

# THE FACTS: IMMIGRANTS AND PUBLIC BENEFITS

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| <p><b>Fact 1: Not all immigrants qualify for public benefits, and qualified immigrants can receive limited benefits</b></p> |    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility for benefits is dependent on immigration status and date of entry</li> <li>• “Qualified” immigrants includes legal permanent residents, refugees, asylees, and other select groups</li> <li>• “Qualified” immigrants are prohibited from receiving Medicaid, TANF, SSI, and other federal public benefits</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Fact 2: Refugees and certain other immigrants are eligible for additional benefits</b></p>                            |    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refugees, asylees, Cuban and Haitian immigrants, and a few others are exempted from the five year ban on receipt of public benefits</li> <li>• Veterans and active duty military personnel and immigrants who have worked at least ten years are also exempted from the five year ban</li> </ul>                                 |
| <p><b>Fact 3: Qualified immigrants have many barriers to receiving benefits</b></p>   |    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Besides the five year ban on public benefits, immigrants also experience a process called “deeming” wherein their wages and those of their sponsor are looked at jointly to determine eligibility for programs</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Fact 4: Few immigrants classified as “not qualified” can receive benefits</b></p>                                     |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigrants classified as “not qualified” can receive few kinds of basic assistance, including emergency Medicaid, immunizations, short-term non-cash disaster relief, free and reduced lunches and breakfasts, and other limited services</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Fact 5: Family sponsors are responsible for the immigrant’s care</b></p>  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsors of LPRs must make enough income to support themselves and the immigrant they choose to sponsor, so they do not become a public charge</li> <li>• Sponsors also sign an affidavit saying they will ensure that the immigrant they sponsor does not use public services before they are eligible</li> </ul>               |
| <p><b>Fact 6: Most tax dollars paid by immigrants go to the federal government</b></p>                                      |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The federal government receives two-thirds of all taxes paid by immigrants, but states and localities provide the majority of services immigrants can use. This creates an imbalance for the state, which has to pay for services without receiving more money</li> </ul>  |

