

## AAP: New public charge rule threatens health of immigrant children, families

August 13, 2019

Article type: [News](#)

Topics: [Advocacy](#), [Immigration](#)

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The Academy is decrying a new federal rule that will make it harder for immigrants to obtain a visa or green card if they've used public benefits.

"Make no mistake: this rule is a threat to the health of immigrant children and families," AAP CEO/Executive Vice President (Interim) Mark Del Monte, J.D., said in a [statement](#).

The public charge rule expands authorities' ability to consider an immigrant's use or likely use of public programs like Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and housing assistance when deciding whether they can enter the U.S. or advance through the immigration process.

"This forces immigrant families into an impossible choice: keep your family healthy but risk being separated, or forgo vital services so your family can remain together in this country," AAP President Kyle E. Yasuda, M.D., FAAP, said in a letter to members. "Of course we know that this is really not a choice at all."

One in four children lives in an immigrant family meaning the child or at least one parent is foreign-born. The AAP repeatedly has affirmed its commitment to protecting the health of all children regardless of where they or their parents were born.

The public charge rule "comes at a time of relentless hardship for immigrant families in the United States as a result of policies put forth by this Administration that harm their health and safety," Del Monte said. "The public charge rule further intimidates these families and expands on the chilling effects pediatricians have seen across the country ever since the proposed rule was issued, with families disenrolling from or avoiding critical health programs and services they are eligible for."

The AAP and hundreds of members voiced their concerns when the proposal was released and will continue to fight against it.

"We urge the Administration to reverse this public charge final rule, which will not only carry serious consequences for the children and families impacted, but also our country," Del Monte said. "We must support the health of all children if we are to reach our full potential as a nation."

### Resource

- [AAP policies and toolkits for pediatricians caring for children in immigrant families](#)

