NISKANEN CENTER

Redefining Public Charge - Appendix

By Samuel Hammond and Robert Orr

This appendix provides methodological information for our report, Redefining Public Charge, as well as state level figures by program. The original report can be found here.

Estimates for the number of individuals impacted by the draft executive order were calculated using the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a survey conducted by the federal government that collects information on the persons, families, and household in the United States. The survey reflects the civilian noninstitutional population of the country.

Benefits Supplied at Personal & Household Level

The CPS tracks the receipt of most federal benefits at the personal level. This includes Medicaid and cash assistance (TANF). However, a number of public benefits are recorded at the household level such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). For benefits delivered at the household level, the CPS cannot discern the immigration status of the intended recipient for households containing both citizens and noncitizens. In households where this is the case, this may lead analysis of household-delivered benefits to overstate the estimate. This is of particular relevance for the National School Lunch Program, where a noncitizen parent would be counted as receiving the benefit even if his children were native-born citizens. For this reason, we give an estimate for the receipt of public benefits for any program as well as any program excluding the NSLP (See Table).

Sampling Error

The CPS is sample based and therefore subject to sampling error. This is especially true for groups like immigrants that are harder to count. For example, immigrants are less likely to speak English and more likely to use temporary housing arrangements. Many undocumented immigrants are wary of responding to government census workers out of fear that they will be reported for to the federal government.

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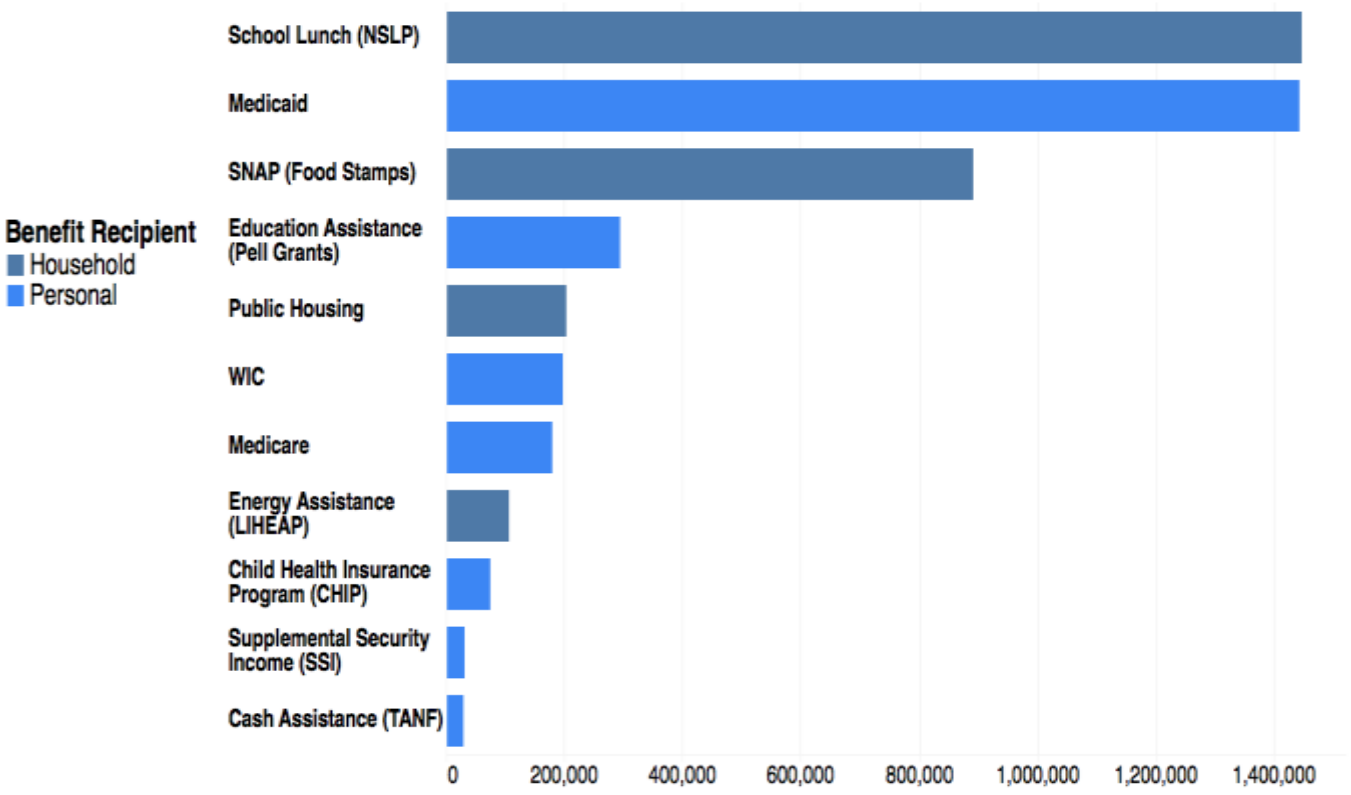
The estimates displayed in the table below represent the “best estimate” according to the CPS, but sampling error may lead to divergence from the exact number. For example, the estimated size of the noncitizen population that entered the country during the last 5 years and also uses at least one public benefit program in California is 441,081 and the standard error for this estimate is 51,639. A calculation of 1.645 x 51,639 produces a 90% confidence interval of 356,134 to 526,029 for the estimate. This means there is a 90% chance that the number of noncitizens that have entered the country in the previous 5 years is between 356,134 and 526,029.

The population estimates of states with smaller immigrant populations have higher standard errors. Additional caution should be exercised when citing estimates from smaller states or from individual programs. Low confidence estimates are displayed in red (see table below).

Noncitizens who entered the country between 2010-2015, by Current Usage of Government Programs



Source:
Analysis of 2016 Current Population Survey data

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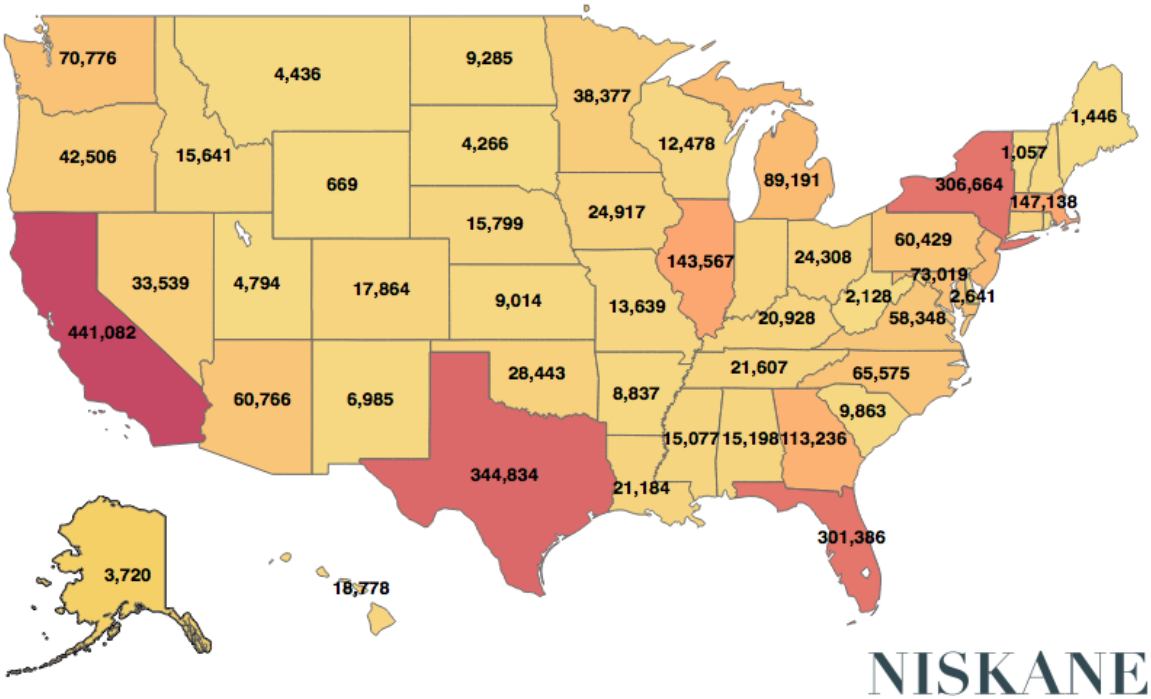
Immigrants Impacted by 'Public Charge' Executive Order

Used any Means-tested Public Benefit, Noncitizens, Entered Country during last 5 years.



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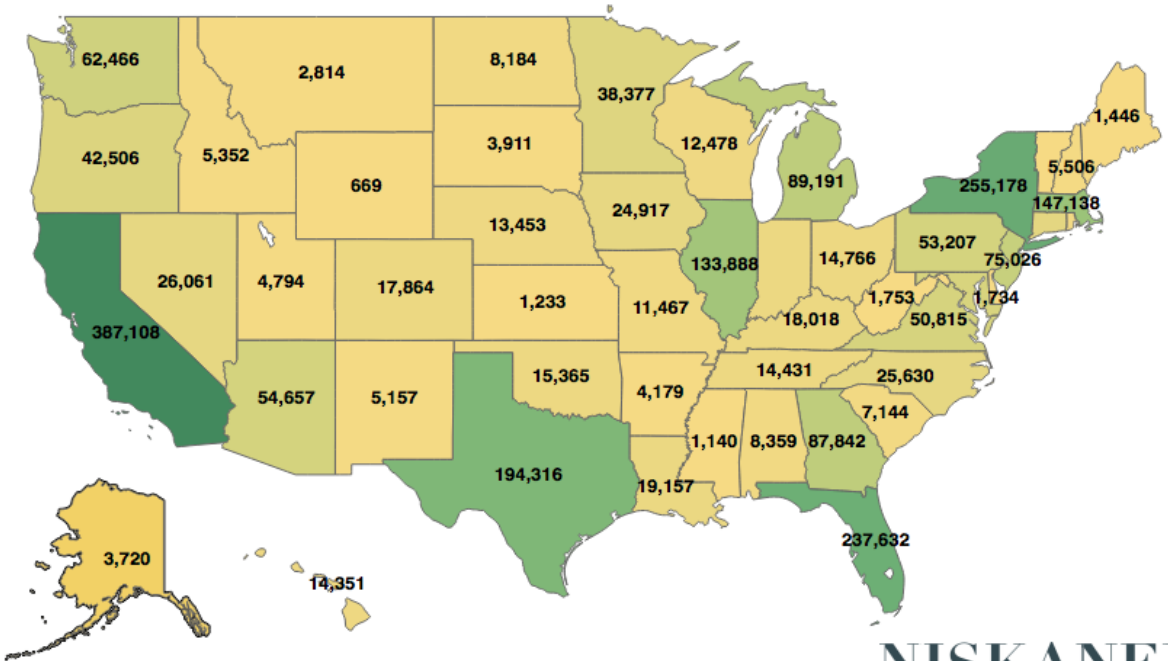
Source: authors' analysis of the Current Population Survey

Immigrants Impacted by 'Public Charge' Executive Order (Excl. NSLP)

Used any Means-tested Public Benefit, Noncitizens, Entered Country during last 5 years.



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Source: authors' analysis of the Current Population Survey

Table: Immigrants Receiving Public Benefits, Entered Country during Previous 5 Years, by State and Program

State	Public Benefit Program											Totals	
	SNAP	Medicare	SSI	LIHEAP	Cash Benefit	Public Housing	CHIP	WIC	Education Assistance	Medicaid	NSLP	Recieve Any Benefit (Excl. NSLP)	Recieve Any Benefit
Alabama	1504	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	3480	1589	889	~ 0	2483	8344	8358	15198
Alaska	2436	498	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	1798	~ 0	546	~ 0	803	2436	3719	3719
Arizona	29339	9094	3456	2946	~ 0	2414	3364	10247	~ 0	34738	38694	54657	60765
Arkansas	1300	~ 0	~ 0	1300	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	2166	2012	4658	4178	8837
California	133253	31708	3397	18814	7621	30263	1552	43354	30899	279221	211104	387107	441081
Colorado	6777	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	2903	~ 0	4023	2150	2008	2903	17863	17863
Connecticut	9493	5588	953	~ 0	~ 0	5769	~ 0	2770	~ 0	20789	11894	29148	32502
Delaware	487	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	432	~ 0	409	~ 0	405	1394	1734	2641
District of Columbia	432	172	180	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	1309	7277	567	8759	9083
Florida	109265	33180	5534	~ 0	~ 0	11025	4252	17387	21756	121656	194723	237631	301386
Georgia	45365	3890	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	10591	13280	10039	51657	61121	87842	113235
Hawaii	2607	1233	375	1304	433	2966	~ 0	425	1280	8008	8134	14350	18778
Idaho	1768	1528	669	~ 0	~ 0	636	~ 0	1418	~ 0	1037	11759	5351	15641
Illinois	72125	7689	~ 0	3808	3970	12911	1852	8764	26915	83383	81562	133887	143567
Indiana	2750	4020	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	6365	8419	2824	17972	17972
Iowa	14426	~ 0	1130	~ 0	~ 0	1213	~ 0	3730	~ 0	19739	8994	24916	24916
Kansas	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	1233	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	7780	1233	9013
Kentucky	8253	1283	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	7145	1108	1924	6555	8253	11163	18018	20928
Louisiana	6447	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	2559	1575	7476	8139	6717	19157	21184

State	Public Benefit Program											Totals	
	SNAP	Medicare	SSI	LIHEAP	Cash Benefit	Public Housing	CHIP	WIC	Education Assistance	Medicaid	NSLP	Recieve Any Benefit (Excl. NSLP)	Recieve Any Benefit
Maine	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	1445	~0	1445	1445
Maryland	12826	1929	~0	~0	2458	18604	1516	8017	3644	30419	53148	49073	73018
Massachusetts	57542	2650	4161	22523	3860	10739	~0	9283	8693	111536	34725	147137	147137
Michigan	58361	4845	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	4083	22301	57821	34088	89190	89190
Minnesota	10196	8857	2195	6215	3139	~0	~0	~0	14834	26545	8295	38377	38377
Mississippi	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	488	~0	651	15076	1140	15076
Missouri	11467	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	3569	~0	13638	11467	13638
Montana	~0	~0	188	~0	~0	597	~0	~0	2338	188	1622	2813	4435
Nebraska	3180	513	~0	~0	~0	7511	~0	545	3745	7062	6676	13452	15798
Nevada	15819	3868	~0	~0	984	7104	1022	~0	1222	10453	14358	26061	33539
New Hampshire	3417	~0	~0	543	~0	2873	~0	~0	1180	3261	3417	5506	5506
New Jersey	33241	1951	~0	11624	~0	~0	~0	3508	9917	56860	47828	75025	92711
New Mexico	4593	~0	~0	1067	~0	~0	~0	706	~0	4056	5014	5156	6984
New York	85073	16294	1745	5975	~0	7998	4560	8442	21707	199383	152964	255178	306663
North Carolina	12023	3317	~0	~0	~0	~0	1138	4205	3645	9960	42948	25629	65574
North Dakota	4249	~0	834	~0	232	1626	~0	1006	3120	2198	4347	8183	9285
Ohio	6297	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	4137	4942	7751	13679	14765	24307
Oklahoma	8008	~0	~0	5786	~0	~0	~0	2363	7190	2210	19981	15364	28442
Oregon	4628	~0	~0	2873	~0	19903	~0	~0	4690	27236	7408	42506	42506
Pennsylvania	17338	~0	~0	6110	~0	~0	~0	5773	6150	44433	8750	53207	60428
Rhode Island	1718	533	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	~0	2770	1941	1307	6964	8272

State	Public Benefit Program											Totals	
	SNAP	Medicare	SSI	LIHEAP	Cash Benefit	Public Housing	CHIP	WIC	Education Assistance	Medicaid	NSLP	Recieve Any Benefit (Excl. NSLP)	Recieve Any Benefit
South Carolina	~ 0	1302	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	998	1613	3229	2718	7144	9863
South Dakota	955	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	605	2393	634	971	3911	4266
Tennessee	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	2111	~ 0	1700	12730	8552	14430	21607
Texas	49777	18145	4175	3560	~ 0	18528	28875	12577	15301	97330	218123	194315	344834
Utah	2475	569	~ 0	2475	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	936	2426	~ 0	4794	4794
Vermont	174	174	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	472	~ 0	236	236	646	584	646	1056
Virginia	16356	4234	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	8176	6540	5334	11875	12896	11049	50815	58347
Washington	22738	9985	2385	9920	6655	13989	3429	7179	11920	41647	39400	62465	70776
West Virginia	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	394	~ 0	~ 0	1358	583	375	1752	2128
Wisconsin	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	6575	3771	5038	~ 0	12478	12478
Wyoming	484	184	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	~ 0	187	187	668	668

Notes:
Estimates that are recorded as ~ 0 indicates a non-statistically significant population.

Red-colored cell values indicate estimates with greater p-values > 0.1 or where the CPS records zero observations. Exercise additional caution when citing these values.