquin region	152,000	361,000	366,000
Fresno County	55,000	120,000	121,000
Kern County	17,000	84,000	84,000
Kings County	6,000	12,000	13,000
Madera County	13,000	21,000	21,000
Merced County	8,000	22,000	22,000
San Joaquin County	8,000	27,000	27,000
Stanislaus County	10,000	30,000	33,000
Tulare County	35,000	45,000	46,000
Los Angeles County	283,000	708,000	727,000
Other Southern California region	227,000	532,000	559,000
Imperial County	6,000	28,000	28,000
Orange County	44,000	116,000	126,000
Riverside County	48,000	122,000	125,000
San Bernardino County	70,000	137,000	144,000
San Diego County	59,000	129,000	137,000

Population estimates are rounded to the closest 1,000 individuals. Estimates may not sum to totals due to rounding.

* Northern and Sierra region includes Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne and Yuba counties.

** We generated county-level estimates for counties with sufficient samples and statistically stable estimates. Counties for which estimates were not generated were grouped together by region.

Demographics of the Populations Impacted by the Chilling Effect

Across California, children make up the majority of people who would be impacted by the chilling effect of proposed changes to the public charge test (Table 2). Among racial/ethnic groups, Latinos and Asians would be most significantly impacted (Table 3).

Table 2. Percent of the Chilling Effect Population Who Are Children

Location	CalFresh	Medi-Cal	CalFresh and/or Medi-Cal
California statewide	75%	67%	67%
Northern and Sierra region	83%	65%	65%
Sacramento region	80%	78%	78%
Bay Area region	70%	63%	61%
Central Coast region	50%	68%	64%
San Joaquin region	76%	66%	66%
Los Angeles County	80%	69%	69%
Other Southern California region	76%	66%	66%

Table 3. Percent of the Chilling Effect Population Who Are Latino or Asian

Location	CalFresh		Medi-Cal		CalFresh and/or Medi-Cal	
	% Latino	% Asian	% Latino	% Asian	% Latino	% Asian
California statewide	91%	7%	88%	8%	88%	8%
Northern and Sierra region	100%	0%	91%	5%	91%	5%
Sacramento region	–	–	47%	38%	47%	39%
Bay Area region	82%	18%	76%	20%	77%	19%
Central Coast region	99%	–	92%	–	93%	–
San Joaquin region	97%	3%	93%	4%	93%	5%
Los Angeles County	91%	6%	90%	8%	90%	8%
Other Southern California region	95%	2%	93%	4%	93%	4%

– Suppressed due to insufficient sample size to make statistically reliable estimates

Decreased access to food and health care as a result of proposed changes to the public charge test

Analysis shows that if 35 percent of Californians impacted by the chilling effect disenroll from

Medi-Cal and CalFresh, 765,000 people across the state will lose much-needed federal benefits that support health and fight hunger.

Table 4. Changes in CalFresh and Medi-Cal Enrollment if 35 Percent of the Chilling Effect Population Disenrolls from CalFresh Nutrition Assistance and Medi-Cal Health Insurance Programs

Location	CalFresh	Medi-Cal	CalFresh and/or Medi-Cal
California statewide	-301,000	-741,000	-765,000
Northern and Sierra region*	-4,000	-14,000	-14,000
Sacramento region	-5,000	-22,000	-22,000
Sacramento County	-4,000	-13,000	-14,000
El Dorado, Placer and Yolo counties (grouped)**	-1,000	-9,000	-9,000
Bay Area region	-46,000	-98,000	-101,000
Alameda County	-9,000	-16,000	-16,000
San Francisco County	-12,000	-20,000	-20,000
San Mateo County	-6,000	-15,000	-15,000
Santa Clara County	-10,000	-20,000	-20,000
Solano County	-2,000	-3,000	-3,000
Sonoma County	-4,000	-8,000	-10,000
Contra Costa, Marin and Napa counties (grouped)**	-3,000	-16,000	-16,000
Central Coast region	-15,000	-47,000	-49,000
Monterey County	-4,000	-14,000	-14,000
Ventura County	-8,000	-13,000	-15,000
San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz counties (grouped)**	-3,000	-20,000	-20,000
San Joaquin region	-53,000	-126,000	-128,000
Fresno County	-19,000	-42,000	-42,000
Kern County	-6,000	-29,000	-29,000
Kings County	-2,000	-4,000	-4,000
Madera County	-4,000	-7,000	-7,000
Merced County	-3,000	-8,000	-8,000
San Joaquin County	-3,000	-9,000	-9,000
Stanislaus County	-4,000	-11,000	-11,000
Tulare County	-12,000	-16,000	-16,000
Los Angeles County	-99,000	-248,000	-254,000
Other Southern California region	-80,000	-186,000	-196,000
Imperial County	-2,000	-10,000	-10,000
Orange County	-15,000	-41,000	-44,000
Riverside County	-17,000	-43,000	-44,000
San Bernardino County	-25,000	-48,000	-50,000
San Diego County	-21,000	-45,000	-48,000

Disenrollment estimates are rounded to the closest 1,000 individuals. Estimates may not sum to totals due to rounding.

* Northern and Sierra region includes Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne and Yuba counties.

** We generated county-level estimates for counties with sufficient samples and statistically stable estimates. Counties for which estimates were not generated were grouped together by region.

Economic losses from proposed changes to public charge test

Disenrollment from CalFresh and Medi-Cal will harm individuals, families and entire communities. California could lose up to \$1.67 billion in federal benefits (Table 5), yielding an even greater loss of spending throughout the broader state economy—

\$2.80 billion—as the loss of those federal dollars has a negative economic ripple effect across industries (Table 6). State and local governments could lose up to \$151 million in state and local tax revenue as fewer dollars circulate through the economy and less sales tax, income tax and other tax revenue is generated (Table 7).

Table 5. Reduction in Federally-funded Benefits to California if 35 Percent of the Chilling Effect Population Disenrolls from CalFresh Nutrition Assistance and Medi-Cal Health Insurance Programs

Location	CalFresh	Medi-Cal	CalFresh and/or Medi-Cal
California statewide	\$488 million	\$1.19 billion	\$1.67 billion
Northern and Sierra region*	\$6 million	\$20 million	\$26 million
Sacramento region	\$8 million	\$34 million	\$42 million
Sacramento County	\$6 million	\$21 million	\$27 million
El Dorado, Placer and Yolo counties (grouped)**	\$2 million	\$13 million	\$15 million
Bay Area region	\$74 million	\$157 million	\$232 million
Alameda County	\$14 million	\$26 million	\$40 million
San Francisco County	\$20 million	\$33 million	\$52 million
San Mateo County	\$10 million	\$24 million	\$34 million
Santa Clara County	\$16 million	\$33 million	\$49 million
Solano County	\$3 million	\$5 million	\$8 million
Sonoma County	\$7 million	\$12 million	\$19 million
Contra Costa, Marin and Napa counties (grouped)**	\$5 million	\$25 million	\$30 million
Central Coast region	\$23 million	\$77 million	\$100 million
Monterey County	\$2 million	\$11 million	\$13 million
Ventura County	\$4 million	\$10 million	\$14 million
San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz counties (grouped)**	\$18 million	\$56 million	\$73 million
San Joaquin region	\$83 million	\$204 million	\$287 million
Fresno County	\$30 million	\$68 million	\$98 million
Kern County	\$10 million	\$48 million	\$57 million
Kings County	\$3 million	\$7 million	\$10 million
Madera County	\$7 million	\$12 million	\$19 million
Merced County	\$4 million	\$12 million	\$16 million
San Joaquin County	\$5 million	\$15 million	\$20 million
Stanislaus County	\$6 million	\$17 million	\$23 million
Tulare County	\$19 million	\$25 million	\$44 million
Los Angeles County	\$165 million	\$406 million	\$571 million
Other Southern California region	\$126 million	\$289 million	\$415 million
Imperial County	\$4 million	\$15 million	\$19 million
Orange County	\$24 million	\$63 million	\$88 million
Riverside County	\$26 million	\$66 million	\$93 million
San Bernardino County	\$39 million	\$74 million	\$113 million
San Diego County	\$33 million	\$70 million	\$103 million

Disenrollment estimates are rounded to the closest 1,000 individuals. Estimates may not sum to totals due to rounding.

* Northern and Sierra region includes Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne and Yuba counties.

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Table 6. Lost Jobs and Lost Economic Output if 35 Percent of the Chilling Effect Population Disenrolls from CalFresh Nutrition Assistance and Medi-Cal Health Insurance Programs

Location	Jobs Eliminated	Lost Economic Output
California statewide	17,700	\$2.80 billion
Northern and Sierra region*	300	\$37 million
Sacramento region	400	\$73 million
Sacramento County	300	\$46 million
El Dorado, Placer and Yolo counties (grouped)**	100	\$27 million
Bay Area region	2,100	\$397 million
Alameda County	400	\$68 million
San Francisco County	500	\$89 million
San Mateo County	300	\$58 million
Santa Clara County	400	\$83 million
Solano County	100	\$14 million
Sonoma County	200	\$32 million
Contra Costa, Marin and Napa counties (grouped)**	200	\$52 million
Central Coast region	1,100	\$159 million
Monterey County	100	\$20 million
Ventura County	200	\$22 million
San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz counties (grouped)**	800	\$117 million
San Joaquin region	2,900	\$432 million
Fresno County	1,000	\$147 million
Kern County	600	\$89 million
Kings County	100	\$15 million
Madera County	200	\$28 million
Merced County	200	\$25 million
San Joaquin County	200	\$30 million
Stanislaus County	200	\$34 million
Tulare County	400	\$64 million
Los Angeles County	6,200	\$992 million
Other Southern California region	4,700	\$714 million
Imperial County	200	\$33 million
Orange County	1,000	\$151 million
Riverside County	1,100	\$160 million
San Bernardino County	1,300	\$193 million
San Diego County	1,200	\$177 million

Job loss estimates are rounded to the closest 100 jobs. Estimates may not sum to totals due to rounding.

* Northern and Sierra region includes Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne and Yuba counties.

** We generated county-level estimates for counties with sufficient samples and statistically stable estimates. Counties for which estimates were not generated were grouped together by region.

Table 7. Lost State and Local Tax Revenue if 35 Percent of the Chilling Effect Population Disenrolls from CalFresh Nutrition Assistance and Medi-Cal Health Insurance Programs

Location	Lost State and Local Tax Revenue
California statewide	\$151 million
Northern and Sierra region	\$2 million
Sacramento region	\$4 million
Bay Area region	\$20 million
Central Coast region	\$9 million
San Joaquin region	\$24 million
Los Angeles County	\$53 million
Other Southern California region	\$39 million

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