

# Alliance for Immigrant Survivors (AIS) Priorities for Next COVID-19 Response Package

May 4, 2020

## Legislative Asks to Meet the Needs of Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Human Trafficking, and other Gender-Based Violence

### Services and Supports for Immigrant Survivors

- Ensure that everyone – including immigrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking – has free access to COVID-19 testing, treatment, vaccine, and other health care services.
- Ensure that immigrant taxpayers have access to income supports, including cash-payments, by allowing taxpayers with individual taxpayer identification numbers (ITINs) to receive cash relief benefits.

### Department of Homeland Security

- Prohibit the detention and deportation of survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking who have pending applications under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) or the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).
- Allow immigrants to keep their immigration status and work authorization that expires during the COVID-19 pandemic by automatically extending them for the same period for which they were initially granted.
- Create flexibility in USCIS and immigration court procedural requirements by extending deadlines in pending immigration cases, appeals and revocations, and immigration court motions; tolling filing cutoffs; and allowing evidence unavailable at the time of filing due to the national emergency to be submitted after filing.
- Limit immigration enforcement activities, including,
  - halt immigration enforcement in locations where immigrant survivors access help, such as victim service agencies, courthouses, and hospitals;
  - significantly reduce the population of people in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) custody; and
  - suspend in-person immigration court proceedings and shut down interior checkpoints, which undermine safety and access to services.

- Suspend the public charge inadmissibility rule to encourage survivors to seek the services they need, and clarify that accessing benefits related to COVID-19 will not count against immigrants in future immigration applications.

### **Services and Supports for Victim Service Providers and Advocates**

- Provide critical support for victim service providers to serve and meet the needs of survivors by
  - increasing funding for Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) services and programs. See specifics on funding asks in the [National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence \(NTF\) Requests for COVID-19 Phase Four Response Package letter](#) to Congressional leaders; and
  - providing flexible funding that allows victim service providers to help survivors with cash assistance, legal assistance, rental assistance, temporary accommodation in hotels or motels for survivors, and other urgent needs of survivors.
- Provide federal assistance and funding for Federal agencies to provide language access and public outreach on coronavirus preparedness, response, and recovery to hard-to-reach populations by translating into multiple languages all written COVID-19 related materials.
- Provide funding and assistance to community-based organizations (CBOs), particularly culturally-specific CBOs that have established relationships with hard-to-reach populations.

### **Additional Resources**

- [H.R. 6437](#), Coronavirus Immigrant Families Protection Act
- [H.R. 6623](#), To require all Federal agencies to translate COVID-19 materials into multiple languages, and for other purposes
- [Alliance for Immigrant Survivors Website](#)
- [AIS COVID-19 Pandemic Resources for Immigrant Survivors & Advocates](#)
- [AIS Statement on COVID-19](#)
- [ASISTA Recommendations on USCIS Response to COVID-19](#)
- [NTF Requests for COVID-19 Phase Four Response Package Letter](#)