



## Food Assistance, Cash Assistance and Medical Assistance for Applicants for T Visa, U Visa, or Asylum

This fact sheet is for individuals who have filed 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. It provides an overview of eligibility for medical, food, and cash benefits programs and the application process for these programs. See the [Spanish version](#), [Polish language translation](#), [Arabic language translation](#) and [simple Chinese language translation](#) of this fact sheet.

### **Medical, Food, Cash Assistance in the “Victims of Trafficking, Torture, & Other Serious Crimes” (VTTC) Program:**

If you have filed or are preparing to file an application for a U visa, T visa, or asylum, you and your “derivative family members” may qualify for cash, food, and medical “Medicaid-like” benefits. “Derivative Family Member” means the spouse, child, parent, or sibling under age 18 of the principal victim who is eligible, or potentially eligible, for one of the above statuses. A spouse must have been married to the principal victim before the principal victim entered the United States. A principal victim is the person who was targeted and a victim of the torture, trafficking, or serious crime for which asylum, a T visa, or U visa is being sought.

Immigration Status Eligibility Criteria: You are eligible for the VTTC program if you are *preparing to file or have filed* an application for a U visa, T visa, and/or an application for asylum. For a list of crimes that may qualify you for a U visa, see this [link](#). See this list of documents that can be used as evidence that you are “*Preparing to File for Status*,” and the list of possible evidence showing you [have applied](#) for a U visa, T visa, or [asylum](#) status.

Other VTTC Eligibility Criteria: you also need to be an [Illinois resident](#) AND be within the specific income and other requirements below for the type of program:

- **Food:** Gross Income Limit is 165% FPL & 200% FPL for those age 60 or older OR Disabled; follows [SNAP income policy](#). Generally, an interview with a caseworker is required for VTTC Food.
- **Cash:** Gross Income Limit follows [TANF income policy](#). See [IDHS policy](#). There is a work requirement (exceptions are available, outlined [here](#)). Work requirements do not apply to people without work authorization. Only one adult can be on a VTTC Cash case. Source: [2/21/18 IDHS Policy memo](#). Generally, an interview with a caseworker is required for VTTC Cash Assistance benefits.
- **Medical:** An 18-year-old (or older) can file and sign an application for assistance. Gross Income Limit is [100% FPL](#); and you must have assets at or below the [AABD community medical](#) resource limit. Financial eligibility can be found at: [IDHS policy M.R. #17-19](#). For information on the [asset test for VTTC medical](#) programs, please see Resources for AABD at [WAG 25-03-02 \(2\)](#).

Eligibility Time Period for VTTC benefits If You Actually Filed an Immigration Application: If you have already filed for a U/T visa or asylum, you can receive VTTC cash, medical and food assistance unless you have had a **final** denial of your visa or asylum case. For example, you remain eligible for VTTC after receiving an asylum “Referral Notice” from USCIS because it is not a final denial of the immigration benefit application. Source: [IDHS policy M.R. #17-19](#).

Eligibility Time Period for VTTC Benefits If You Are “Preparing to File”: If you receive VTTC benefits on the basis that you are “preparing to file” an application for a T visa, U visa, or asylum, you may continue to receive benefits for **one year** after the [date of your application](#) for benefits. There are limited exceptions to extend the VTTC eligibility after this one-year period; see this [link](#) for IDHS policy.

Eligibility for VTTC Programs after U Visa Is Approved: If you are *approved for a U-Visa* you **continue to qualify for VTTC as long as you meet all other eligibility criteria**. Source: [IDHS policy guidance](#).

Eligibility for VTTC Programs after T Visa Is Approved: If you are *approved for a T visa*, you meet federal Medicaid Qualifying Non-citizen criteria as a trafficking victim per [PM 03-01-02-d](#) and you should be transitioned to federal



Medicaid, such as ACA Adult (if otherwise eligible). As a T visa holder, you would also be eligible for [TANF](#) and [SNAP](#) and potentially eligible for [SSI](#).

**Individual with Asylum Application Pending and Then Approved:** When you provide proof that you have a pending asylum application, you may qualify for the “Medical Benefits for Asylum Applicants and Torture Victims (AATV program)”. See [WAG 06-21-00](#). Once and if you are granted asylum, you meet federal Medicaid Qualifying Non-citizen criteria per [PM 03-01-02-d](#). Once you are granted asylum, you must update your immigration status (individuals should do this in Manage My Case on <https://abe.illinois.gov>) and a DHS caseworker will update your eligibility for another medical program. For instance, you would be eligible for ACA Adult (if age 19-64, <138% FPL), or AABD if at least 65 years old, with income 100% FPL.

**VTTC Application Process and Appeal Rights:** You can apply for VTTC benefits at ABE/IES via <https://abe.illinois.gov>. Please note that **people eligible for VTTC DO NOT need to provide a Social Security Number (SSN) if you do not have one**. Source: [DM MR#17-19](#). Eligibility for VTTC cash, food and medical benefits must be redetermined every 12 months or when an eligibility affecting change happens (such as change in income, immigration status, residency). As a VTTC applicant, you are entitled to appeal any adverse action or any non-action (such as failure to timely process an application). Please see [PM 01-07](#) and [WAG 01-07-02](#) for more information.

**Other Health Coverage Options If an Adult Client Is Ineligible for VTTC Medical Coverage (such as because over-income, or never filed a visa application):** You may also be eligible for [Health Benefit for Immigrant Seniors \(HBIS\)](#), [Health Benefit for Immigrant Adults \(HBIA\)](#) if age 42-64 years old, [Moms & Babies](#) if pregnant or postpartum. You may also be eligible for ACA Marketplace coverage through [Healthcare.gov](#) if you have a [lawfully present](#) status, which includes people who have an approved U visa or who applied for/approved for a T visa, or an individual who applied for asylum and was granted an EAD (are under the age of 14 and have had an application pending for at least 180 days) or was granted asylum status. APPLY TO HBIA BEFORE JULY 1, 2023; ENROLLMENT OF HBIA WILL BE PAUSED ON JULY 1, 2023.

**Emergency Medicaid:** Individuals who are ineligible for traditional federal Medicaid due solely to their immigration status (including adults age 19 and over) [are eligible for Emergency Medical for Non-Citizen](#). See [this fact sheet](#) for more information on Emergency Medicaid.

**Public Charge:** When certain individuals (most commonly individuals applying through the family immigration pathway) apply for LPR status, immigration officials assess several factors to determine whether they are likely to become primarily dependent on the government for their subsistence -- and if so, the applicant could be denied on grounds of public charge. Many VTTC-eligible or VTTC-enrolled individuals will NOT be subject to a public charge test. (For a full list of exempt statuses see [this link](#).) For those who are subject to public charge, enrollment in VTTC *food* and *medical* benefits (unless for care in a nursing home) is NOT counted in the public charge test. However, cash benefits may be. For more information about public charge implications (if any) for individuals who are preparing to apply or have applied for a T visa, U visa, or asylum, please see [this fact sheet](#). For benefits that are NOT counted in the public charge test (“safe” benefits), see [this link](#).

### Questions?

- [GetCareIllinois.org](#): Community-facing website in five languages to “help you get healthcare coverage if you need it. If you already have healthcare coverage, this site will help you understand how to use your coverage to go to the doctor.” Email your question to [pifillinois@povertylaw.org](mailto:pifillinois@povertylaw.org).
- Visit the [Immigrant Family Resource Program \(IFRP\)](#) and IFRP HOTLINE 1-855-437-7669 for help.
- ICIRR’s Family Support Hotline in English/Spanish/Korean/ Polish: 1-855-HELP-MY-FAMILY (1-855-435-7693).