

# 2026 Legislative Updates: Immigrant Family Policies

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Written by: Ciriac Alvarez Valle

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As deportations have increased across our state in the past year, our commitment remains as strong as ever to ensure that we are doing everything we can to support immigrant children and keep families together.

## Our 2026 Legislative Priorities

### Protect access to public programs

Protecting immigrant children's access to programs that keep them healthy and safe. This means we will oppose legislation that attempts to restrict immigrant children and families' access to public programs and services that they are eligible to receive. Not only does that directly harm immigrant children, but it also goes against the values that our state holds of compassion and dignity for families across the state to obtain necessary services to keep all of our children safe.

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**Oppose legislation that makes it more difficult for parents to show up for their children.**

We aim to dispel the harmful rhetoric about immigrants who call Utah home and legislation that would make it harder for parents to seek the support their children need to thrive or restrict their ability to travel to things like doctors' appointments and school drop off. We remain committed to documenting the potential harm that new legislation may have on immigrant families in our state.

**Monitor the impact of legislation that affects immigrants more broadly.**

Not every legislation that impacts immigrants has a direct impact on children; however, we will monitor and assess legislation that arises that targets immigrant communities and how they may directly or indirectly impact immigrant children and their families.

For video updates, check out our [Utah Immigrant Advocacy Coalition Instagram!](#) We'll be sharing weekly updates about immigrant-related policies during this year's legislative session.

*This blog will be updated as information becomes available. Last updated 1/16/26.*

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## Immigrant Family Policy Priorities

Last Updated: 1/16/26

### [HB88](#): Public Assistance Amendments

**Bill Update:** The bill has been numbered, and the text is live.

**Position: Oppose**

**Summary:** This bill would require state public assistance programs that are currently exempt, such as vaccines, communicable disease testing, crisis counseling, and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs, to verify immigration status for all individuals and prevent undocumented immigrants from receiving any aid. Idaho enacted a similar legislation last year and is currently facing a lawsuit.

The bill sponsor has also expressed interest in including a repeal of the State CHIP

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Program that would strip the healthcare of more than 1,500 immigrant children across the state.

**Opposition Statement:** We oppose this bill because it does not make our community safer, stronger, or healthier. Instead, it goes against our Utah values and will make it so mixed-status immigrant families can no longer access currently exempt programs. Emergency and public health programs have remained exempt because they have been historically recognized as necessary, humane, and protective of the well-being of all children in our state.

By denying basic services like these, we are not only undermining the dignity and humanity of immigrant communities and sending a harmful message to children across our state about who belongs. Additionally, removing access to health coverage would mean that more than 1,500 State CHIP enrollees would be unable to access the timely care they need, including well-child visits, vaccinations, preventive care, and disease management services. **We urge every legislator to oppose this harmful bill.**

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