

Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

Economic Services Administration | Community Services Division

Washington COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund

Millions of Washingtonians have been adversely impacted and have endured economic hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including 250,000 people who have been unable to access unemployment insurance compensation and federal stimulus packages due to their immigration status.

The Washington COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund is a pool of funding created during the coronavirus pandemic to support people ineligible for federal stimulus money or unemployment benefits due to their immigration status. The relief fund will provide nearly \$62 million in federal CARES Act funding to distribute a one-time cash grant of \$1,000 per person.

What is the role of DSHS?

As a community-driven initiative, DSHS is partnering with many of the organizations that requested the funding, including Scholarship Junkies, Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network or WAISN, and many others. For a full list of partners, please refer to the website: <https://www.immigrantreliefwa.org>.

When will the Washington COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund be available?

Applications will be open from April 21 to May 21, 2021. Funds will be distributed to approved applicants between June 1 and June 15, 2021.

How can people apply?

Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, prioritizing those in greatest need.

Eligible community members can apply by:

- Visiting the website at www.immigrantreliefwa.org.
- Calling the hotline 844-724-3737, available every day from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- Connecting with a DSHS community-based partner for assistance.

Contact: Sarah Peterson, Chief of Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance, sarah.peterson@dshs.wa.gov.

Who is eligible?

Applicants must demonstrate that they:

- Are a Washington state resident.
- Are at least 18 years of age.
- Have been significantly affected by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Are ineligible for the federal stimulus payment or for unemployment insurance benefits due to their immigration status.
- Have an income at or below 250% of the federal poverty level.

How much will be available?

Up to \$1,000 per individual.

If someone receives this assistance, will it prevent them from getting a visa or a green card in the future because of public charge?

No. This fund is considered one-time disaster relief assistance, and it should not be considered under the public charge rule. Receiving assistance from this fund should not impact people's ability to obtain a green card.

Please see our website for more information on public charge.