

Freedom to Thrive: Priorities for Executive Action on Immigration in 2021

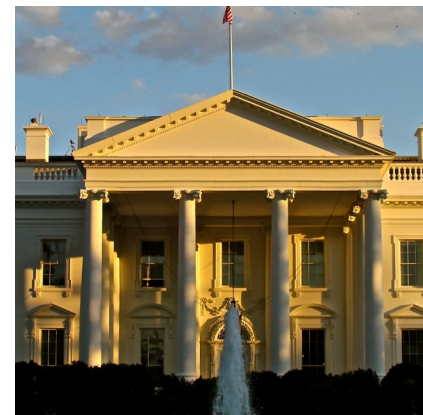
In 2021, the Biden administration will have the opportunity — and mandate — to undo four years of divisive and harmful immigration policies put into place by the previous administration and, to the relief of millions of immigrants across the country, has pledged to do so beginning on day one. Under the Biden administration, the United States can again become a nation that welcomes immigrants and refugees.

Restoring our country's rightful place as a beacon for immigrants seeking a better life for themselves and their families will require both administrative and legislative action, and undoing the more than 400 anti-immigrant policies set forth by the previous administration may take years; however, the priorities outlined in this document reflect executive actions that can create immediate and transformative change. These priorities are offered amid a devastating pandemic, grounded in the belief that there can be no recovery without immigrants and that we must begin the work of creating a 21st century immigration system that recognizes the essential role of immigrants in our society while ensuring that we continue to create opportunities for everyone in our country to be healthy and have the freedom to thrive.

Take Immediate Administrative Action to Undo the Harms of the Prior Administration

- 1. Rescind the Immigrant Wealth Test.** Reverse public charge and related policies that make it difficult for low- and moderate-income families to remain or be reunited with their loved ones and that deter immigrant families in the U.S. from accessing health care, nutrition, housing, and basic supports and services for which they are eligible.

2. **Strengthen and Expand DACA & Redesignate Temporary Protected Status (TPS).** Ensure ongoing protections for immigrants eligible for DACA and protect TPS holders by redesignating TPS for countries that were terminated and extending protections for all current TPS countries.
3. **Repeal the Muslim, African, Refugee and Asylum Bans.** Repeal the discriminatory bans that prevent individuals from Muslim-majority and African countries and asylum-seekers from entering the United States.
4. **Halt Destructive Immigration Enforcement Practices.** Issue a moratorium on immigration enforcement, including but not limited to worksite raids and I-9 (employment eligibility verification) enforcement, until a comprehensive review is completed of all enforcement policies and procedures. Redefine the mission of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to assist people in securing safety, reuniting with loved ones, and becoming essential members of our society, rather than criminalizing and excluding immigrants.
5. **Protect Private Data.** Develop, implement, and enforce privacy laws, regulations, and guidance documents that limit collection of immigrants' personal information and prevent sharing between local, state, federal, and foreign agencies for use in immigration enforcement. Improve trust in government by terminating contracts with for-profit and nonprofit entities that collect and share personal information and that develop systems for the management and use of such information in immigration enforcement.



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Build Strong, Healthy, and Inclusive Communities

6. **Ensure that COVID Relief Efforts are Inclusive.** Leverage relief and recovery efforts to ensure that programs and policies include immigrants.
 - a. Honor and protect essential workers, who are disproportionately workers of color and immigrants, by recognizing the role they are playing in our recovery by providing them with pathways to work authorization, updating Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for workplaces, issuing an emergency temporary standard from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and supporting paid sick and family leave for all workers.
 - b. Clarify that emergency Medicaid covers COVID testing/treatment/vaccination for all, regardless of their immigration status. Ensure that COVID public health campaigns, including vaccination, account for the needs of immigrants, are culturally and linguistically appropriate,

and provide funding to community-based organizations that serve immigrants, including community health centers.

- c. Ensure that any federal COVID relief is available to all, and that states, localities, businesses, and educational institutions have the flexibility they need to protect the health and well-being of all community members – to ensure they can remain in housing and have access to food, education, and economic support if needed.
 - d. Protect immigrant families' privacy. Limit information collected, retained, used, and disclosed for unrelated purposes.
- 7. Clear Pathways to Legal Status and Strengthen Worker Organizing.** Grant affirmative immigration relief to workers involved in labor disputes so they may organize to improve their workplace conditions and effectively cooperate with government agencies to hold their employers accountable for labor violations. Create other pathways to legal status and work authorization for immigrants using affirmative administrative remedies.
- 8. Improve Access to Health Care.** Clarify that people with DACA and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status are lawfully present/residing under the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid/CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) at state option for children and pregnant women (CHIPRA Sec. 214). Create new, and increase existing, outreach and public education efforts to encourage and educate immigrant communities about health care and public insurance programs.
- 9. Protect and Support Workers.** Prioritize robust enforcement of our labor and employment laws, which requires a significant increase in resources for hiring of personnel, investigations, and enforcement. Ensure that employers cannot use a worker's immigration status to suppress their labor rights and thereby depress working conditions for all workers. Ensure all workers have access to a fair grievance process, can collectively bargain, and are fully protected if unfairly terminated.
- 10. Improve Access to Education & Student Wellness.** Create additional pathways to affordable higher education. Safeguard the privacy of students and their families. Divest from punitive school discipline and ban police and immigration enforcement presence, and invest in holistic, trauma-informed, and race-conscious practices.

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