

COVID-19 Resources for Undocumented/DACA Students

Updated 5/21/20

by Miriam Kontoh, Cornell Law 1L Immigration Law & Advocacy Clinic

Immigration Issues for Cornell Students:

- The Cornell Law School Immigration Clinic is now doing DACA renewals remotely, and they should be filed ASAP! Please email jak533@cornell.edu to reach Jaclyn Kelley-Widmer. Please note that although USCIS offices are closed, students can still file to renew their DACA and can request funds from the University to do so.
- Please reach out to the larger Cornell Law professor immigration team at immigrationhelp@cornell.edu with general immigration concerns or inquiries.

Job Opportunities for DACA students:

- Cornell Law School Clinical Programs are Seeking Spanish Language Interpreters for Paid Summer Work! Please email clinicalprograms@cornell.edu to learn more and sign up.
- Chegg Internships has a list of places hiring remote interns (both paid and unpaid) for the summer. You can see the list of opportunities [here](#).

Funding:

- Scholly Scholarship Platform has created a COVID-19 Student relief fund where students or the parents of high school and college students can apply for \$200 in assistance [here](#).
- The Lambda Theta Alpha Foundation has created a disaster relief fund to help provide relief for those affected by COVID-19. You can request up to \$250 in assistance by completing their application fund [here](#). Please note that in order to be eligible for this fund, you or a family member must have tested positive for COVID-19 or been adversely impacted by it. The fund also reimburses individuals for expenses incurred due to displacement because of COVID-19. They will ask you to attach receipts showing costs incurred or medical papers showing a positive diagnosis in order to be eligible for relief.
- The Arts and Culture Leaders of Color Emergency Fund is providing US-Based BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) artists and art administrators with a one-time grant of \$200. You can fill out the application [here](#).
- Cornell University has created an access fund to provide students with financial support during this time. The university is offering up to \$500 to help mitigate emergency expenses. You can find more information and complete the application [here](#).
- Herman Legal Group, an immigration law firm, has created an essay contest that will provide \$1,000 to the winning essay. Submissions are due by August 1, 2020. For more information about eligibility and how to submit your essay, please visit Herman Legal Group's essay contest webpage [here](#).

Medical Care:

- United We Dream has posted a list of free/low cost medical facilities available in every state. To figure out where you or your loved ones can go for medical care, please click this [link](#).
- [Here](#) is a link for a free clinic directory. This site allows you to search for clinics nationwide.

Facemasks:

- The Betancourt Macias Family Scholarship Foundation is providing undocumented immigrants with face masks. If you or your loved ones need facemasks, you can click [here](#) to fill out the required form and request up to two facemasks.

Food:

- Feeding America is a nationwide organization attempting to combat food insecurity during COVID-19. Their website has a food bank locator that individuals can use to find a food bank near them. You can access that tool by clicking [here](#).
- No Kid Hungry is helping distribute meals to families with children through local schools and charitable organizations. Their website has a feature that allows individuals to see if any schools or organizations near them are distributing meals. You can access that tool [here](#).
- Burger King is providing free kids' meals with any purchase on the Burger King app (available for download on both the apple store and the google play store). Free kids' meals are only available for take-out or drive-thru.
Source:<https://www.today.com/food/burger-king-offer-free-kids-meals-amid-coronavirus-pandemic-t176377>
- This [article](#) provides a list of resources for individuals located in Washington, Tennessee, New Jersey, Delaware, Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Oregon, New York, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Maryland, Kentucky, Colorado, California and Arizona.
- This is a New York City Specific list of organizations providing food to impacted populations. The list is organized by borough and accessible [here](#).

Shelter:

- The National Low-Income Housing Association has created a list of states that have implemented temporary moratoriums on evictions (this means that tenant evictions are not allowed either for a specified amount of time or at all during the pandemic). You can access that list [here](#). They have also created a searchable database for federally subsidized housing which also has a temporary moratorium on evictions under the CARES act. You can access that list [here](#).
- The Homeless Shelter Directory has created a list of shelter nationwide that cater to homeless/housing insecure individuals. Please note that some shelters are full and have

a waiting list. Also, some shelters require identification documentation. This list contains both shelters that do and do not require such documentation. Please call the shelter to inquire about their capacity and documentation requirements before going there. You can access the directory [here](#).

- Tuck Sleep has also created a directory of shelters that you can search by state. Once again, some shelters have waiting lists and require documentation, while others do not. Please call the shelter to inquire about their capacity and documentation requirements before going there. You can access the directory [here](#).

Storage:

- U-Haul is offering college students 30 days of free self-storage during the Coronavirus Outbreak. You can find the closest U-Haul by clicking [here](#).

Travel Assistance:

- Enterprise has reduced the minimum age to rent a vehicle to 18 and is waiving the young renters' fees for rentals through May 1, 2020. You can rent a vehicle by clicking [here](#).

General Resources:

- The National Domestic Workers Alliance has created a spreadsheet of various resources for undocumented immigrants during this time. The spreadsheet includes both national resources, and resources by state. You can access the spreadsheet [here](#).
- Informed Immigrant has compiled a list of resources for undocumented immigrants. The list includes both national resources and resources by state. You can access the list by clicking [here](#).
- My Undocumented Life has kept up to date with the latest information concerning the pandemic and has compiled a list of resources (both national and state specific) for immigrants to access during this time. They also have provided links for relief funds in California, Washington, Massachusetts, and New York. You can access their website [here](#).
- Immigrants Rising has put together a resource page with a wide variety of resources. You can access their resource page [here](#).
- HIAS has created a "Know Your Rights" flyer available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Farsi](#), [Arabic](#), [French](#), [Russian](#), and [Swahili](#).

Internet:

- Xfinity is offering two months of free Wi-Fi to students who live in their service areas and need internet. There are no upfront fees or installation costs. You can find out more about their program or apply [here](#).
- Altice USA is offering 60 days of free Wi-Fi to students impacted by COVID-19 in their service areas. You can find out more about their program or apply [here](#).
- Charter is offering 60 days of free Wi-Fi to students impacted by COVID-19 in their service areas. You can find out more about their program or apply [here](#).

COVID-19 UNDOCUMENTED/DACA FAQ's

Updated 4/23/20

by Miriam Kontoh, Cornell Law 1L Immigration Law & Advocacy Clinic

Questions about Healthcare

1. Can I go to the hospital?

- Undocumented individuals can visit free or low-cost clinics near them in order to seek treatment. Individuals can click this [link](#) in order to find a health center near them. You should always call centers beforehand or visit their website to see whether or not they are testing for COVID-19 or if they require an appointment. According to recent statements by ICE, Immigration enforcement should not take place at or near health care facilities. DHS (the Department of Homeland Security) has internal policy guidelines that recognize schools, medical treatment and health care facilities, places of worship, religious or civil ceremonies, and public demonstrations as “sensitive locations.” According to these internal policy guidelines, ICE should limit or avoid immigration enforcement in any sensitive locations. These policy guidelines, however, exist only as internal agency memorandum and not as federal law. While it is possible that ICE will come to a hospital, it is unlikely. ICE is not stopping immigration enforcement in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

Source(s): National Immigration Law Center: “[Understanding the Impact of Key Provisions of COVID-19 Relief Bills on Immigrant Communities](#)”
Immigration and Customs Enforcement: “[ICE Guidance on COVID-19](#)”
ACLU: “[COVID-19 Doesn’t Discriminate – Neither Should Congress’ Response](#)”

2. If I am undocumented and therefore do not qualify for Medicaid, can I access emergency Medicaid to cover coronavirus treatment?

- Yes. Under federal law (42 U.S.C. § 1396b(v)(2)(A)-(C)), state Medicaid programs must treat individuals suffering from an emergency medical condition who are not lawfully present in the United States and therefore do not meet the immigration requirements for Medicaid. An “emergency medical condition” is such that the absence of immediate medical attention could put the patient in serious jeopardy, impair bodily functions, or cause serious disfunction to an organ or body part. To qualify for emergency Medicaid in New York, the individual must be a New York resident, financially eligible for Medicaid, and have an emergency medical condition.

Source(s): [Healthcare.gov](#): “Coverage for Lawfully Present Immigrants”

[NY Health Access](#): “Emergency Medicaid in New York State -Limited Medicaid Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants”

3. Can individuals with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) access Medicaid, insurance through the ACA Marketplaces, or private health insurance through an employer?
 - Can individuals with DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) access Medicaid, insurance through the ACA Marketplaces, or private health insurance through an employer? Individuals with DACA are not eligible for Medicaid and cannot purchase private health insurance coverage through the ACA Marketplaces. As DACA recipients have work authorization, they can access employer-provided private health insurance. DACA recipients can access emergency Medicaid if they meet the income requirements for Medicaid and arrive to a hospital suffering from an emergency medical condition (meaning that the absence of immediate medical attention could put the patient in serious jeopardy, impair bodily functions, or cause serious disfunction to an organ or body part).

Source(s): The Kaiser Family Foundation: “[Key Facts on Individuals Eligible for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals \(DACA\) Program](#)”

4. Are there other options for undocumented people besides going to the emergency room and accessing emergency Medicaid?
 - Yes. Undocumented people (and anyone else) can go to free or low-cost clinics. The below link contains websites for each state that will give users a list of free and low-cost clinics based on address.

Source(s): [United We Stand](#): “Healthcare access for Undocumented Folks in the Time of COVID19”

5. Can undocumented immigrants access private health insurance?
 - Undocumented immigrants cannot purchase private health insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplaces. Some undocumented immigrants may access private health insurance as a spouse or dependent of an employee who receives health insurance through his or her employer. Other undocumented immigrants who are students may receive health insurance through their colleges or universities. Undocumented immigrants can purchase private health insurance on the individual market outside of the ACA marketplaces (i.e. directly from an insurance company), but not all plans on the individual marketplace comply with the ACA.

Source(s): [The Kaiser Family Foundation](#): “Health Coverage and Care of Undocumented Immigrants”

[Healthinsurance.org](https://www.healthinsurance.org) “Should You Look Outside the ACA’s Exchanges?: How your individual health coverage differs –and how it doesn’t –when you shop for insurance outside Obamacare’s marketplaces”

Questions about Unemployment Compensation

6. Can I file for unemployment if I am undocumented?
- No, under the current state and federal systems, undocumented workers are not eligible for unemployment benefits. Generally, workers must have valid work authorization when they apply for their job, when they were working, and when they are filing a claim in order to receive unemployment benefits.

Source: NELP.org: “[Immigration Status Requirements for UI Eligibility](#)”

7. I heard that everyone will receive a \$1,200 check in the mail to offset economic losses due to the coronavirus pandemic. Can people working with DACA receive the \$1,200?
- Students with DACA are eligible for the stimulus checks. In order to qualify for the stimulus relief checks, an individual has to have a social security number. Individuals with DACA receive work authorization and a social security number. However, students cannot qualify for stimulus relief if they are claimed as a dependent by a parent or guardian.

Source(s): The Wall Street Journal: “[Some Tax-Paying Immigrants Won’t Get the Coronavirus Stimulus Payments](#)”

Buzzfeed.News: “[Will I Get a Check From the US Government, and How? Here’s Everything You Need to Know](#)”

8. I belong to a mixed status family. Will we be eligible for the \$1,200?
- Under the CARES Act mixed status families are ineligible for stimulus relief if one parent in the household is unauthorized. Unauthorized means that the individual is not authorized to work in the US and files taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).

Source: Wall Street Journal “[Some Tax-Paying Immigrants Won’t Get Coronavirus Stimulus Payments](#)”

9. I have DACA; am I eligible for unemployment insurance if I lose my job?
- Noncitizens are generally eligible for unemployment insurance benefits as long as they are:(1) work-authorized at the time they file for unemployment benefits and during the entire time that they are receiving benefits; and (2) meet the state residency requirements for unemployment benefits. However, this does vary by state. Some states preclude DACA recipients from obtaining unemployment benefits.

Source(s): National Immigration Law Center: “[Understanding the Impact of Key Provisions of COVID-19 Relief Bills on Immigrant Communities](#)”
DACA Dreamed Success: “[Got DACA Now What? What to Know When Your Deferred Action For Childhood Arrivals is Approved](#)”

Questions about Immigration Status and Removal/Deportation

10. Can I still file to renew my DACA application?

- Although USCIS offices are closed, DACA recipients can still file for DACA renewal and are encouraged to do so. Applications are still being accepted by USCIS even if they are not being processed. Students have questions concerning their DACA renewal or who would like assistance filing their application should email jak533@cornell.edu to reach Jaelyn Kelley-Widmer.

Source(s): Informed Immigrant: “[DACA Updates During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)”

11. Are USCIS offices open during the coronavirus pandemic?

- USCIS has temporarily closed its domestic offices through May 3, 2020 and plans to reopen on May 4, 2020 unless the public closures are extended. All domestic field offices, application support centers, and asylum offices are temporarily closed. Please see the below link for information regarding whether international offices are closed temporarily or permanently by location. USCIS domestic offices will send notices to applicants and petitioners whose scheduled appointments and naturalization ceremonies are impacted by the temporary closure. Asylum interviews have been automatically cancelled and rescheduled. Asylum applicants will receive a new interview notice once their interview has been rescheduled. Once USCIS offices have reopened, USCIS will reschedule the application support appointments and notify the individuals of the new appointment time by mail. If an individual has an appointment at a field office, she must reschedule through the USCIS Contact Center (link below); USCIS will not automatically reschedule appointments at field offices.

Source(s): U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: “[USCIS Office Closing](#)”
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: “[USCIS Contact Center](#)”

12. What is happening in detention centers to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

- According to an ICE statement, ICE is reviewing CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidance daily and updates its protocol based on the CDC guidance. ICE evaluates detainees based on CDC protocol to determine if individuals with a higher risk of severe illness as a result of COVID-19 should continue to be

detained. According to ICE, ICE initially released 160 individuals from detention who have a higher risk of severe illness as a result of COVID-19 after evaluating their immigration history, criminal record, potential threat to public safety, flight risk, and national security concerns. According to ICE, ICE has decreased the number of new detainees due to coronavirus concerns. To prevent the spread of coronavirus in detention centers, the ICE Health Service Corps isolates detainees with fever and/or respiratory symptoms who meet the CDC criteria for epidemiologic risk of exposure to COVID-19. Detainees without fever or respiratory symptoms who meet the CDC risk criteria are monitored for 14 days while housed separately from the general population. Detainees are tested for COVID-19 if they meet the CDC guidelines for testing. ICE transports individuals with moderate to severe coronavirus symptoms to hospitals. ICE provides detainees with soap in the showers and hand soap in the bathrooms. The population at all detention facilities has been reduced to 70% capacity to encourage social distancing. ICE has temporarily suspended social visitation at detention centers to prevent the spread of coronavirus, and has increased detainee access to videoconferencing, telephone, and email as a result. In-person attorney visitation is allowed if the attorney determines that in-person visitation is essential, but the attorney must undergo the same screening required for staff entry into the facility. Litigation is on-going to try to release immigrant detainees. Immigration advocates are also filing humanitarian parole requests to try to get detainees released.

Source(s):Immigration and Customs Enforcement: “ICE Guidance on COVID-19” <https://www.ice.gov/coronavirus>