



October 3, 2018

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Trump Administration's Proposed Public Charge Regulations Aim to Penalize Working Families, Prioritize the Wealthy

On September 21, the Department of Homeland Security proposed new regulations that would overhaul how the government evaluates whether a would-be immigrant is likely to be a public charge. This proposed overhaul of the public charge ground of inadmissibility would make it extremely difficult for many immigrants to receive green cards if they are not wealthy. ***At the time of finalizing this newsletter, the proposed regulations had not yet been published in the Federal Register, but we expect them to be published any day.***

Although there is currently a public charge bar on the books, the proposed regulation seeks to increase the scope of the public charge bar astronomically. It's clear that the proposed regulations impose new requirements on families that are not wealthy (including many families with parents who are low-wage workers) and consider receipt of types of support not previously considered for purposes of the public charge bar. The public charge bar currently focuses on receipt of cash benefits and long-term care, but the proposed regulations include non-cash benefits such as housing support, nutritional programs, and Medicaid. The proposed regulations would likely lead to decisions denying hopeful Americans access to lawful permanent residency based on conjecture about their future wealth and as punishment for accessing benefits to which they were legally entitled.

It is, however, important to note that the public charge bar does not apply to all immigrants seeking admission. The following classes of people are exempt from the public charge bar: applicants for asylum, refugee status, VAWA relief, and U and T Visas, as well as asylees, refugees, and U Visa holders applying for lawful permanent residency (and T Visa holders applying for permanent residency can waive this ground).

Many of our clients, particularly those seeking to reunite with their families, would, however, be directly affected by these changes if they become law. ***Ayuda strongly opposes the proposed regulations because of the foreseeable detrimental effect they will have on so many of our clients and their families.*** We look forward to not only standing with our clients, regardless of income, providing quality representation as we always have but also contributing to efforts to avoid imposition of these unduly harsh requirements during the official notice and comment period on the proposed rule, which will follow publication in the Federal Register.

Ayuda's Annual Welcome Breakfast



This year the Welcome Breakfast brought together **220 guests**, who learned about the day-to-day challenges and struggles faced by low-income immigrants. We heard from former Ayuda clients - Filma, Nancy, and Fainess - who so bravely shared stories of their immigration journeys. Together, we learned what challenges the immigration community is currently facing in the DMV and how Ayuda is helping to confront those challenges.

The event was **presented by Southwest Airlines**, sponsored by JBG Smith, Amerihealth Caritas DC and ACSI Translations, and SOS International employees were our wonderful volunteers for the event.

Through the generosity of all who sponsored and contributed, Ayuda exceeded its Welcome Breakfast fundraising goal. **Together, participants contributed more than \$26,000.** These funds will go right to work supporting in our efforts to stop abuses and help immigrants rebuild their lives.

To see pictures of the event, please visit [our photo gallery here](#). **And for those who entered the Southwest Airlines raffle at the event - please stay tuned! We will be announcing the winner in a separate press release on Thursday, October 4th.**

Meet Ayuda's New Legal Director



Ayuda is pleased to announce that effective October 1, Laurie Ball Cooper will serve as Ayuda's legal director, providing leadership, vision and support to our legal services teams across offices and practice areas.

Laurie previously served as a senior staff attorney in Ayuda's pro bono program. She has represented immigrants and survivors of trauma in many capacities throughout her career, including as a Skadden Fellow at the Tahiri Justice Center, at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, and in the human rights practice group at the private law firm Cohen, Milstein, Sellers & Toll. Prior to her work in direct legal services, Laurie was a law clerk to the Hon. M. Margaret McKeown on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and worked in international development and human rights.

Laurie has dual degrees in law and public policy from Yale Law School and the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University and completed her undergraduate degree at Duke University. Laurie is fluent in Spanish and Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month - DVAM

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). DVAM was launched nationwide over 30 years ago as a way to raise awareness and connect and unite individuals and organizations working on domestic violence issues.

Ayuda, as a partner organization of the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCCADV), will be hosting events throughout the month of October to raise awareness around domestic violence and sexual assault. Below are the various events Ayuda will be hosting in conjunction with the DCCADV. Make sure you check them out!



Purple Thursday!
October 18, 5PM-8PM

Happy Hour at [Capitol Cider House](#)
Happy Hour at [Republic](#)

Wednesday, October 24, 5PM-9PM

Happy Hour at [Vinoteca](#). With a donation of any amount to Ayuda, Vinoteca will extend it's happy hour prices until 9PM.



Friday, October 19, 8PM-10PM

Grassroots Comedy DC will host the "**Super Spectacular Comedy Show for Immigrants' Rights**" at [KramerBooks](#).

Tickets are \$12 & 50% of proceeds will go directly to Ayuda!

You can [buy your tickets here](#).

