

San Mateo County Immigrant Forum
Meeting Notes
10/21/2021

1. Welcome & Introductions: Jennifer Llamas

- a. Thank you to all for joining us on Zoom. The Immigrant Forum will be held virtually until further notice.

2. USCIS Updates: Vilaysay “Sai” Phavisith, Community Relations Officer, USCIS

- a. Humanitarian Parole for Afghan Nationals
 - Webinar on **Friday, Nov. 5 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Eastern**
 - **Purpose:** During this webinar, an overview of parole will be provided with an update specific to Afghan nationals located outside of the U.S. who have submitted requests for parole
 - Parole allows an individual, who may be inadmissible or otherwise ineligible for admission into the United States, to be paroled into the United States for a temporary period
 - **To register visit:** [registration page](#)
- b. Naturalization Statistics
 - Webinar on **Thursday, Nov. 4, 2021, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Eastern**
 - **Purpose:** During this webinar, USCIS will provide an overview of the types of data that are available to the public, with an emphasis on naturalization statistics, particularly on the characteristics of naturalized citizens. Subject-matter experts will discuss how USCIS' data can be used by different organizations such as research and academic institutions, think tanks, and community-based organizations
 - USCIS also wants to hear from your organization to learn what they can do to improve transparency and access to immigration data and statistics
 - **To register:** Visit [registration page](#)
- c. New Webpage for Lockbox Filing Location Updates
 - See which lockbox form filing locations have been updated and when the update was made
 - Page will be updated regularly, but always check the “Where to File” section of your form’s webpage for the most current information on where to mail form
- d. Webpage for Afghan Evacuees
 - Updated to include in-depth information for the Afghan evacuees who have entered the US
 - This includes info on the requirements on evacuees who were granted conditional LPR status so they can complete medical exams, how to file for a humanitarian parole for afgans still in Afghanistan, and possible avenues to LPR status such as a family petition, asylum, or employment
- e. USCIS Extends Evidence of Status for Conditional Permanent Residents to 24 Months with Pending Form I-751 or Form I-829
 - Starting Sept. 4, 2021, USCIS is extending the time that receipt notices can be used to show evidence of status from 18 months to 24 months for petitioners

who properly file Form I-751, Petition to Remove Conditions on Residence, or Form I-829, Petition by Investor to Remove Conditions on Permanent Resident Status

- The change is being made from 18 to 24 months to accommodate current processing times for Form I-751 and Form I-829, which have increased over the past year
 - Additionally, new receipt notices will be issued to eligible conditional permanent residents who properly filed their Form I-751 or Form I-829 before Sept. 4 and whose cases are still pending. Those receipt notices will also serve as evidence of continued status for 24 months past the expiration date on their Green Card
- f. COVID-19 Vaccination Required for Immigration Medical Examinations
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced that, effective Oct. 1, 2021, applicants subject to the immigration medical examination must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before the civil surgeon can complete an immigration medical examination and sign Form I-693, Report of Medical Examination and Vaccination Record
 - This requirement is effective Oct. 1, 2021, and applies prospectively to all Forms I-693 signed by the civil surgeons on or after that date
 - Form I-693 and the form instructions to incorporate this new requirement are being updated
- g. USCIS Awards FY 2021 Citizenship and Integration Grants
- On Sept. 20, 2021, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced the award of \$10 million in grants to 40 organizations that prepare lawful permanent residents (LPRs) for naturalization
 - The grants also aim to promote prospective citizens' integration into American civic life by funding educational programs designed to increase their knowledge of English, U.S. history and civics
 - Located in 25 states, these organizations will receive federal funding to support citizenship preparation services for LPRs through September 2023
 - Fresno Unified School District and Catholic Charities in Santa Rosa are closest in this area
- h. USCIS Issues Updated and Comprehensive Guidance on T Visa Adjudications
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is issuing updated and comprehensive guidance in the USCIS Policy Manual on adjudicating applications for T nonimmigrant status (or T visas) submitted by victims of human trafficking, including clarifying how applicants establish eligibility
 - Policy guidance clarifies the physical presence eligibility requirement, the age-based exemption from the requirement to comply with law enforcement requests, and how the agency evaluates involuntary servitude claims
 - The guidance reduces barriers for noncitizen victims of trafficking, consistent with the intent of the Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000

3. Legal Updates: Alison Kamhi, Supervising Attorney, ILRC

- a. DHS Releases Worksite Enforcement Strategy to Protect the American Labor Market, Workers, and Worksite Conditions
- <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2021/10/12/dhs-releases-worksite-enforcement-strategy-protect-american-labor-market-workers-and>

4. San Mateo County Small Business Grant Opportunities: Caleb Smith, Resource Conservation Specialist II, Office of Sustainability

- a. **Purpose:**
 - To help small business that have not received any assistance from the county, state, or federal COVID-19 relief programs in the past 12 months
- b. **Timeline & Applicant Assistance:**
 - **Friday, October 29, 2021 at 8:00am to Friday, November 12, 2021 at 5:00pm**
- c. **Process:**
 - Submit online application: <https://www.smcstrong.org/applyforfunding>
 - Selection based on lottery system
 - Approved business will be funded by San Mateo Credit Union up to \$10,000
- d. **How to help the word:**
 - Via Facebook: /smcstrong @smcstrongFund @smc_Strong
- e. **For more information:** sbgrant@smcgov.org or call support lines:
 - English: 650-413-5600
 - Spanish: 855-221-1777
 - Chinese: 888-262-7552
 - Tagalog: 800-211-9641
 - FAQs: www.smcstrong.org
- f. **Q/A**

Q: What is the purpose of using a lottery system vs who needs it?
A: To not deny applicants-based off "how well can they tell their story."
Q: Can undocumented business owners apply?
A: Yes, with their ITIN number

5. FLY Program Presentation: Kate Hiester, San Mateo County Director, FLY Program

- a. **Purpose:** Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY) works to dismantle the pipeline to prison in CA
- b. **Four programs:**
 - 12-week class Law Program
 - 10th month class Leadership Program
 - 9+ month Reentry Program
 - 3-9+ month Stay Fly Program
- c. **New role** Career Pathways Navigator: supports youth to navigate the educational and career system and goals
- d. **Q/A**

Q: What is the process by which we can refer or connect youth to your program(s)?
A: The referral link is: bit.ly/SMCFLYReferral20

6. Transition to Independence Fair 2022: Lianna Chen, Community Worker II, Family Health Services

- a. The Transition to Independence Fair (TIF) is an annual event, free for all San Mateo County residents, that provides resources, information, and workshops to students with disabilities age 16 and older (and their parents/family members) who are no longer eligible for school-based services as they transition to adulthood

- b. The event brings together agencies that provide higher education, job training, employment, day programs, living options and health services to adults with disabilities
- c. They have never had Immigrant Support Services available at the event, and they would like to reach out and invite participation from agencies because this falls under a large part of our population
 - Information about agency services can be in the format of a video to be put onto their website
 - The video can include (for example): special education services for undocumented students to help them through the process of obtaining citizenship – can they request accommodation or longer times for taking the Citizenship Test and how can we assist them to communicate that to the people providing the test? Also help for understanding about DACA, or if there are updates for DACA
 - There are things families do not know about and may not know what questions to ask, or who to ask. Also, students may not know if they can get a permit to work if they are undocumented
- d. They feel that having Immigrant Support Services as part of the fair can lead to networking with school districts and come up with a way to make the transition easier for students coming to our county
- e. Updates will be provided as more information is known to us
- f. If anyone is interested in contributing a video to the Transition to Independence Fair (TIF) website, or if you have questions, please email Lchen1@smcgov.org

7. Office of Community Affairs Updates

- a. The recruitment for Jasmine’s position closed on Monday, October 18 and screening of the applications will be taking place next week
- b. The Immigrant Services Provider Spotlight Series continue monthly – October highlighted National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. All past Spotlight Series starting from November of 2020 can be found on our webpage <https://cmo.smcgov.org/community-engagement-efforts>

8. Agency Update Roundtable

- a. **Multicultural Institute Events:**
 - Vaccine clinic for NFO residents 11/7/21 from 10am to 2pm
 - Navidad Jornalera: a Christmas Celebration 12/22/21 will include food, gifts & toys distribution. Now accepting donations!
 - Altar de Muertos to commemorate COVID deaths
 - For more information or donations contact: Cesar Meza-Esveille
- b. **SMC Libraries:** NFO library launching 2 programs
 - Native Spanish speaker’s literacy classes Mondays at 6pm
 - Literacy English class Tuesdays 6pm-7:15pm
- c. **CLESPA:** Food distribution coming in December
- d. **49ers Academy Cesar Chavez School:** holiday drive coming soon. Please contact Maria Chavez for food and toy donations.
- e. **Catholic Charities:** New consultation phone line 650-727-8430