



### [Supreme Court Allows “Public Charge” Immigration Rule to Take Effect](#)

The Supreme Court ruled this week that a controversial Trump administration proposal regarding green cards was constitutional. The policy in question revises the existing “public charge” law, and makes immigrants ineligible for permanent legal status if they take advantage of public benefits such as food stamps or Medicaid. If an immigrant is deemed to be likely to use public benefits, they could be denied a green card, the document that allows permanent residency in the United States to non-citizens. The Supreme Court voted 5 to 4 to allow the new policy, with the court’s conservative judges siding with the Trump administration, and the liberals against it. Despite the Supreme Court ruling the new plan constitutional, the Trump administration will face additional injunctions from lower courts around the country in the coming days and weeks.

The “public charge” law as it exists now is designed to prevent immigrants who are unable to support themselves financially from entering the United States and becoming permanent residents. It is an immigration law that dictates potential immigrants who have a higher level of financial stability be given priority over those who are unable to prove financial security. The law does not affect current permanent residents who are seeking to become American citizens. Previously, the “public charge” law disqualified less than one percent of applicants from the permanent residency process. However, the Trump administration is broadening the law to make it more specific. The criteria on which immigrants will be judged on is now phrased as “non-cash benefits” that are used in any twelve months of a thirty-six-month period. These benefits will include Medicaid and food stamps, among other public services. The Trump administration initially proposed the change to the law in August of 2019, but a flurry of injunctions caused it to be delayed. Even with the Supreme Court’s decision this week, it is unclear when the changes will begin to be enforced.

The change to the “public charge” law is aimed at decreasing the number of immigrants on public benefits, such as Medicaid and welfare. President Trump has frequently railed against immigrants entering the country and “immediately going on welfare,” calling it a burden on the American taxpayer. The change to the law is just the latest example of the Trump administration taking aim at immigrants, and making the United States a less hospitable place for non-citizens.

This is not the first time that the Supreme Court has allowed a controversial immigration law proposed by the Trump White House. In July of last year, the Supreme Court signed off on the White House using funds from the Pentagon to build a wall along the border with Mexico. Then later in September, the Trump administration was permitted to reject asylum seekers and migrants from Central America seeking to enter the United States. This was on top of the court also allowing the President’s “Muslim ban” that barred nationals of seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States.