

5 Things to know about how President Obama's Actions Impacts Undocumented Immigrants

The President's Immigration Accountability Executive Actions are an important step to fix our broken immigration system. Millions of undocumented immigrants who live in the shadows but want to play by the rules and pay taxes have no way to correct their immigration status under the law. That's why the President is taking immediate action to fix as much of the problem as he can while continuing to work with Congress to pass a comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform bill.

The President has been clear that he can't stop all deportations or fix the immigration system entirely on his own; whatever action he takes will not be a substitute for long lasting solutions that only comprehensive immigration legislation can provide.

Here are the 5 things that you should know about the President's initiatives impacting undocumented immigrants in the US:

1. You must meet strict requirements to qualify for relief from deportation

Eligible immigrants will have the opportunity to request temporary relief from deportation and work authorization if they come forward and pass criminal and national security background checks, pay their taxes, pay a fee, and show that they are:

A parent of US citizens or lawful permanent residents on the date of the announcement, are not enforcement priorities and have been in the US before January 1, 2010, or

An individual who arrived in the US before turning 16 years old and before January 1, 2010, regardless of how old they are today

Additionally, we are reducing the time that families are separated while obtaining their green cards. Undocumented immigrants who are immediate relatives of lawful permanent residents or sons or daughters of US citizens can apply to get a waiver if a visa is available. [Learn more here](#)

2. You Cannot Apply for Several Months

The U.S. government (and specifically USCIS) will not begin accepting applications until early 2015. While the government is not accepting applications now, if you believe you are eligible for one or more of the initiatives, you can prepare by gathering documents that establish your identity, relationship to a US citizen or lawful permanent resident and show that you have continuously lived in the US for 5 years or more.

3. Recent Border Crossers will be a Priority for Deportation

You must have been in the US for at least 5 years to qualify for these programs. These executive actions will not benefit immigrants who recently crossed the border (defined as those who entered the country after January 1, 2014), who may cross the border in the future, or who help those who cross in the future, but rather immigrants who have

been living in the United States for years. The President's actions increase the chances that anyone attempting to cross the border illegally today will be caught and then sent back.

4. If you commit fraud you will not qualify

USCIS will review each case very carefully. As with other immigration requests, knowingly misrepresenting or failing to disclose facts will subject applicants to criminal prosecution and possible removal from the United States.

5. Beware of Immigration Scams

Many people offer help with immigration services. Unfortunately, not all are authorized to do so. While many of these unauthorized practitioners mean well, all too many of them are out to rip you off.

Make sure you remain informed and know when the application process starts. Visit www.uscis.gov and sign-up for email updates that provide information about eligibility and applications.