



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NACCHO Opposes Proposed “Public Charge” Rule Changes Affecting Immigrant Communities

Proposed Regulation Deters Immigrants from Using Social Services

Washington, DC, October 10, 2018 — The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO), representing the nation’s nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments, strongly opposes immigration policy that unfairly discriminates against immigrants with respect to education, employment, basic human rights, and social welfare. Under the proposed “public charge” rule published today in the [Federal Register](#), individuals who have received public benefits may be denied entry to the United States or a green card allowing them to stay in the U.S. legally.

In addition, the proposed changes may have a chilling effect on those seeking to apply for assistance designed to support low-income families, including Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy Program, and several housing programs.

“NACCHO vigorously opposes anti-immigrant laws that discriminate and exclude on the basis of nationality and immigration status,” said CEO Lori Tremmel Freeman. “Our local public health departments are here to protect and preserve the health and well-being of the communities they support, especially the most vulnerable among us. Clearly, public health will be compromised if families are too afraid to access vital services, fearing the loss

of permanent residency status. Limited or reduced access to support programs will affect their health, financial stability, and the healthy development of their children.”

Under the proposed rule, the changes would likely lead to broad decreases in participation in Medicaid and other programs among legal immigrant families and their primarily U.S.-born children, beyond those directly affected by the changes. Nationwide, over 19 million or one in four (25%) children live in a family with an immigrant parent, and nearly nine in ten (86%) of these children are citizens.

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation’s nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.