

IMMIGRATION



NCJW works for comprehensive, humane, and equitable immigration and naturalization laws, policies, and practices that facilitate and expedite legal status for more individuals. We support measures such as the **DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act)**, which failed in Congress but has been passed by several states across the country, as a way to expedite the path to citizenship and higher education for the best and brightest immigrant children. NCJW seeks to promote measures that provide a direct and inclusive path to citizenship without unjust enforcement triggers and rejects the enforcement-only approach that separates families and persecutes those seeking opportunity and a better life.

Preserve and work to advance family reunification

Clearly, the current family reunification system is not working well for many legal permanent residents and their immediate family members. Furthermore, the lack of a reasonably timely family reunification option within the legal system is contributing to the breakdown of the integrity of the U.S. immigration system.

Resettlement and detainment

The United States must increase refugee resettlement, ensure adequate funding for international assistance and US refugee resettlement, and stop detaining and deporting refugees, instead ensuring they have full access to protection and asylum.

Advance due process and fair treatment that are consistent with American values

Ensure that immigrants and refugees are guaranteed fair court proceedings and meaningful review of their individual cases by amending the 1996 laws to repeal mandatory detention laws and reinstate judicial discretion and due process. Congress also should expand alternatives to detention and institute enforceable standards in the detention system, such as interpretation and translation assistance and access to medical care, mental health services, legal counsel and family members.

Protect rights and working conditions, while ensuring enforcement Protection for all workers

Promote the U.S. economy by establishing and enforcing full labor and workplace rights and protections for all workers regardless of immigration status, including in the areas of wage/hour, health and safety, antidiscrimination, and the right to organize. Retaliation against workers based on immigration status should be prohibited and protective tools like U-Visas should be expanded.

Oppose legislation that discriminates based on citizenship status

Discriminatory restrictions imposed by the 1996 welfare law means that immigrants with lawful permanent resident status must wait five years before they are eligible to access affordable health coverage programs like Medicaid, CHIP, and the health insurance marketplace -- despite being authorized to live and work in the US, contributing to our communities and economy. Immigrant women struggling to make ends meet are disproportionately harmed from these arbitrary and inhumane barriers and delays -- five years without access to affordable health care can mean the difference between life and death. Our laws must ensure that immigrants receive fair treatment in the health care system to which they contribute. No one should be forced to wait five years for the health care they need.

What to Do Next:

The Jewish faith teaches that to save one life is to save the world. As a community with its own history of refugees seeking asylum, our only moral response to the crisis before us is one of compassion.

Diligently read, watch, and listen to the news.

Monitor your sources.

Stay informed.

Join organizations like Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates, or MIRA.

Support organizations like The International Institute and The Mosaic Project in St. Louis.

NCJW®

National Council of Jewish Women
St. Louis Section