

**San Mateo County Immigrant Forum**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**5/20/21**

**1. Welcome & Introductions – Immigrant Services Team**

- a. Thank you to all for joining us on Zoom. The Immigrant Forum will be held virtually until further notice.

**2. Legal Updates: Alison Kamhi, Supervising Attorney, ILRC**

- a. There is an increase on the number of refugees that the US will be admitting: 62,500
- b. Termination of contract with detention facilities (Georgia and Massachusetts) has occurred
- c. Department of State is going to prioritize the immigrant visa process into four tiers
  - Tier 1: Immediate relative intercountry adoption visas
  - Tier 2: Immediate relative visas; Fiancé(e) visas and returning resident visas
  - Tier 3: Family Preference immigrant visas
  - Tier 4: Employment visas, and other kind of immigrant visas including diversity
- d. USCIS is no longer applying the Public Charge rule implemented by the Trump administration; Also, courts threw out the case that was trying to appeal
- e. The proposed rule that would make biometric data very invasive was withdrawn
- f. USCIS/Immigration Courts put a call out to weigh in to give input
- g. There's an Executive Order requiring agencies to review current policies to identify barriers that people encounter when trying to access benefits
- h. Q/A

Q: What is happening with DACA?

A: In 2020, The Supreme Court ruled in favor of DACA recipients. The criteria for DACA has not changed, meaning that an applicant must have 14 years of continued presence in the US (not 5 as it was when rule was first implemented in 2012).

Q: What is happening with the flow of families and kids crossing the borders? Are they staying here, or we are sending them back?

A: Adults are being sent back, but children are staying here. Children are exempt from Title 42, a title that allows US government to temporarily close the US borders due to health reasons.

Q: What is the process with unaccompanied minors when they get to the border?

A: After they are apprehended at the border, CBP has 72 hours to turn them over to the refugee's office. After this, they need to relocate the children with a sponsor that can be the parents or legal guardian, regardless of their immigration status. We strongly encourage parents to get their children.

Q: Are there organizations helping the sponsors?

A: Legal Aid Society can provide legal help.

**3. USCIS Updates: Jennifer LaForce, Community Relations Officer, USCIS**

- a. USCIS is working on shifting all policies from the last administration
- b. USCIS is working on having more engagement with the community
  - Webinars at the national level
- c. USCIS has an open application period for the Citizenship and Integration Grant Program

- \$10 million in grants for organizations that have citizenship preparation programs
  - Application due July 16, 2021
- d. Q/A
- Q: What is the wait time for the naturalization process?
- A: There are longer times depending on the office. USCIS is working on that by suspending biometrics in some individuals, and hiring new people after budget and COVID issues

#### 4. **Bicycle Fix-it Station Grants: Matt Petrofsky, San Mateo County Office of Sustainability**

- a. Office of Sustainability Bicycle fix-it station application: <https://www.smcsustainability.org/2021fixitstation>
- b. Silicon Valley Bicycle Exchange (<https://bikex.org/>) and Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (<https://bikesiliconvalley.org/>) are helping people learn the skills on how to ride a bike, and mechanical/basic repairing skills
  - Webinars
  - In-person training before the Pandemic
- c. There is also the Peninsula Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition to use as a resource: <https://www.smc-connect.org/locations/peninsula-bicycle-and-pedestrian-coalition>

#### 5. **Office of Community Affairs Updates: Jennifer Llamas, Immigrant services**

- a. On April 29<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup>, San Mateo County held four information sessions for the Community Engagement Teams for the San Mateo County Immigrant Integration/Inclusion Strategic Plan; partners are still welcome to sign on as a Community Engagement Team <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G4GTeams>
- b. Canvassing efforts are taking place weekly in different cities/towns in San Mateo County to help spread the word on local pop-up neighborhood vaccination sites
- c. The Community Crew continues to distribute masks 4 times a week to high COVID-19 positivity rate locations. We are also giving out masks. Email [lperezavila@smcgov.org](mailto:lperezavila@smcgov.org) if you would like masks

#### 6. **Agency Update Roundtable**

- a. **Multicultural Institute:** Promoting and helping people get vaccinated
- b. **Red Cross:** Helping the community to change fire detectors
- c. **Latino Collaborative:** Latino Collaborative Meeting Tuesday 5/25 3:30-5pm <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/964067192?pwd=NmVZbWQvc3U4cWpJT0F2RDVEYldiZz09>  
Meeting ID: 964 067 192 Passcode: LCBHRS  
Latino community afraid of calling the police. Working with the police for a community engagement program
- d. **BHRS:** May is Mental Health Month. There are some virtual events that BHRS, CBOs and other consumer groups will be hosting. For more information about upcoming events <https://www.smchealth.org/post/mental-health-month>

- e. **Legal Aid Society:** Immigrants can still apply for the San Mateo County immigrant relief; still only accepting first-time applicants but this could change. Mission Asset Fund is helping applicants if needed as well. SMC Immigrant Relief Fund Spanish landing page <https://www.missionassetfund.org/es/immigrant-families-grant-sm/> and English Landing page <https://www.missionassetfund.org/immigrant-families-grant-sm/> LIBRE also has blue cards – if you would like physical copies of the trifolds, email Eunice at [ehernandez@legalaidsmc.org](mailto:ehernandez@legalaidsmc.org)
- f. **CORA:** June 11<sup>th</sup> Domestic violence training. <https://www.corasupport.org/>