

Immigration Updates

May 2026

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Northwest
IMMIGRANT
RIGHTS
Project

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on our services across WA: www.nwirp.org**

*****Today's information is intended for educational purposes only*****

- Individuals with immigration questions should seek the advice of a reputable and experienced immigration attorney
- The information provided today is only guaranteed to be updated through today
- To stay on top of immigration law updates, please go to:
 - Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project's Breaking News Page, available in [ENG](#) and [SPA](#)
- Please also join NWIRP's mailing list: www.nwirp.org/join/mailling-list

Today's Presentation: What We Will Cover

- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) - *Deferred action challenges*
- DACA - *Renewals processing times still delayed*
- Temporary Protected Status (TPS) - *Lawsuits fighting against revocation*
- Asylum - *Dismissal of cases for failure to pay annual fee*
- Immigration Fines - *What to do if you get a notice*
- USCIS - *Enhanced security screenings; new signature requirements*
- Detention Center - *WA Governor Sues Detention Center Owners*
- Fraud - *Mass lawsuit against WA state immigration attorney*
- New Resources - *Family Preparedness Plan; challenging detention; suing ICE agents*

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)

- Previously, USCIS would automatically consider SIJS applicants for “Deferred Action.”
 - Temporary relief granted by the government to postpone deportation (removal) while a person waits for their Legal Permanent Resident card (green card) to become available
- **USCIS is no longer automatically considering Deferred Action for SIJS applicants** since May 10, 2026. Applicants who want to be considered for deferred action must apply for that separately. As part of a new policy, deferred action grants will be seen as an “extraordinary exercise of prosecutorial discretion” reserved for “compelling cases.” This means **USCIS will not be regularly granting Deferred Action status.**
- You can view the new SIJS Deferred Action policy [here](#).

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)

What can I do?

- **If you have not yet applied for SIJS:** You can choose to apply for SIJS without requesting Deferred Action. Consult with a trusted immigration lawyer or accredited representative to decide if asking USCIS for deferred action makes sense in your case.
- **If you applied for SIJS before May 10, 2026:** USCIS will automatically consider your case for deferred action, but under a less favorable standard.
- **If you were granted SIJS between April 7, 2025 and June 6, 2025 and still do not have Deferred Action status:** USCIS [will automatically review your case](#) to decide if you should be given Deferred Action. Your SIJS approval will be considered a very strong positive factor in USCIS's decision. You will be scheduled for a biometrics appointment.

DACA Updates

- Many people are reporting **processing delays for their DACA renewal applications**. USCIS reports the applications are taking almost 4 months.

What can I do?

- Send in your renewal application to USCIS 150 days before your current DACA expires;
- Check your [case status online](#) using your application receipt number. Make copies of any updates you see on this page.
- If your renewal application [has not been processed within the normal timeframe](#), submit an inquiry with USCIS by phone or [online](#).
- Escalate the case with [USCIS Ombudsman's office](#).

DACA Updates

- You can call your representatives' and senators' offices and ask to speak with their immigration caseworker for help.
 - WA House Representatives:
 - <https://www.house.gov/representatives#state-washington>
 - WA Senators:
 - <https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/>
 - <https://www.murray.senate.gov/>

Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

- TPS, a temporary protection for individuals from countries suffering humanitarian disasters, has been under attack.
- **Trump's administration has been trying to end TPS for several countries, but the immigration community has been able to fight back and block Trump's efforts through lawsuits.**
- See [here](#) for more TPS news for specific countries.

Latest Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Updates

- The latest updates include:
 - **TPS for Yemen remains valid**: Trump's DHS intended to end TPS for Yemenis on May 4, 2026, but this has been [stopped for now](#).
 - **TPS for Haiti remains valid**: Trump's DHS tried to end TPS for Haitians in February 2026. This was also paused through a [lawsuit](#). The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in the lawsuit on April 29, 2026, and is expected to make a decision by July 2026. The decision may impact TPS more broadly.

Consequences of not paying the Annual Asylum Fee

- New fees were introduced for applying for asylum last year—an initial fee of \$100 and an annual fee of \$102. These apply if filing at USCIS or immigration court.
- USCIS [announced](#) that starting on May 29, 2026, any applicants that do not pay the annual fee (\$102) [on time](#) will be denied asylum.
 - Any work permit application based on a pending asylum application will be denied and previously approved asylum-based work permits will be canceled.
- This announcement is about what USCIS will do with asylum applications that do not have the annual fee paid on time. It is very likely that the Immigration Court will follow suit and deny asylum to those who do not pay the annual fee on time.

Other Updates

- On March 30, USCIS said it would start making asylum decisions again in some cases (previously, USCIS had paused processing on all asylum applications). Unfortunately, asylum applications for people from [these 40 countries](#) are still on pause.
- On April 24, an [appeals court blocked President Trump's executive order](#) suspending asylum access at the southern border

Immigration Fines

- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been sending people notices by mail, charging immigration fines. These can be for:
 - Failing to leave the U.S. after receiving a removal order or after agreeing to voluntarily depart;
 - Entering or attempting to enter the U.S. between ports of entry;

What can I do?

- You can file an opposition to challenge the fine. Notices sent on June 27, 2025 or later have only 15 days to file an opposition. But even if you are late in responding, you can still file an opposition to note you disagree.
- Templates and instructions for sending an opposition are [available online](#).
- There is a [lawsuit](#) attempting to block DHS from issuing fine notices, but we're still waiting for a decision from the Court.

Immigration Fines - Example Notices



U.S. Customs and
Border Protection
Indianapolis, IN 46249



For Inquiries, please contact the CBP at INACivilPenalties@cbp.dhs.gov



Penalty Tracking Number: [REDACTED]
Invoice Date: [REDACTED]
Amount Due: \$ [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam:

A civil monetary penalty was imposed on you pursuant to Section 274D(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and 8 C.F.R. Part 281. The circumstances and specific INA provision for this penalty assessment are set forth in the Notice of Violation and Order with the above-referenced Penalty Tracking Number and are incorporated by reference herein.

This debt is final under 8 C.F.R. Part 281 and payment in full is due now in the amount of \$ [REDACTED]. Please see the enclosed Payment Options for instructions on how to make payment.

If you fail to pay the full amount within ten (10) calendar days of this Invoice Date, the U.S. Department of Justice may file a civil lawsuit against you at any time. However, you may be able to avoid this debt if you voluntarily depart the United States within ten (10) calendar days of this Invoice Date and confirm your departure with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, or through the CBP Home mobile application. If immigration officials can verify your departure, and if you are otherwise eligible for the debt rescission program, the United States will rescind the debt listed above. For more information about voluntary departure and debt rescission, please see the DHS CBP Home Mobile application or www.dhs.gov/cbp/home.

If you wish to dispute this Invoice, your dispute must be in writing, must include your Penalty Tracking Number, and must be received by INACivilPenalties@cbp.dhs.gov within ten (10) calendar days of this Invoice Date.

Failure to promptly pay this debt has consequences, including the accrual of interest, administrative costs, and a late payment penalty charge pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 3717, 5 C.F.R. § 11.10, and 31 C.F.R. § 901.9. Interest shall accrue at the annual rate of 6% on the delinquent principal debt amount from the date of the Invoice Date. Administrative costs include costs for processing and handling of delinquent balances which accrue at 15% on the delinquent debt amount. You can avoid assessment of interest and administrative costs if payment in full is received within 30 days of the Invoice Date. Additionally, a late payment penalty charge will be assessed at the annual rate of 6% on any amount that is delinquent for more than ninety (90) days from the Invoice Date.

If you fail to promptly pay this debt, CBP may take any or all of the following actions:

- Collection of this debt by administrative offset of any eligible Federal and State payments due to you.
- Refer your debt to a private collection agency.
- Refer your debt to the U.S. Department of Justice to initiate collection litigation.
- Report the indebtedness to national credit bureaus, which could adversely affect your credit rating.
- Take this debt into consideration, to the extent permitted by law, in future immigration-related proceedings, including admissibility determinations.

You may request to inspect and copy records related to this debt. You may also request to enter into a reasonable written repayment agreement that is acceptable to the agency to pay this debt in installments, or you may submit an offer in compromise to settle this debt in accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 3711.

If you have any questions concerning this debt, or want to request an inspection of records or a repayment plan agreement, contact CBP at INACivilPenalties@cbp.dhs.gov.

Your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

NOTICE OF VIOLATION AND ORDER UNDER THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT

File Number: [REDACTED]

Penalty Tracking Number: [REDACTED]

In the Matter of: [REDACTED]
Name: [REDACTED]
Address (Number, Street, City, State, and Zip Code): [REDACTED]

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security provides notice of the following determinations:

- You are not a citizen or national of the United States.

It is further determined that, under the following sections of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended and codified at Title 8, United States Code:

Section 240B

- On _____, you were permitted to depart voluntarily under Section 240B of Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended and codified at Title 8, United States Code, Section 1229c.

- You failed to voluntarily depart the United States within the time period specified.

Based on the foregoing, you are subject to a civil monetary penalty under Section 240B(d)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended and codified at Title 8, United States Code, Section 1229c(d)(1).

IT IS ORDERED that:

- a civil penalty be imposed upon you in the amount of: \$ _____, pursuant to Section 240B(d)(1)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended and codified at Title 8, United States Code, Section 1229c(d)(1)(A); and Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 281.

Section 274D

- On _____, an order of removal, for which you are subject, was made final.

You -

- willfully failed or refused to depart from the United States pursuant to the order.
- willfully failed or refused to make timely application in good faith for travel or other documents necessary for departure.
- willfully failed or refused to present for removal at the time and place required by the Attorney General (or Secretary of Homeland Security).

Based on the foregoing, you are subject to a civil monetary penalty under Section 274D(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended and codified at Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324d(a)(1).

IT IS ORDERED that:

- a civil penalty be imposed upon you in the amount of: \$ 1,820,352.00, pursuant to Section 274D(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended and codified at Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324d(a)(1); and Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 281.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Enhanced Security Checks

- USCIS is going to complete “enhanced” (more in-depth) security checks for any applications that requires biometrics appointments (where fingerprints are taken)--including asylum, green card applications, and family-based visa petitions. This may include applicants who have already done biometrics.
- More information on this new screening process can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

What does this mean?

- These “enhanced” security checks could cause longer processing delays for applications since USCIS will spend time re-screening individuals and sending follow-up information requests if any criminal history is discovered

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Stricter Signature Requirements for Forms

- New [proposed rule](#) would allow USCIS to deny applications after accepting the applications and fees, simply for having “invalid” or missing signatures;
- The proposed new rule was announced on May 11 and is supposed to go into effect on July 10.

What does this mean?

- Anyone sending applications to USCIS should be even more careful that they have correctly signed the application in all required spaces, with a “wet-ink” signature (that is, a physical, handwritten signature made with a pen) wherever possible because digital copies of an original signature may be considered invalid under the new rule

Detention Center Updates

- Trump administration [shuts down the agency in charge of investigating civil rights abuses and misconduct in immigration detention](#), known as the Office of the Immigration Detention Ombudsman (OIDO).
- This takes place at the same time that the [Trump administration lowers detention standards in detention centers](#) and despite a surge in allegations of excessive use of force, abuse, and misconduct in these facilities.

Detention Center Updates

- Governor Bob Ferguson and Attorney General Nick Brown announced [legal action](#) against The GEO Group, the private company that owns and operates the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA.
 - The action **asks the court to order The GEO Group to allow inspectors from the state Department of Health into the immigration detention facility** to ensure it is following state law, and to investigate the more than 3,500 complaints from detainees about conditions in the facility
 - Department of Health inspectors have been turned away 10 times



Photo from governor.wa.gov

Mass Civil Suit against WA Immigration Attorney

- On May 11, 2026 [a mass civil lawsuit was filed in Washington state](#), against La Luz del Camino Legal (formerly Alexandra Lozano Immigration Law).
- The [lawsuit](#) claims, among other things, that this firm committed legal malpractice, fraud, and violated numerous laws by filing baseless applications for immigration benefits and placing clients' signatures on documents without their knowledge and consent.
- If you believe that you have been a victim of fraud, [you have rights](#). If you believe that you were harmed by the specific law firm mentioned above, you may wish to visit [this resource page](#).

Preventing Notary and other Fraud

- Only licensed attorneys or fully Dept. of Justice (DOJ) Accredited Representatives can represent you in immigration court, can provide legal services, and can give legal advice
 - Check credentials:
 - Practicing attorneys have a State-issued bar license;
 - DOJ Accredited Representatives can be searched here: [DOJ Accredited Representatives Roster](#)
- Do not sign documents that are blank, that you do not understand, or that have false information
- Do not pay money without understanding the process and obtaining a receipt and a copy of your retainer
- Do get copies of all applications or other documents prepared for you or filed on your behalf
- If the advice seems too good to be true, get a second opinion

Notario vs Notary

- Notarios and Notaries are not the same
 - Notario in Latin America is usually a trained lawyer with significant legal authority
 - Notaries in the US:
 - Verify identity
 - Witness signatures
 - Administer oaths
 - Certify copies
 - In WA a notary may charge a small fee. [You can find those fees here.](#)
- This is very important: a notary public in the U.S. cannot fill out immigration forms, provide legal advice, or represent a person in court.

Preventing *Notario* and other Fraud - continued

- Be alert to digital scams
 - Be skeptical of social media posts promising new or rapid immigration relief
 - There is no communication from the government via WhatsApp or social media
 - Generally, there is no communication by phone—with limited exceptions
 - Avoid sharing unverified information on social media
- Report *notary* fraud or other scams to the Attorney General's Office
 - Victims may file a complaint online at www.atg.wa.gov or call 1-800-551-4636 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. weekdays. Written complaints can be filed in Spanish at www.atg.wa.gov/en-espanol
- Client Flyer: Protect Yourself from Immigration Scams
 - AILA provides a [flyer](#) to warn clients and community members about the recent surge in immigration-related scams and how to protect themselves

Preventing *Notario* and other Fraud - continued

Bond Scam Alert!

All over the country, scammers are calling or sending mail to the loved ones of detained immigrants. The scammers pretend to be real attorneys or a local non-profit sharing the good news that a bond has been granted. They sometimes use the photo and business card of a real attorney to make the documents appear real.

What can I do?

- Do not send money or share any private information (like A# or birth date) with someone who calls you that you do not already know.
- Take their name and organization name, then hang up the phone.
- Search online for the public telephone number of the organization or lawyer - do not call back the number that originally called you. Ask the organization or lawyer, “did you just call me about paying a bond?”
- Remember: Immigration bonds are never paid by gift card, Zelle, or Venmo

New Resources

Family Preparedness Plan

- A new toolkit, including a fillable and printable step-by-step planning guide, plus explanation video, is available [here](#). The toolkit covers: different childcare options available in case a parent is detained, how to find trusted immigration services in your community, and what to do in the presence of an immigration officer.

Habeas Explainer and Template Filing

- This [guide](#) explains how to file a habeas corpus petition in federal court, which is a way of challenging immigration detention. It contains an example to follow.

Suing ICE

- This [website](#) offers detailed information about how to sue the government if a federal agent, including ICE, unlawfully harms you.

Upcoming NWIRP Webinars

- **June 2026 Community Immigration Updates Webinar**
 - Tuesday, June 23, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
 - Spanish followed by English
- **July 2026 Community Immigration Updates Webinar**
 - Wednesday, July 22, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
 - English followed by Spanish
- **August 2026 Community Immigration Updates Webinar**
 - Tuesday, August 25, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
 - Spanish followed by English
- **Watch recorded webinars here: nwirp.org/webinars/**

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Thank you!