

# Know Your Immigration Rights and Protections Under the Law

- **You have the right to apply for and secure housing without sharing your immigration status.** California law prohibits housing providers from asking about your immigration status unless you are applying for affordable housing funded by the federal government. Additionally, housing providers cannot harass or intimidate you by threatening or sharing information about your immigration status to ICE, law enforcement, or other government agencies.
- **You have the right to access emergency medical care.** Federal laws and regulations ensure the rights of all people to access emergency medical care, including undocumented immigrants.
- **You have the right to an attorney.** If you are arrested by police, you have the right to a government-appointed attorney. If you are detained by ICE and/or are facing immigration proceedings, you have the right to seek legal assistance through an attorney.
- **State and local law enforcement cannot ask for your immigration status.** California law expressly prohibits law enforcement from inquiring about a person's immigration status for immigration enforcement purposes.
- **State and local law enforcement cannot share your personal information.** This includes sharing your home or work address for immigration purposes, unless that information is available to the public or unless that information involves previous criminal arrest, convictions or similar criminal history.
- **State and local law enforcement cannot assist ICE with immigration enforcement, with very limited exceptions.** This means they cannot investigate, cannot interrogate, cannot arrest, and cannot detain you unless it is as part of joint federal task force where the primary purpose is not immigration enforcement.

## Guidance for Immigrant Students and Families

- **Right to a Free Public Education:** All children have a right to equal access to free public education, regardless of their or their parents'/guardians' immigration status.
- **Information Required for School Enrollment:** Schools must accept a variety of documents from the student's parent or guardian to demonstrate

proof of child's age or residency and schools are not required to keep a copy of the document used as proof of a child's age.

- **Confidentiality of Personal Information:** Federal and state laws protect student education records and personal information. These laws generally require that schools obtain written consent from parents or guardians before releasing student information, unless the release of information is for educational purposes, is already public, or is in response to a court order or subpoena.

## Protect Yourself from Immigration Scams

If you need help applying for immigration relief, be careful who you hire. Watch out for immigration scams that can cost you thousands of dollars and/or harm your immigration status! Here are some tips and resources to help:

- **Go to a legitimate legal aid organization for free legal help.** Many nonprofit organizations provide free immigration help to low-income individuals, such as those found through the resources below. To find a legal aid organization near you, go to [lawhelpca.org](http://lawhelpca.org).
- **Keep your original documents in a safe place.** Don't give your original documents to anyone unless you see proof that the government requires the original document. If you give someone an original, they may lose it or refuse to return it unless you pay them.
- **Do not hire an immigration consultant or a notary.** Only lawyers, accredited representatives, and recognized organizations can give you legal advice or represent you in immigration court. Immigration consultants – who may call themselves immigration experts, notarios, notaries public, or paralegals – cannot do so.
- **Do not give money or personal information to anyone who calls, texts, or emails you claiming that there is a problem with your immigration matter.** No federal or state agency, including USCIS, will ever ask for your personal information or payment over the phone, by email, or text.