



Immigration Enforcement Information for Marylanders (February 18, 2025)

At the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS), our mission is to assist Marylanders in need and to provide children, youth, and adults with the services and support to which they are entitled. We have an obligation to protect Marylanders, including immigrants and their family members. We are guided in our work by four values:

1. We will deliver for Marylanders;
2. We will defend our constitutional rights;
3. We will grow our economy; and
4. We will restore faith in our public servants, our institutions, and our democracy.

DHS is required by federal and state law to maintain confidentiality and to protect personally identifiable information. We will ensure the information in our possession remains confidential and is not disclosed without legal authority.

Personally Identifiable Information can be disclosed only:

1. With our customer's consent; or
2. Pursuant to a court order; or
3. To a government employee acting in an official capacity, only if the release of information is necessary to administer public assistance, medical assistance, social services, child welfare services programs, or to register voters in Maryland.

Eligibility for Benefits

All Maryland residents have the right to apply for benefits administered by DHS, such as Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), SUN Bucks, and energy assistance programs.

When applying for benefits, only household members seeking benefits are asked to provide Social Security numbers (or proof that they have filed a current application for a SSN) and information about immigration status. This information is necessary to determine eligibility. Children and household members who are U.S. citizens or lawful residents remain eligible for benefits when other household members do not produce documents sufficient to determine eligibility.

DHS established an easy-to-use [Benefits Screener](#) to help Marylanders determine the benefits for which they may be eligible.

Marylanders can [apply for benefits online](#) or in person at a [Local Department of Social Services](#).

Child Welfare Services

Every child in Maryland has the right to safety, stability, and permanency, regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents, kinship caregivers, or guardians. Parents have the right to direct the care and custody of their children, including identifying emergency contacts and Standby Guardians.

DHS will work with families to ensure they understand their rights, obligations, and options, including opportunities to seek legal representation and participate in reunification plans.

Kinship caregivers, resource families, and adoptive parents meet licensing and legal requirements. Maryland's kinship caregivers, resource homes, and other out-of-home placement providers are licensed by the State of Maryland. Oversight of compliance with state licensing requirements is also conducted by the State of Maryland. There is no additional federal licensing.

Emergency Contact

All parents and guardians can update their child's emergency contact information at school, including secondary contacts, to identify a trusted adult who can care for their child(ren) if they are unavailable or unable to care for their child. Emergency contact information provided to schools is confidential. For more information, please see the [Maryland State Department of Education's webpage](#).

Standby Guardians

Families may designate a trusted individual as a [standby guardian](#) to serve as a caregiver in the event they become unable or unavailable to care for their children. The Maryland Judiciary has a [form to designate a standby guardian](#). Parents do not lose their parental rights by designating a standby guardian. At least one parent must consent to the appointment, and a parent may revoke their consent to the standby guardianship at any time.

We encourage families to complete the form and share with trusted parties, schools, and healthcare providers.

The Standby Guardian is authorized to care for the child(ren) for 180 days without any need to file in court. If a standby guardian is needed for longer than 180 days, then the standby guardian must [file a petition in court](#) for a judicial appointment as the standby guardian.

Child Support

Child support services are available to all parents and guardians upon referral or request. Parents and guardians may receive any or all of the following services:

- Location of a noncustodial parent
- Establishment of Paternity
- Establishment of a court order for child support and health insurance coverage
- Collection and disbursement of support payments
- Enforcement of a court ordered for support
- Review and modification of a court order for support

Citizenship, immigration status or documentation is not required to receive child support services. The child must reside with the parent or guardian to receive child support services. Maryland courts do not consider the immigration status of an individual who is ordered to pay child support.

A parent to whom child support payments are disbursed may add an alternate payee to their case in the event they are unable to care for their child. The alternate payee can be the parent's designated Standby Guardian. Examples of alternate payees are: relatives, interstate agencies, courts, kinship caregivers, resource parents, and institutions.

Services for Vulnerable Adults

Maryland's Office of Adult Services programs, including Adult Protective Services (APS) investigations, post-investigatory services, and Adult Public Guardianship are available to all Maryland residents without regard to immigration status. Vulnerable adults are eligible for APS investigations into whether they have been maltreated or are self-neglecting, and they may be eligible for continuing services regardless of immigration status. Due to the protective nature of the APS program, Social Security numbers are not required for APS investigations or services. Additionally, local departments of social services serve as court-appointed guardians of the person for certain vulnerable adults, regardless of immigration status. Maryland courts do not consider the immigration status of an individual who is the subject of a guardianship proceeding when deciding whether to appoint a guardian for that individual.

Under COMAR 07.01.07.07 and absent a court order or other court-issued document signed by a judge, DHS may decline to disclose information if the disclosure is

contrary to public interest or contrary to the best interest of a vulnerable adult who is the subject of an APS investigation.

The Maryland Department of Health issues licenses to long-term care facilities, including assisted living facilities and nursing homes. No federal entity oversees the Maryland Department of Health's decision to issue a license to an assisted living facility or to a nursing home.

Locator

Families trying to locate someone who may have been detained may use the Immigration and Customs Enforcement [\(ICE\) detainee locator](#).

Legal Resources

Please note that the information contained in this document is not meant or interpreted to be legal advice. Families seeking legal assistance or information about immigration issues can access the following resources:

- [Maryland Immigrant Legal Assistance Project \(MILAP\) *pro bono*](#)
- [Immigration Legal Services - The Maryland People's Law Library](#)
- [Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs](#)
- [Montgomery County Maryland - Immigration Legal Services](#)

The Maryland Office of Attorney General and several immigration organizations provide comprehensive guidance on preparing for and responding to immigration enforcement actions:

- [Resources for the Maryland Immigration Community](#)
- [ACLU Know Your Rights: Immigrant Rights Scenarios](#)
- [CASA Rapid Tip Hotline](#)