



Resources for Immigrant and Refugee Families in Minneapolis Public Schools

Minneapolis Public Schools is a safe place for all students and families, regardless of their immigration status, national origin or language. The Minneapolis Board of Education affirmed this in a resolution passed in December 2016. It is not the role of the district to ask about the citizenship or immigration status of any of our students or families, or to enforce federal immigration laws. It has been our practice to only provide information when required by law or a valid court order. MPS will continue to ensure all students have equitable access to educational and extracurricular opportunities, including rigorous courses, engaging activities, high-quality athletics and supportive services, regardless of immigration status.

Frequently Asked Questions

Recent executive orders declare that undocumented persons who receive certain government aid will be deported. What does this mean related to receiving Free/Reduced Price lunch?

This is not new, however, what may happen is more vigorous enforcement as it called for the identification and removal “as expeditiously as possible.” It is important to know that participation in public schools, including the free/reduced price lunch program is available to all children regardless of their status or a parent's status.

What about the data in the Free/Reduced Price lunch forms? What is in there and who has access?

The data needed to apply for Free/Reduced Price lunch does not include citizen status, and only the last four digits of an adult member’s social security number is required or to make an indication of “none” if the adult has none. Other foreign adults, in addition to undocumented persons, do not have social security numbers. The data provided in the form is subject to strict privacy protections put forth by the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”). The USDA has consistently communicated that “all school-aged children in income eligible households can receive school meal benefits regardless of the immigration status of household members, and that information provided by the household will not be used for immigration-related purposes.”

What happens with the data required in background checks for parents who wish to volunteer?

In order to conduct a background check, the District requires a social security number. It is important to know that all parents can volunteer in different capacities even if they do not have a social security number or do not want the District to use it. It does mean that certain volunteer opportunities like overnight trips will not be available to such parents. The District uses a service to gather information relevant to the background check, and securely stores the background check results. Such documentation is regularly shredded and purged.

What is MPS’ equal education policy?

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that equal educational opportunity is provided for all students regardless their immigration status, national origin or language. MPS is committed to the success of every student, and our mission is to support students to be career and college ready.

Will MPS turn-over citizenship or immigration status information, if requested by a government agency representative?

MPS does not collect or keep citizenship and immigration status information or enforce immigration laws.

What happens when a representative of any government agency comes to the schools or makes a request?

If a representative of any government agency inquires about a student or family, they are referred to the MPS Office of General Counsel. General Counsel then requires substantiation of legal authority or a court order before releasing any information the district may have about a student or family. General Counsel will provide notice to families



unless the governmental agency has required the District not to provide notice, and has provided appropriate legal authority.

How can families prepare for the possibility of deportation?

- Update your emergency contact information with Minneapolis Public Schools by contacting the main office of your student's school.
- Create and discuss a Family Preparedness Plan. The Immigrant Legal Resource Center has a guide for creating a plan at: <https://www.ilrc.org/family-preparedness-plan>
- Parents may designate a temporary legal guardian for their children for a period of up to one year with a Delegation of Parental Authority. With this form, a temporary legal guardian will be able to enroll children in school and deal with other educational matters so that children can continue their education uninterrupted. More information about this form is available at <http://bit.ly/2mxfa47>

Where can families find legal advice on immigration matters?

- The Immigrant Law Center of MN operates an **Immigrant and Refugee Rights Helpline** to connect community members with a free legal consultation. The Helpline is available for immigrants and refugees living in MN whose household income is below 250% of the federal poverty level. **For immediate legal advice and assistance from an attorney, call 651-287-3715 during the following hours: Tuesdays 1pm – 3pm or Thursdays 6pm – 8pm.** Help is available regarding;
 - Know Your Rights legal guidance
 - Questions about President Trump's immigration Executive Orders
 - Travel ban questions
 - Immigration court and detention information
 - Advice for emergency family planning
- **Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid** (mylegalaid.org) offers free civil legal assistance to low-income community members in many areas of law, including immigration. For assistance, contact a client specialist at **612-334-5970** on weekdays between 8:30am to 4:30pm. You will be asked a series of questions regarding your legal issue.
- View a **directory of Immigration Legal Services in Minnesota** from the Immigration Advocates Network at <http://bit.ly/2oNdorA>

Where can families find information about their rights, regardless of immigration status?

- Know Your Rights resources from the Immigrant Law Center of MN: <https://www.ilcm.org/immigration-resources/know-your-rights/>
- Fact sheet on rights to access health care from the National Immigration Law Center: <https://www.nilc.org/issues/health-care/health-insurance-and-care-rights/>
- Information on the current status of the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program from the Immigrant Legal Resource Center: <https://www.ilrc.org/daca>

What resources are available regarding the travel restrictions for citizens of Muslim countries?

- Contact CAIR MN by calling **612-206-3360**. CAIR MN has many online resources for American Muslims, including;
 - Guide to legal rights: <https://www.cairmn.com/civil-rights.html>
 - Community Advisory on the Executive Order signed March 6, 2017: <http://bit.ly/2qbVzre>
- Resources for Travelers from the Immigrant Law Center of MN (flyers in English, Arabic, Somali, Spanish, German, Pashto, French, Farsi, and Kurdish): <http://bit.ly/2qbW04Q>
- Contact the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota (ACLU-MN) by calling **651- 645-4097**

More information at: http://multilingual.mpls.k12.mn.us/resources_for_immigrants