



## Data Snapshot of Immigrants in Maine: Effective COVID Relief Depends on the Inclusion of Immigrants

The COVID-19 crisis has shown that we are interconnected: the health and prosperity of *each* of us depends on the health and prosperity of *all* of us. Yet, the legislation enacted to date has excluded millions of immigrants and their families from health care and economic relief. A response that leaves out immigrants and their families in **Maine**--many of whom are providing care for our loved ones and delivering groceries--will undermine our public health and economic recovery. This data snapshot describes immigrants in Maine, some of the barriers to accessing health care they face, and how the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions ("HEROES") Act would make our state and nation healthier and safer.

### Immigrants in Maine:

- Approximately **39,000 people in Maine**, including **11,000 children**, live in families with at least one **noncitizen** in the household.<sup>1</sup>
- **4% of Maine workers in frontline industries** are immigrants, including about **3%** of workers in the grocery, **5%** of workers in health care, and **9%** of workers in the building cleaning services industries.<sup>2</sup>

### Barriers Accessing Essential Services for Testing and Treatment of COVID-19 for Immigrants in Maine:

- Because of the public charge regulation's "chilling effect," immigrant families, including many who are not subject to the public charge test, are avoiding public programs.<sup>3</sup> About **20,000 people in Maine could potentially be deterred from public programs** because of immigration-related consequences.<sup>4</sup>
- Rapid job loss is leading to declines in employer-provided health insurance coverage,<sup>5</sup> which in turn has increased need for publicly funded health care. If unemployment were to reach 17.5%, approximately **1,000 more noncitizens in low-income Maine households would be uninsured**.<sup>6</sup>

### Among Ways the HEROES Act Would Help Immigrants in Maine:

- Provides economic relief to approximately **290 children and adults in Maine** households that filed taxes with an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).<sup>7</sup>
- The direct economic impact of the inclusion of ITIN households in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (retroactively) and HEROES Act would be approximately **\$553,000**.<sup>8</sup> As recipients use these funds to pay rent and buy groceries, they will strengthen the Maine economy.

*If you have questions or would like assistance creating your own state-specific version, please contact Renato Rocha at CLASP at [rrocha@clasp.org](mailto:rrocha@clasp.org) or Sonya Schwartz, NILC consultant, at [sonya@sonyaandpartners.com](mailto:sonya@sonyaandpartners.com).*

---

<sup>1</sup> Public Charge Proposed Rule: Potentially Chilled Population Data Dashboard (Manatt Health, 2018), <https://www.manatt.com/insights/articles/2018/public-charge-rule-potentially-chilled-population>.

<sup>2</sup> A Basic Demographic Profile of Workers in Frontline Industries, [A Basic Demographic Profile of Workers in Frontline Industries \(Center for Economic and Policy, April 2020\)](https://www.manatt.com/insights/articles/2018/public-charge-rule-potentially-chilled-population).

<sup>3</sup> Amid Confusion over the Public Charge Rule, Immigrant Families Continued Avoiding Public Benefits in 2019, (Urban Institute, May 2020), <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/amid-confusion-over-public-charge-rule-immigrant-families-continued-avoiding-public-benefits-2019>.

<sup>4</sup> Public Charge Proposed Rule: Potentially Chilled Population Data Dashboard (Manatt Health, 2018), <https://www.manatt.com/insights/articles/2018/public-charge-rule-potentially-chilled-population>. Calculation of the potentially chilled population based on families with at least one noncitizen and earned income under 250 percent of the federal poverty level.

<sup>5</sup> As of April 2020, the national unemployment rate stands at nearly 15 percent: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Barriers to COVID-19 Testing and Treatment: Immigrants without Health Coverage in the United States, (Migration Policy Institute, May 2020), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/covid-19-testing-treatment-immigrants-health-insurance>

<sup>7</sup> Analysis: How the HEROES Act Would Reach ITIN Filers, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, May 2020), <https://itep.org/analysis-how-the-heroes-act-would-reach-itin-filers/>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.