

Immigration Fact Sheet

March 11, 2019



Community Health Centers

California's Community Health Centers provide high-quality comprehensive care to 6.9 million people – that's 1 in 6 Californians. For decades, community health centers have provided care to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay, their immigration status, or their individual circumstances. Our goal is a healthy community and that requires universal access to primary care services.

Overview

Over the past few years, negative rhetoric around immigration has had a real impact on our patients. The President has signed executive orders that have a detrimental impact on immigrants, their communities, and the community health centers that care for them.

The increase in the number of ICE raids, changes to the DACA program, and proposed changes to Public Charge have caused a "chilling effect" among our patients. Their fears about being unable to adjust their immigration status or being deported have led many patients to cancel appointments and question whether to maintain their enrollment in programs like Medicaid, ultimately putting their health and the health of their communities at risk.

Patients' fear of deportation for themselves or their family members have become so acute that health centers are seeing an increase in behavioral health and mental health conditions like depression, anxiety and stress. To help ease their patients' fear, health centers have implemented policies and procedures to reassure patients that health centers continue to be a safe place to receive care.

Community Health Centers & Immigrant Patients

California's 1,330 community health centers are committed to providing a safe, healing environment for patients by taking reasonable and appropriate steps to safeguard patients. This includes providing 'Know Your Rights' information to both patients and staff and putting in place procedures that explicitly state how health centers can protect patients' information if immigration agents enter the clinic.

Advocacy

Regardless of the national anti-immigrant rhetoric, California's community health centers will maintain their commitment to serve everyone – no matter their immigration status.

If we want our communities to thrive, all of the families in those communities must be able to get the care and services they need. At this time of rising national division, Advocates and health centers are proud to stand with our immigrant communities and re-affirm our commitment to valuing and protecting the health care rights of our immigrant patients.

We will continue to fight and advocate for policies that ensure community health centers are safe places to receive care and support. More specifically, California's community health centers continue to advocate against:

- Changes to Public Charge
- The elimination of the DACA program
- Adding an immigration question to the 2020 Census
- Inadequate health screenings and services for immigrants in ICE custody

We ask that you continue to fight against the Trump Administration's attacks on the immigrant community.