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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid Statement on DHS' Final Public Charge Rule

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society today released the following statement in response to the new “Public Charge” [rule](#) issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that will largely codify [1999 field guidance](#) governing public charge determinations:

“We need to be clear that any public charge policy geared at excluding low-income immigrants from permanent residency in the U.S. hurts immigrant communities. Short of statutory reform that eliminates the public charge ground of inadmissibility altogether, however, we are stuck with some version of the public charge rule, and the Biden DHS rule released today reflects a vastly superior approach than the racist 2019 Trump administration rule that The Legal Aid Society has successfully been fighting in the courts.

This new rule appears intended to mitigate the chilling effect on immigrant use of government benefits and services that stemmed from the 2019 rule and to reduce fear among immigrant communities of accessing certain benefits.

The confusion and harmful effects deliberately caused by the Trump-era changes linger among many community members. We want to remind our clients and all immigrants that the Biden administration stopped enforcing the Trump-era rule in March 2021. Since then, it has been safe for immigrants and their families to secure health care (including COVID-19, monkeypox, and polio vaccinations), food and housing assistance, and other vital forms of benefits for which they are eligible without the fear that they will lose the chance to obtain lawful permanent residence.”

For more resources, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/3cedecta>.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 145 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org