

Legal Services of New Jersey
100 Metroplex Drive at Plainfield Avenue
P.O. Box 1357
Edison, New Jersey 08818-1357

Contact: Harvey Fisher
Office Phone: 732-529-8430
Cell Phone: 908-616-9941
E-mail: hfisher@lsnj.org

FOR RELEASE AT WILL

September 2019

**LATEST LEGAL SERVICES NEWSLETTER FOCUSES ON FORTHCOMING
“PUBLIC CHARGE” OR WEALTH TEST FOR IMMIGRANT STATUS**

EDISON — The latest newsletter of Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) lays out the key facets of the newly-expanded federal means test to determine whether those seeking a green card or change in immigrants status may be denied if they are determined to be a “public charge” when the rule change takes effect Oct. 15.

The government test is designed to assess those likely to use public benefits or be deemed a financial burden, and effectively would place new limits on immigration.

The bilingual publication, “Looking Out For Your Legal Rights,” may be viewed online at www.lsnjlaw.org and also is available at all Legal Services offices in New Jersey.

The Oct. 15 implementation of the new rule could be delayed as pending legal challenges by many states are considered by the courts.

Under the rule, anyone seeking a change in immigrant status will be assessed based on income level, fluency in English, disability and health issues, education and job skills, among other numerous test points. Additionally, the government will consider 12 months of public benefits during a 36-months period a negative factor. Public benefit now will include food stamps, subsidized housing, and medical insurance.

All of the changes make it easier for the government to deny applications for adjustment, extension and change in status, and that especially affects those who are eligible for representation by Legal Services programs.

Generally people who already have green cards are not affected.

Legal advice may be obtained by calling LSNJ's toll-free hotline at 1-888-LSNJ-LAW.

The newsletter also provides information on what people can do when they disagree with a school's decision to place a child in a special education program, as well as noting maximum grants were increased July 1 for those in the state's WorkFirst benefits programs.

Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ), located in Edison, heads the state's Legal Services system, a network of five independent non-profit corporations and has been providing free essential legal aid in civil matters to low-income people through offices in all 21 counties for more than 50 years. Since its inception, LSNJ has provided representation in more than 2.4 million cases.

#####