



Illinois Benefits/Programs For Migrants

June 26, 2023

Spanish Version [here](#); Arabic translation [here](#); Polish translation [here](#); simple Chinese translation [here](#)

Newly-arrived Illinois residents ***who are undocumented or who may be preparing to file an application for a U visa (for survivors of certain crimes), T visa (for survivors of trafficking) or asylum***, are eligible for the programs and benefits listed below (assuming the individual meets other eligibility criteria such as age, income level and Illinois residency). These benefits are safe to enroll in and not counted in the public charge test.

Name of Benefit Program	Brief description
Food & Nutrition	
VTTC food assistance/nutrition	The VTTC food/ nutrition assistance program gives households money to buy food at grocery stores and farmers markets. Benefits are paid through a LINK card each month to eligible households. The amount is based on countable income and household size. VTTC fact sheet for community here .
WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children)	Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): These are benefits to pregnant and breastfeeding people, children under age 5, and caregivers (not just birth parents) for children under age 5. The benefit is limited to certain food items and formula. You can enroll in WIC and still receive food stamps, school lunches and food from a food pantry. Income has to be at or below 185% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL). To learn more about the WIC Program, visit here . How to Access this Benefit: Go to the IDHS website here to find a WIC office in your County.
Food pantry & meal delivery programs	Food pantries and community feeding programs typically get food from a food bank as well as donations from grocers and community members. They distribute free food to members of the community. Programs, services, or assistance (such as soup kitchens, crisis counseling and intervention, and short-term shelter) provided by local communities or through public/ private nonprofit organizations.
P-EBT (Pandemic EBT)	P-EBT are special EBT benefits for children who miss K-12 school or miss attending childcare due to Covid, and who qualify for free school meals or pay a reduced-price fee. This includes all children in a school district that provides free school meals as a “Community Eligibility Program” school.
Free and reduced-cost school meals	Nutritional meal service in schools, day care centers, family day care homes, residential child care institutions, and during the summer for eligible children and adults. Children can receive free lunches when their family income is at or below 130% of FPL. Reduced price lunches are available when a family income is at or below 185% FPL. If your family receives SNAP benefits, your children will automatically qualify for the school lunch program. How to Access this Benefit: Apply at your child’s school for the school lunch program. If you need more information call the US Department of Agriculture Public Information at 703-305-

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	2286 or Illinois State Board of Education at 217-782-2491. www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp
Other food/nutrition programs	These include Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and benefits under the Emergency Food Assistance Act (TEFAP).
Senior Food Assistance Program	<p>There are many food programs for seniors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Site Meal and Nutrition- meals are often served at sites such as senior centers, churches, senior housing facilities and community buildings ● Home-Delivered Meals- Illinois Meals-on-Wheels is a private/public partnership that helps fill “gaps” left by the state and federally funded home delivered meals program. ● Senior Farmers’ Market Coupons – This is a federally funded program that provides coupons to low income seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers’ markets. <p>How to Access this Benefit: Contact your local Area Agency on Aging, found online at www.illinois.gov/aging/PartnersProviders/Pages/aaa_list.aspx or the Department on Aging Senior Help Line at 1-800-252-8966, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY).</p>
Housing	
Rental assistance programs, housing vouchers, mortgage relief.	Rental Assistance Program through City of Chicago (link here); Illinois Housing Development Authority’s Foreclosure Prevention Program ; Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP), Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), among other programs. Mortgage relief programs. Housing assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
Public Housing	State-aided public housing includes low-income family, elderly, and handicapped housing in buildings owned by Local Housing Authorities.
Emergency Assistance shelter	Emergency shelter for families fleeing substantial health or safety risks; emergency shelter assistance system an opportunity to overcome some of the financial barriers to ending their homelessness.
Homeless shelters	Services for those experiencing homelessness.
Health	
COVID-19 testing, vaccines and other immunizations	Testing, vaccines, and health resources for COVID-19 and flu and other immunizations or programs funded by local health departments
Enrollment in the Health Benefit for Immigrant Adult	VTTC Medical assistance: Eligible individuals are those preparing to file or who have filed an application for a U visa, a T visa, or asylum. Gross Income Limit is 100% of the federal

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<p>(HBIA) program, Health Benefit for Immigrant Seniors program (HBIS), All Kids, Moms & Babies, Medical assistance Through “Victims of Trafficking, Torture, & other Serious Crimes” (VTTC) Program, and other Medicaid and health coverage programs. (VTTC fact sheet for community here.)</p>	<p>poverty level (FPL) ; it has an asset test (AABD community medical).</p> <p>HBIA: for Illinois residents aged 42-64 years old, < 138% FPL, with immigration status that makes them ineligible for federal Medicaid (such as undocumented or LPR < 5 years). STATE IS SEEKING TO PAUSE ENROLLMENT TO HBIA STARTING JULY 1, 2023 SO APPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.</p> <p>HBIS: for Illinois residents age 65+, < 100% FPL (spenddown available), with immigration status that makes them ineligible for federal Medicaid (such as undocumented or LPR < 5 years), asset test (waived during PHE).</p> <p>All Kids: for children up to age 19 and up to 318% FPL regardless of immigration status.</p> <p>Moms & Babies: for pregnant people up to 210% FPL, regardless of immigration status; for coverage during pregnancy and for 12 months after the pregnancy has ended.</p> <p>Enrollment in these Medicaid and Medicaid-like programs is <u>not</u> counted in public charge. The only counted health benefit for public charge is government payment for long term facility-based care such as nursing home care paid for by Medicaid.</p>
<p>Medicaid Presumptive Eligibility (MPE):</p>	<p>MPE provides pregnant people immediate, temporary coverage for outpatient healthcare. If a pregnant person meets the Illinois residency and income requirements for MPE, they can get services right away—including the same day the individual signs the application if the MPE provider says the pregnant person is eligible. MPE covers outpatient services like prenatal checkups, doctor visits, lab tests, prenatal vitamins, medicine, specialty medical care, eye care, dental care, emergency room care, mental health and substance abuse services, transportation to get medical care and other services. If the pregnant person has a doctor or clinic, ask the office staff if the doctor or clinic is an MPE provider. If the doctor or clinic is not an MPE provider, or if the pregnant person does not have a doctor or clinic, they can call the All Kids Hotline at 1-866-255-5437 and a Hotline representative is supposed to help find an MPE provider where the pregnant person lives. If a pregnant person is enrolled in MPE, it is important for the person to also apply for Moms & Babies since MPE is temporary and pays for only outpatient services for up to two months.</p>
<p>Emergency Medicaid and receiving medical services at an Emergency Room</p>	<p>Emergency Medicaid is a reimbursement mechanism for hospitals to be reimbursed for qualifying emergency medical services received by an eligible individual. It is not comprehensive health coverage.</p>
<p>Community health center, FQHC, free/charitable clinics</p>	<p>These centers provide patients with whole-person care (medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy or other vital services). Find a health center here. Directory to Illinois Free and Charitable Clinics: https://www.illinoisfreeclinics.org/clinic-search/clinic-directory/</p>
<p>Assistance with cost of prescription drugs</p>	<p>-Needy Meds: https://www.needymeds.org/</p> <p>-PhRMA’s Medicine Assistance Tool (MAT) is a search engine designed to help patients, caregivers and health care providers learn more about the resources available through the various biopharmaceutical industry programs: https://medicineassistancetool.org/</p> <p>- Rx Assist: directory of Patient Assistance Programs (run by pharmaceutical companies to provide free medications to people who cannot afford to buy their</p>

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	medicine): https://www.rxassist.org/ - National Organization for Rare Disorders (database and Patient Assistance Program): https://rarediseases.org/ - Illinois Rx Card: https://illinoisrxcard.com/index
Financial assistance	
Donations from private sources	Donations from individuals, faith organizations, or nonprofit organizations
Disaster relief	Cash payments provided as part of pandemic or disaster relief funds
Covid-19 Economic Relief	The American Rescue Plan provides \$350 billion in emergency funding for eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments to respond to the COVID-19 emergency.
Energy assistance, including Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	(Low Income Housing and Energy Assistance Program) provides help with the cost of winter heating for households with income at or below 150% FPL. LIHEAP provides energy counseling, outreach, education and direct financial assistance once a year. You are not required to have an overdue bill or a disconnect notice to receive LIHEAP assistance. Emergency assistance is available for eligible households whose utility service has been disconnected and for homeowners whose furnace is not working or determined unsafe. How to Access this Benefit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call the Energy Assistance hotline 877-411-9276, or contact your local Community Action Agency to make an appointment to apply. ● You can find your nearest CAA at: www.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/HomeWeatherization/CommunityActionAgencies/Pages/default.aspx. Low Income Household Water Assistance (LIHWAP) is also not counted in the public charge test. More information here .
Privately-funded / ARPA-funded Cash Assistance Programs	Cook County Promise Guaranteed Income Pilot and the Chicago Resilient Communities Pilot, since these programs are currently funded with ARPA dollars. Immigrant Family Support Program , administered by ICIRR. For public charge questions about other cash assistance programs please email pifillinois@povertylaw.org .
Illinois Home Weatherization program	The Illinois Home Weatherization Program helps households whose incomes are at or below 200% FPL. The type of help provided includes: Repairing or replacing windows and doors; Furnace cleaning, safety checking, repair, or replacement; Installing smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers; Insulating walls and attics; Sealing cracks with weather-strip and caulk. You may qualify for weatherization services whether you own or rent your home. If you

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	rent, the owner must agree to repairs.
Other Benefits	
Head Start and Healthy Start	Head Start is a federal program that offers early education and care programs and services for low-income families.
Public education (K-12)	The goal of the Illinois public K-12 education system is to prepare all students for success after high school.
Child Care Assistance	Including: Child care related services; cash payments from state/local/ federal government provided for childcare assistance
Other Education benefits	This includes publicly funded scholarships and educational grants
Transportation benefits	Transportation vouchers or other non-cash transportation services
Affordable Connectivity (such as phone, broadband) Program	Lifeline Affordable Connectivity program provides a discount on monthly telephone service (land line or wireless, not both) purchased from participating providers. Safelink provides a wireless phone and monthly package of set minutes, texts, and data. You may qualify for these programs if you have an income below 135% FPL, or receive benefits through one of the following programs: Medicaid, LIHEAP, school lunch, free lunch program and other public programs. Apply for Lifeline here and Safelink here .

Need more information?:

For Community Members: [Immigrant Family Resource Program \(IFRP\)](#) and IFRP HOTLINE 1-855-437-7669: IFRPs work with immigrant families on public benefit applications. ICIRR’s Family Support Hotline in English/ Spanish/ Korean/ Polish: 1-855-HELP-MY-FAMILY (1-855-435-7693). [Illinois Welcoming Centers](#); [GetCareIllinois.org](#): community-facing website in 5 languages to help you get healthcare coverage if you need it and use your coverage if you have it.

For Enrollment Assisters: HelpHub is a free online community where enrollment assisters in Illinois ask questions and troubleshoot problems they’re having. HelpHub experts answer questions on immigrant eligibility for public benefits and on the intersection of public benefits and public charge. To enroll: <http://helphub.povertylaw.org>. For information about public charge or to receive updates please email pifillinois@povertylaw.org or see the [Protecting Immigrant Families Illinois](#) website