

## Older Adults & Public Benefits: Impact of the Public Charge Rule

Right now, there are more than 1.1 million immigrants age 62 and older living at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level. Benefit programs have the potential to help these immigrants and their families pay for prescription drugs, medical care, food and housing.



### THE 2019 PUBLIC CHARGE RULE

In August 2019, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released a final rule regarding the definition and determination of “public charge” both for immigrants waiting to legally enter the United States and those lawfully here who are seeking to remain or adjust their residency status. The new regulations have the potential to significantly affect access to the Medicare Savings Programs, Medicaid, SNAP, housing assistance, and other public benefits by older adult immigrants and their families to maintain their economic security.

### HOW BENEFITS HELP

- Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) help beneficiaries afford Medicare premiums, deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments for their inpatient and outpatient health care.
- Medicaid pays for a broad range of medical services for poor seniors, younger adults living with disabilities, and children and their family caregivers.

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps) provides credits on electronic cards that enable recipients to buy nutritious food.
- Subsidized housing programs provide assistance to pay for shelter for those who cannot afford it.

### THE VALUE OF BENEFITS

- The national average SNAP benefit for an elderly recipient living alone was \$106 per month in 2016. (USDA Food & Nutrition Service, 2018)
- The value of Medicare Savings Programs is at least \$1,626 a year for Medicare Part B premiums alone.

To learn more, go to [ncoa.org/publiccharge](https://ncoa.org/publiccharge)

For more information about older adults and public benefits, go to [ncoa.org/benefitsforseniors](https://ncoa.org/benefitsforseniors)

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