



**LOOKING BEYOND ONE MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD:
TIPS FOR CARE TEAMS ORIENTING FAMILIES TO THEIR ELIGIBILITY FOR
RESOURCES & BENEFITS**

Immigration law is technical, complex and changes frequently. It also is very high-stakes for families. All of this can cause people to distrust immigration information and related programs/systems – and this means many families go without financial supports they may be entitled to.

Understanding eligibility for public benefits can be especially complicated for **mixed-status families**. Yet when talking with these families, care team members can help promote opportunities for benefit maximization!

WHO IS A MIXED-STATUS FAMILY?

A mixed-status family is composed of people with different types of immigration status. Not all mixed-status families look the same! One mixed-status family may have a child with U.S. citizenship and a parent with lawful permanent residence (LPR or green card) status. Another might include a parent with U.S. citizenship and a co-parent with a visa, which is only temporary permission to be in the country. Still another example is a household with an undocumented caregiver and several U.S. citizen children.

Thank you for answering these screening questions. You marked that sometimes you don't have enough nutritious food for your toddler. Have you thought about applying for WIC?



I have and I know I can apply for WIC, but I'm sponsoring my spouse for a green card. I heard his application could be rejected if I or our baby use any public benefits.

THE PERSON I'M HELPING DIRECTLY IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT. WHY DOES THE STATUS OF OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS MATTER?

Sometimes, even though one person is not eligible for a resource, other people in the family might be eligible! Learning about the whole family can help identify new problem-solving pathways! You, the care team member, may be the first person – or the first trusted person – to explain this possibility to the caregiver you're working with. Meaning you have a powerful opportunity to clarify what is true and not true.

Thanks for sharing that concern. You can actually apply for WIC without it impacting your spouse's application. It sounds like you might be worried about the "public charge" rule. It recently changed. Would you like to learn more about what this rule says today?



I didn't know the rules changed! It's very confusing. I would like more information.





PROBLEM-SOLVING TIPS FOR CARE TEAMS

DEPLOY SCREENING PRACTICES THAT ACKNOWLEDGE PEOPLE'S RISKS

- ⇒ Explain that everyone is asked the same questions to help assess eligibility.
- ⇒ Give context about why you might need status information.
- ⇒ Share how you might use that information, if at all.
- ⇒ Keep an open door if a person declines; people will share when they are ready.

CORRECT MISINFORMATION

- ⇒ Care teams can share legal information and rights education, ideally in the preferred language of the family.

REFER TO LEGAL EXPERTS FOR CUSTOMIZED ASSESSMENTS AS NEEDED

- ⇒ Care teams can share contact information for trusted immigration law resources so mixed-status families can seek specific evaluations if they wish. Remember— family situations are unique and immigration problem-solving can be highly tied to a family's particular facts.

GENERAL IMMIGRATION RESOURCES IN THE GREATER BOSTON AREA

- [Protecting Immigrant Families Coalition](#) Public Charge Flyer
- [Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy \(MIRA\) Coalition](#)
- [Rian Immigrant Center](#)
- [Centro Presente](#)
- [Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement](#)
- [Political Asylum/Immigration Representation \(PAIR\) Project](#)