

Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Economic Services Administration • Community Services Division

Millions of Washingtonians have been adversely impacted and endured economic hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including an estimated 250,000 people who have been unable to access unemployment insurance compensation and federal stimulus packages due to their immigration status.

Since October 21, 2020, the Washington COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund has received 160,618 applications and has funded 120,853 eligible and approved applicants. To continue to support all Washingtonians, the Washington State Legislature invested an additional \$340 million to continue the implementation of the Immigrant Relief Fund in State Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023. This fund will make available a final cash grant amount to individuals who are ineligible for other forms of assistance.

What is the role of DSHS?

As a community-driven initiative, DSHS has contracted with multiple local organizations to implement and administer the infrastructure of the program, conduct community engagement strategies and implement a communications campaign. In addition, DSHS has partnered with 52 community-based organizations across the state to implement outreach activities and provide application assistance.

When will the Washington COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund be available?

Applications will be open from Sept. 19 to Nov. 14, 2022. Funds will be distributed to eligible and approved applicants between December 2022 and January 2023.

Who is eligible?

Eligible applicants must:

- Live in Washington state.
- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Have experienced hardship due to the pandemic, and
- Be ineligible to receive unemployment insurance or federal stimulus dollars due to immigration status.

How much will be available?

Eligible and approved applicants will receive one payment of at least \$1,000.

If someone receives this assistance, will it prevent them from getting a visa or green card in the future because of public charge?

No. This fund is considered one-time disaster relief assistance and should not be considered under the public-charge rule. Receiving assistance from this fund should not impact people's ability to obtain a green card.

How can people apply?

Eligible community members can apply for funding for 2022-2023 beginning Sept. 19, 2022:

- Visiting the website at: immigrantr reliefwa.org
- Calling the customer support line at: **844-620-1999**
- Connecting with a DSHS community partner for assistance by visiting: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/office-refugee-and-immigrant-assistance>

More information:

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Transforming lives

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