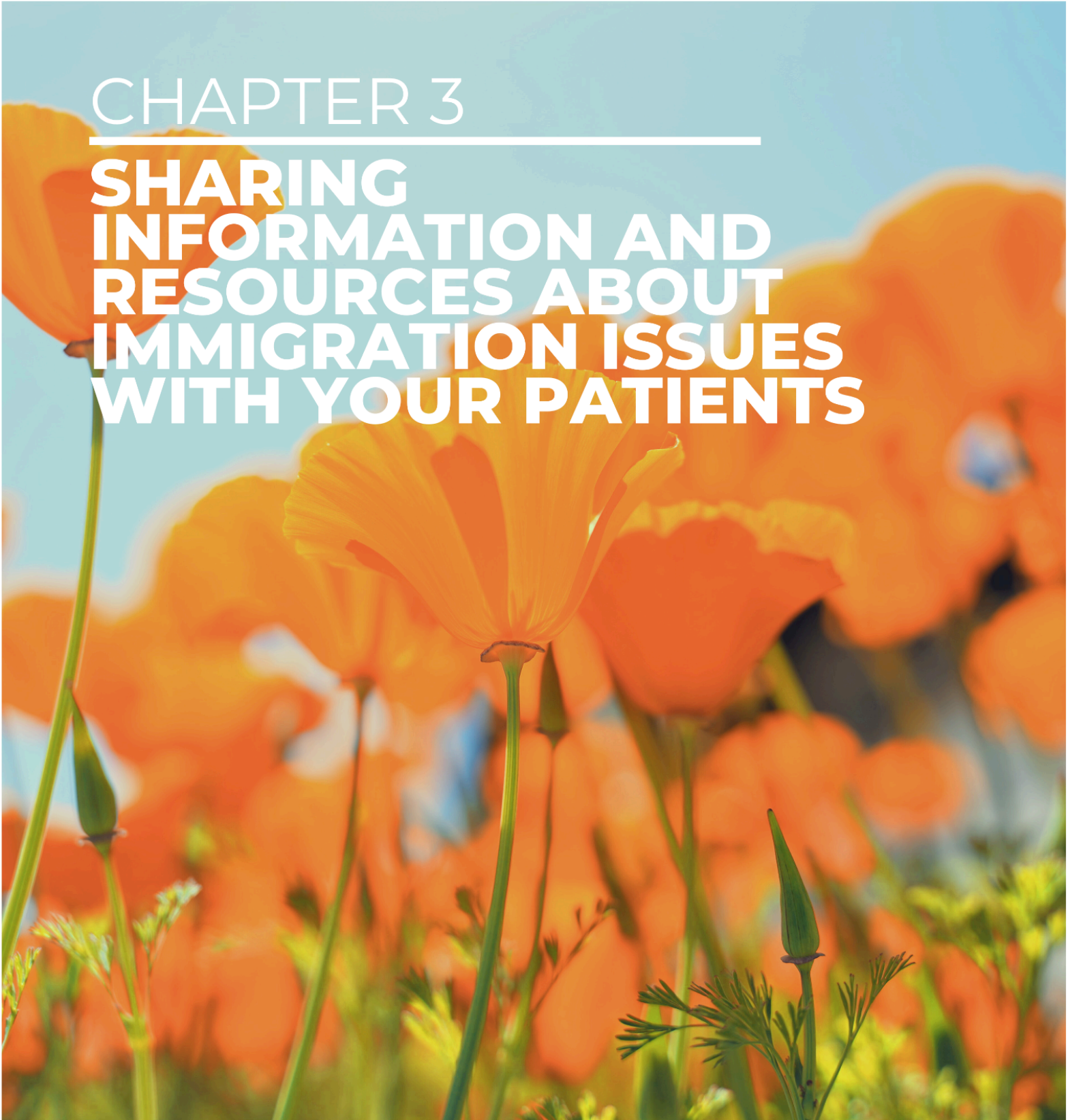


HEALTHY HARBORS FOR ALL CALIFORNIANS

CHAPTER 3

SHARING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES ABOUT IMMIGRATION ISSUES WITH YOUR PATIENTS



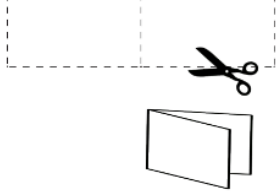
CHAPTER 3: Sharing Information and Resources About Immigration Issues with Your Patients

SUMMARY: Clinicians can play a vital role in supporting immigrant patients by sharing up-to-date, multilingual resources on immigration rights, legal services, benefits eligibility, and family preparedness. This chapter offers links to trusted materials, including know-your-rights cards, rapid response networks, and public charge guidance, helping providers reduce confusion and build trust with immigrant families navigating a shifting policy landscape.

Readily available, multilingual information and resources on immigration issues can be shared with patients. Examples include know-your-rights cards, family preparedness plans, legal services, rapid response networks, and guides on eligibility for health and social services. Your clinic/office can share these resources and ensure that materials are regularly updated, as immigration law, policies, and practices can change quickly.

“Know Your Rights” Information

Immigrant rights organizations provide “know your rights” cards and flyers, reminding immigrants of key rights: not opening the door at home (if Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents do not have a judicial warrant), remaining silent, and not signing any documents that waive their rights. These resources are available in multiple languages.

<p>To print at home, use heavy weight paper, or card stock. Cut out the cards along the dotted lines. If you're unable to print on both sides, you can simply fold on the center line to make a 2-sided card.</p> <p>If you use a professional printer, we suggest you print 2-sided cards with white text on red card stock with rounded corners.</p>	
<p>Usted tiene derechos constitucionales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO ABRA LA PUERTA si un agente de inmigración está tocando la puerta. • NO CONTESTE NINGUNA PREGUNTA de un agente de inmigración si trata de hablar con usted. Usted tiene el derecho a guardar silencio. • NO FIRME NADA sin antes hablar con un abogado. Usted tiene el derecho de hablar con un abogado. • Si usted está fuera de su casa, pregúntele al agente si tiene la libertad de irse y si le dice que sí, váyase con tranquilidad. • ENTRÉGUELE ESTA TARJETA EL AGENTE. Si usted está dentro de su casa, muestre la tarjeta por la ventana o pásela debajo de la puerta. 	<p>I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.</p> <p>I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate with my name on it that you slide under the door.</p> <p>I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights.</p> <p>I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.</p> <p><i>These cards are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.</i></p>

- Immigrant Legal Resource Center **Know Your Rights** Cards (“Red Cards”)(in Spanish and 40 other languages) <https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards-tarjetas-rojas>
- Immigrant Defense **Project Know Your Rights** Flyers (in Spanish and 16 other languages) <https://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/know-your-rights-with-ice/>

Family Preparedness Plans

Like an emergency plan, a preparedness plan helps families respond if a member of the family is arrested, detained or separated by ICE. These plans are available in Spanish and Chinese.



Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Family Preparedness Plan

<https://www.ilrc.org/community-resources/family-preparedness-plan>

<https://www.ilrc.org/resources/step-step-family-preparedness-plan>

Legal Services

The California Department of Social Services (DSS) funds legal services organizations that help immigrants apply for or maintain their immigration status, and provide legal representation in deportation or removal cases. Specialized services are also available for immigrant youth eligible for special immigrant juvenile status.¹⁶

¹⁶ California Department of Social Services, Immigration Legal Services
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/immigration/contractor-contact-information>

A warning about “notarios”

Unfortunately, unethical and unscrupulous immigration attorneys and “notarios” continue to exploit immigrants with false promises and exorbitant fees. In Latin America, “notarios” (notary publics) have broader legal authority (beyond notarizing documents), but in the U.S. the term is misused to falsely suggest legal expertise. If a patient is using a notario, refer them to a trusted California DSS-funded legal services organization.

The California League of Independent Notaries, Notario Fraud: Combating Misrepresentation in Immigrant Communities

<https://www.calnotaries.org/blog/notario-fraud-combating-misrepresentation-in-immigrant-communities>

Federal Trade Commission, How to Avoid Immigration Scams and Get Real Help

<https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-avoid-immigration-scams-and-get-real-help>

Rapid Response Networks

There are multiple “rapid response networks” throughout California, created by immigrant rights organizations and supported by community volunteers. These rapid response networks verify immigration enforcement activities and alert immigrants about enforcement activities taking place. They also explain how to access information about detained immigrants and visiting ICE facilities.¹⁷

Additional Information and Resources

State and Federal Public Programs and Services

Since 2024, all low-income Californians – regardless of immigration status, are eligible for Medi-Cal. California receives funding from the federal government for a portion of the cost of most Medi-Cal enrollees.

Undocumented immigrants are generally not eligible for federal funding. Even though these enrollees are funded just using State dollars.^{18,19}

Recent federal legislation and changes required by the California state budget impose new restrictions on immigrants’ access to federal and state public programs and services. The

¹⁷ California Rapid Response Networks, <https://www.ccijustice.org/carrn>

¹⁸ California Department of Health Care Services, Coverage for All: Get Medi-Cal, <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Get-Medi-Cal/Pages/coverage-for-all.aspx>

¹⁹ California Immigrant Policy Center, <https://caimmigrant.org/what-we-do/policy/health-public-benefits/medi-cal-expansion-resource-hub>

2025 federal budget may cause 3.4 million Californians – including immigrants – to lose Medi-Cal by 2027 (due to new work/reporting rules and funding changes), and 735,000 to lose CalFresh under new requirements. California also plans to freeze new enrollment in state-funded Medi-Cal for undocumented immigrants in January 2026 and also add \$30 monthly premiums starting July 2027.^{20, 21}

History of Family Separation

In 2017, the Trump Administration’s “zero tolerance” policy prosecuted all immigrants crossing the southern U.S. border without documentation. Parents were held under federal criminal law in adult detention facilities, while their children were detained separately under federal civil immigration law. Previously, undocumented entry was usually treated as a civil matter, allowing families to stay together.

Under “zero tolerance,” parents faced lengthy criminal trials, often lasting months, which resulted in forced separation from their children.

Meanwhile, their children – minors not subject to criminal prosecution – were separated from their parents and indefinitely detained under federal civil immigration law. The Department of Homeland Security was unprepared for tens of thousands of children, who were held in overcrowded, unsanitary and inappropriate facilities. Separation of very young children was especially traumatic. Public outcry and legal challenges eventually forced the Trump Administration to end family separation.

The “Public Charge” Law and Patient Impact

The “public charge” law can make an immigrant ineligible for permanent residency (“green card”) if they rely on government cash assistance programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF, or CalWORKS in California), or county General Assistance programs. In 2019, the Trump Administration expanded “public charge” to include public health insurance programs such as Medicaid (Medi-Cal here in California), food assistance programs such as Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, or CalFresh here in California), and some federal housing assistance programs. Although eligibility rules did not change, fear of adverse consequences created a widespread “chilling effect,” deterring immigrants from enrolling in or using these programs.

²⁰ Governor Gavin Newsom, Press Statement, June 6, 2025, <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/06/27/governor-newsom-slams-trump-over-bill-that-would-cut-millions-in-health-cover-age-food-assistance-for-california/>

²¹ California Department of Health Care Services, Medi-Cal Program Changes 2026-2027 <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/eligibility/Pages/medi-cal-changes.aspx>

Legal challenges delayed implementation of the expanded definition of public charge, but in 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court allowed the regulation to take effect pending appeals. **In 2022, the Biden Administration withdrew the rule, and restored the prior narrower interpretation (limited to cash assistance programs).**^{22, 23}

The current Trump Administration has moved to further restrict immigrant eligibility for federal programs and services, and may re-propose the 2019 public charge regulation, which would trigger new legal challenges. Regardless of outcomes, fear and confusion will again deter eligible immigrants from accessing needed programs and services.²⁴

Patient-Facing Resources on Public Charge

The California Department of Health Care Services provides public charge information in all Medi-Cal threshold languages.

- California Department of Health Care Services, Public Charge - <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Get-Medi-Cal/Pages/coverage-for-all.aspx>
- The Protecting Immigrant Families Coalition has information about the public charge law in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, French, Korean, Portuguese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese - <https://pifcoalition.org/publiccharge2022>
- Keep Your Benefits is an online tool (English, Spanish, Chinese) to help immigrants understand how benefits may affect immigration status - <https://keepyourbenefits.org/en/ca/>
- All in for Health - <https://allinforhealth.org/public-charge/>

²² National Immigration Law Center, Public Charge: What Advocates Need to Know Now, December 1, 2023, <https://www.nilc.org/resources/public-charge-what-advocates-need-to-know-now>

²³ California Health Care Foundation, Fears over Past Immigration Policies Chill Medi-Cal Enrollment, October 1, 2024, <https://www.chcf.org/resource/chilling-effect-medi-cal-enrollment-fears-over-past-immigration-policies/>

²⁴ Executive Order 14218: Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Open Borders, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-02-25/pdf/2025-03137.pdf>