



Monthly Immigration Forum March 8, 2022

Purpose of Meeting

- Identify and discuss specific Biden Administration immigration developments, including recent updates, and address the impact on the local community
- Create space for community advocates and service providers to share updates on local work, including advocacy opportunities and immigrant, refugee, and new American inclusion initiatives
- Offer space for questions for people with expertise on immigration law and policy and additional subjects of interest
- Discuss additional topics of interest to immigrant, refugee, and new American communities

Overview of St. Paul Immigrant and Refugee Program and Minneapolis Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

- Minneapolis OIRA:
<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/immigrant-refugee-affairs/>
- Welcoming St. Paul, Immigrant and Refugee Program:
<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/city-attorney/civil/immigration-resources-assistance>

Immigration related developments and updates

Public Charge and Lift the Bar Act, Mid Minnesota Legal Aid (Anne Quincy, Danielle Hendrickson)

- Lawhelpmn.org. Legal Aid toll-free, available statewide, 800-292-4150. Intake 612-334-5970 (all languages welcome)
- Trump administration published public charge rule—vacated by President Biden, whose administration has returned us to public charge analysis contained in 1999 guidance.
- USCIS is publishing new notice of proposed rule-making, which for the most part follows the 1999 guidance. (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/02/24/2022-03788/public-charge-ground-of-inadmissibility>)
- In new proposed rule, public charge does not apply to anyone who uses refugee services, even if they have not been declared a refugee. Doesn't apply to Temporary Protected Status (TPS), Liberian Refugee Immigrant Fairness Act (LRIF), or recent Afghan arrivals.
- Biggest change is food assistance, emergency assistance affects public charge. No healthcare benefits except Medicaid for Nursing Home care.
- Bottom line – benefits are complex, it is safe to apply. You are not a recipient if you applied and were turned down. You are not a recipient if you are applying for your children. We can safely say, there are no benefits for which you would be eligible, and would affect public charge. Please call MMLA if you have questions. You'll get to someone who speaks your language. federal register notice on public charge:
- 5 year bar legislation – house sponsors, none in Senate. Proposal to reform 5-year bar issues. MN has a number of work arounds. Please call us if you have questions. More information about



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the "Lift the Bar" Act: <https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/resources-on-the-lift-the-bar-act/>

- Intake process for Immigration Law is a little different than intake for other issues. [MMLA ILP Half Sheet Double Sided.pdf](#)

American Families United Act, Kali Pliego

- **Kali Pliego** – President of American Families United. kali@americanfamiliesunited.org
- <https://www.americanfamiliesunited.org/>
- Organization of US citizen (USC) whose spouses have inadmissibility issues.
- The American Families United Act, HR2920, seeks to expand waiver to cover administrative inadmissibility, not criminal issues.
- Bill is active in the House and there is an active campaign to recruit a sponsor in Senate.
- HR 2920 details: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2920>
- www.americanfamiliesunited.org/champions: this link will take you directly to your two Senators and House Rep if you want to sign on to a pre-prepared letter asking them to support the bill

Immigration legal service funding at federal level and additional updates: Lindsey Greising, Advocates for Human Rights

- lgreising@advrights.org
- Afghan Adjustment Act—at present there is no streamlined way for Afghan evacuees to obtain permanent residence in the US. Asylum process is complicated and extremely difficult. Advocacy is growing to pass an Afghan Adjustment Act to obtain permanent residence status. To take action or express support visit: <https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/News/Index?id=269>
- Legal service funding: House committee requested pilot project for 50 million for legal representation for people in removal. Would need at least 200 million to properly serve vulnerable populations seeking representation.
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status – USCIS has updated policy manual to consider employment authorization <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/policy-manual-updates/20220307-SIJAndDeferredAction.pdf>
- TPS for Ukraine, Sudan and South Sudan
 - <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status/temporary-protected-status-designated-country-south-sudan>
 - <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status/temporary-protected-status-designated-country-sudan>
 - <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>
- Ukraine – TPS for Ukrainians currently in the US. Minneapolis and Saint Paul are working to identify organizations who are working with community to ensure that people are aware of the opportunity to file.
- Post meeting update/see also Immigrant Law Center of MN Factsheets on TPS:



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- Sudan: <https://www.ilcm.org/latest-news/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status-for-sudan/>
- South Sudan: <https://www.ilcm.org/latest-news/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status-for-south-sudan/>
- Ukraine: <https://www.ilcm.org/latest-news/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status-for-ukraine/>

War in Ukraine

- Ukrainian Solidarity Day on March 6. Governor Walz, Lt Governor Flanagan, Mayor Frey spoke at event
- Michelle Manivel: Public Engagement Liaison for Immigrants and Refugees at Governor's office
 - Governor Walz issued a Proclamation and Executive Order:
 - https://mn.gov/governor/assets/03.03.22%20Ukrainian%20Solidarity%20Day%20Signed_tcm1055-520287.pdf
 - https://mn.gov/governor/assets/EO%2022-03_tcm1055-520552.pdf
- American Red Cross shared information on connecting with loved ones
- Cities and counties are connecting with community members and leaders and identifying ways to support community
- TPS has been issued but as yet no pathway for refugee status or humanitarian parole to enable people with relatives in MN to come here.
- Citizens for Global Solutions MN has a program on March 17 at 7pm on human rights and the war in Ukraine: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtdOurpj8vGtzR1n6447iuT-wAJGKG4gGF>
- Humphrey has a program on March 16 entitled War in Ukraine, implications for Global Peace and Stability: <https://www.hhh.umn.edu/event/war-ukraine-implications-global-peace-and-stability>
- Note from Kay Kessel: I would like to recommend Susan Hartman as a resource for Ukrainians. 20 years ago she led USConnect and helped set up exchanges between Russians, Ukrainians, and US. She had judges and we had a Ukrainian judge who stayed in our home. She helped with the Gorbachev visit and has many connections still in Minn with Ukrainians. She flew and visited Ukraine 60 times back then.

Presentations:

- Legislative effort to establish Minnesota Office of New Americans
 - Anisa Hajimumin, Assistant Commissioner for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs MN Department of Employment and Economic Development legislative effort to establish Office of New Americans, within Governor's Supplemental Budget Request
 - Anisa will be at the forum next month to provide more information. There will be a hearing at the state legislature next week.
 - More information about the proposal to establish a statewide Office of New Americans attached



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- Proposed changes to drivers license applications to include voluntary submission of race and ethnicity data
 - Jody-Kay Peterson, Driver and Vehicle Services, Department of Public Safety
 - For a copy of the PowerPoint presentation email
Michelle.Rivero@minneapolismn.gov

Questions:

- Is there a bill number for the legislation? No bill number or hearing
- If no US document, only documents from home country. Does this work for MN ID? Accept passport, but if not in English, needs to have translation. List of acceptable documents on website.

Community and government updates and news

City of St Paul and Ramsey County

- Recent excellent Ramsey County Workshop on immigration legal services:
<https://ramseycountymn.legistar.com/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=926449&GUID=3494924B-0AB0-4021-B8D2-670FF3198AB1&Options=info%7C&Search=>
- Loan Program: Affinity Plus Credit Union in partnership w/Saint Paul to provide loans to people seeking to apply to citizenship.
 - **Stephy Diaz** – Loans cover USCIS filing fees. 0% interest loan. \$75 application fee. If you cannot afford the fee upfront the application fee can be rolled into the loan. The maximum loan is \$2,000. Must be paid back in a year. Unsecured loan. Contact Natasha Waltman 651-312-9747. nwaltman@affinityplus.org
 - City of Saint Paul Webpage on New American Loan Program with PDF Flyers in multiple languages: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/city-attorney/civil/immigration-resources-assistance> City of Minneapolis updates
- (Christina Kendrick, christina.kendrick@minneapolismn.gov)
- Community Connections Conference:
<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/inclusive-community-engagement/connections-conference/>
 - Question: Is there a cost to becoming an exhibitor? No cost except if you need electricity. Registration form will walk you through everything.
- Partnership Engagement Fund: Supports collaboration between community and neighborhood-based organizations. There is an information session
<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/neighborhood-programs/partnership-fund/> March 9, 12-1. Must submit initial expression of interest April 15th. Request up to \$20k for smaller organizations, and up to \$50k for larger organizations.

Community updates

Juliana Cadavid Vaughn – juliana.cadavidvaughn@hennepin.us



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Opening date of Office of Multicultural Services, 2215 East Lake St., opening on April 11th. Will be in the office on a rotational schedule. Feel free to reach out if any questions, or if you want to know what services are available in Hennepin County.

Mahmoud Ahmed – Binger Center for New Americans – Headed to SD to assist with asylum applications, St. Peter and Waite Park to assist with general immigration issues. Work with ACLU, Advocates, VLN, and local groups to set up legal clinics. Will share link to newsletters in future meetings.

Beth Breiter – bbreiter@hclib.org - Librarian at Downtown Library – If you need space to hold in-person meeting, spaces are now free to rent. Have rooms that hold 2-20, then two other rooms that hold 30, and 50. They are for public meetings, not anything that generates income or parties.

Amarillis Vang - Lao Center has fresh food and produce distribution once a month.
<https://www.facebook.com/LaoCenter.org/>

PJ Doyle – Volunteer with American Red Cross – Program – Restoring Family Links. Helps families separated by natural disaster/war. Working with Ukrainian/Polish Red Cross. If you have contact with family members in US who can't reach family in Ukraine, reach out.

Next meeting: April 12 at 4:30