



# Impact of Changing Immigration Policies on IRC Clients: Frequently Asked Questions

On January 20, 2025, President Donald Trump issued a series of executive orders that call for stricter immigration enforcement and increased deportations. An executive order is a signed, written, and published command from the president of the United States that has the same effect as a law. Federal agencies have since issued further guidance implementing some of these orders.

Every person's immigration case is unique. Please speak to an immigration lawyer or Department of Justice-accredited legal representative about your options. Are you unsure about how your immigration status could be affected by the new U.S. government? Below is some general information and guidance.

**The IRC has created resources for clients in the U.S. We hope this helps people better understand their rights and the immigration process. However, this information is not a substitute for legal advice from a qualified attorney or accredited representative.**

**NOTE:** The provided information is accurate as of **January 24, 2025** and may change rapidly due to further policy changes and/or court decisions.



## How will the new immigration policies affect me?

**I am a **Lawful Permanent Resident** (also known as a Green Card holder). Am I at risk of losing my status or being deported based on these new policies?**

**NO.**

As a permanent resident, you have indefinite permission to live and work in the United States. You cannot be subject to deportation proceedings unless you have committed fraud, have abandoned your residence by being outside of the United States for too long, or have committed certain criminal offenses. If you believe any of these may apply to you, you should speak to an immigration lawyer or Department of Justice (DOJ) accredited legal representative to assess your risks. Permanent residents are encouraged to speak to an immigration attorney or accredited representative before applying for naturalization.

You should always carry your legal permanent resident (LPR) card with you. If you are stopped by law enforcement, and asked for proof of immigration status, let them know that you are a permanent resident and show them your LPR card.

**I am an **Afghan or Iraqi Special Immigrant** (SIV). Am I at risk of losing my status or being deported based on these new policies?**

**NO.**

Those who entered the US with a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) or who were granted adjustment of status based on an approved SIV petition or Chief of Mission approval are already Lawful Permanent Residents.

If you have requested Chief of Mission (COM) approval of your request for classification as a Special Immigrant based on one or more years' service to the US mission in Iraq or Afghanistan, but have not yet received it, you are not yet legally a Special Immigrant. You should consult a legal service provider to see if you qualify for another form of temporary or permanent relief such as Temporary Protected Status or asylum.

If you are an LPR, or hold another lawful status, you should always carry proof of your legal status with you. If you have a COM Approval and have filed for Adjustment of Status, you should always carry a copy of your I-485 receipt from USCIS (I-797) with you at all times.

**NOTE:** having a pending application for status may not protect you from detention or removal.



**I am an **asylee or refugee**. Am I at risk of losing my protection or being deported based on these new policies?**

**NO.** As an asylee or refugee, you have been granted indefinite protection by the United States. You cannot be placed in deportation proceedings unless you have committed fraud/misrepresentation, returned to your home country, or committed certain criminal offenses. (If any of these may apply to you, you should speak to an immigration lawyer or DOJ accredited legal representative to assess your risks). **Asylees/refugees should seek assistance from an immigration attorney or accredited representative to apply for Adjustment of Status (a green card) as soon as possible upon completing one year of physical presence in the US.**

You should always carry proof of your asylee or refugee status with you. If you are stopped by law enforcement and asked about your immigration status, you should show them proof of your asylee status (grant of asylum and/or (a)(5) work permit) or refugee status (proof of entry as refugee document and/or (a)(3) work permit).

**I have **Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**. Am I at risk of losing my protection or being deported based on these new policies?**

**MAYBE.** By law, the president must review all TPS country designations and determine whether to extend or terminate them prior to their expiration. **If TPS is terminated, those who currently have TPS will not be able to renew their TPS or work authorization and may be subject to detention and/or removal.** As of the date of this guidance, there have not yet been any terminations of TPS.

You should always carry proof of your TPS status with you. If you are stopped by law enforcement and asked for your immigration status, you should show them your TPS approval notice and/or your (a)(12) or (c)(19) work permit.

**I have **Humanitarian Parole (Parolee)**. Am I at risk of losing my protection or being deported based on these new policies?**

**YES.** The president may revoke parole for immigrants, and recent changes in policy **increase the risk of potential detention and deportation of parolees.** Specifically:

- The president is reviewing all parole programs for possible termination.
- New rules allow for the immediate detention and deportation of parolees.
- Re-parole may not be possible after the current period ends. \*Please note that there is no process for CHNV re-parole (CHNV is the Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan Parole Program).

Parolees should **urgently consult with an immigration attorney or accredited representative** to explore alternative legal options and protection from deportation.



**Travel advisories for individuals who are not lawful permanent residents or U.S. citizens (including asylees, refugees, TPS holders, and parolees)**

Because the U.S. Government is currently assessing potential travel bans, it is strongly recommended that individuals who have not yet obtained lawful permanent status (Green Card) **NOT** leave the United States until there is more clarity on whether travel bans will be issued, and for which countries, or until you have obtained your LPR status (Green Card). Please be advised that there are immigration checkpoints within the United States within 100 miles of the border with Mexico or Canada. If traveling domestically, avoid travelling to these areas.



# What documents should I carry with me?

**NOTE:** We recommend carrying original documents or paper copies with you at all times. Make sure you have extra copies in a safe place at home.

| Status | Documents to carry |
|--------|--------------------|
|--------|--------------------|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| If you have <b>current immigration status</b> | <p>Always carry documentation that provides proof of your immigration status in the US, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>I-551</b> proof of Lawful Permanent Residence (Green Card)</li> <li>2. <b>I-94</b> proof of lawful entry or stamped passport or other travel document with visa/entry stamp</li> <li>3. <b>Employment Authorization Card</b> (work permit)</li> <li>4. <b>I-797</b> Approval Notice for your immigration status</li> <li>5. <b>State Issued Driver's License</b>—only if your state requires current immigration status to obtain a driver's license</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| If your <b>status is pending</b> (meaning you have applied for an immigration benefit or protection but do not yet have an outcome in your case) | <p>Carry copies of <b>receipts from USCIS (I-797)</b> with you at all times.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> having a pending application for status may not protect you from detention or removal.</p> |
|--|---|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| If you are <b>in removal proceedings and do not have an employment authorization card</b> | Carry a copy of your <b>Notice of Hearing</b> , any <b>receipt</b> you may have for applications you have filed, or <b>parole notice</b> (if applicable). |
|---|---|

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| If you are <b>undocumented</b> | <p><b>DO NOT carry copies</b> of your national identification or national passport as they can be used against you in immigration court.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> you should not carry any false documents or documents that belong to someone else.</p> |
|--------------------------------|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| If you are <b>undocumented</b> or your <b>status is pending</b> , you are <b>not in removal proceedings, AND you have been in the U.S. for 2 years or longer</b> | <p>Carry <b>proof of your physical presence</b> in the U.S. for 2+ years to protect yourself from expedited removal.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> this does not fully protect you from detention or deportation but might protect you from expedited removal.</p> <p>This could include copies of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of filing taxes for the last three years (only if valid ITIN or Social Security # used)</li> <li>• Lease or rental documents</li> <li>• Utility bills</li> <li>• Your or your children's school records</li> <li>• Any other documents you may have that prove you have been in the U.S. for over 2 years</li> </ul> |
|--|---|





# Know Your Rights.

All people living in the United States, regardless of immigration status, have certain basic rights under the U.S. Constitution. People with temporary immigration status have these rights, too. Know your rights and do not be afraid to exercise them when interacting with the police or with Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers.

If you are stopped or questioned by the police or by an immigration officer, remember that **you have the following rights:**



**You may refuse to speak with them.**

You do not have to say where you were born or how you entered the U.S.



You have the **right to speak with a lawyer.**



If you are not a U.S. citizen and an immigration officer requests your papers, you must show them if you have them with you. Carry your immigration documents with you at all times. **If you do not have immigration papers, say you want to remain silent.**



**Before you sign anything, talk to a lawyer.**



Carry a **Know Your Rights card** in your **language** and show it if an immigration officer stops you (see more KYR resources below).

Please use the links below to **find more information** on how to protect your rights:



**ILRC Red Cards**

[ILRC.ORG/RED-CARDS-TARJETAS-ROJAS](https://ilrc.org/red-cards-tarjetas-rojas)



**We Have Rights (videos + materials)**

[WEHAVERIGHTS.US](https://wehaverights.us)





## How can I get help?

**Do you have a Green Card or U.S. citizenship?** If not, speak to an immigration lawyer or Department of Justice-accredited representative about your options to obtain a permanent immigration status. An immigration lawyer or accredited representative will assess whether you are eligible for a permanent status.

If you are eligible for a permanent form of immigration status, it is always recommended to pursue it, regardless of who is president of the United States.

## Avoid Immigration Scams!

Request the qualifications of the immigration attorney or DOJ-accredited representative who is helping you.



Remember that only immigration lawyers and accredited representatives can provide you with legal advice. Beware of notarios or public notaries who are not authorized or qualified to provide immigration advice. They will waste your time and money and can put you and your case at great risk.



Before you hire someone to help you with your case, ask the professional for their qualifications. Is the person an attorney or accredited representative? How much experience does the person have in immigration law? Click this link for more information on [Immigration Scams](#). Refer to [this directory](#) or see QR code below to find an authorized legal service provider that may be able to assist for low or no cost.

Please use the links below to find **free or low-cost legal assistance** in your city:



National legal directory for assistance in finding free or low-cost legal assistance



**Immigration Advocates Network**

[IMMIGRATIONADVOCATES.ORG/LEGALDIRECTORY/](https://IMMIGRATIONADVOCATES.ORG/LEGALDIRECTORY/)



For youth who entered the United States without a parent or legal guardian



**ImportaMi**

[IMPORTAMI.ORG/EN-US](https://IMPORTAMI.ORG/EN-US)

