

COVID-19 Responses and Positive Community Outcomes

Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
March 9, 2021



Seattle
Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs

Top Lines

- Three crises in 2020: **immigration, pandemic, and racism.**
- Our leading principles: **equity, equity, equity.**
- Every initiative begins with **community.**
- Our department's small size and matrixed structure allow us to be **collaborative, nimble, responsive,** and **innovative.**



Funding / Origins

Rapid Response Fund

- 2020 budget to engage community and rapidly respond to emergent threats facing Seattle immigrants
 - \$375,000 for education and assistance with public charge, DACA, and other issues (CM González)
 - \$50,000 for DACA fee assistance (CM Pacheco) + \$25,000 match from Facebook

Joint COVID-19 Relief Package

- \$9 million from Ordinance 126211 (“Jump Start” COVID-19 relief)
 - \$8.3 million for direct cash assistance to pandemic-impacted immigrants not eligible for federal relief or state unemployment funds ([Seattle COVID-19 Disaster Relief Fund for Immigrants or “SDFR”](#))
 - \$700,000 to support ongoing [Language Access](#) in the City’s COVID-19 response, including outreach for the SDRF and other services funded from 126211



Rapid Response

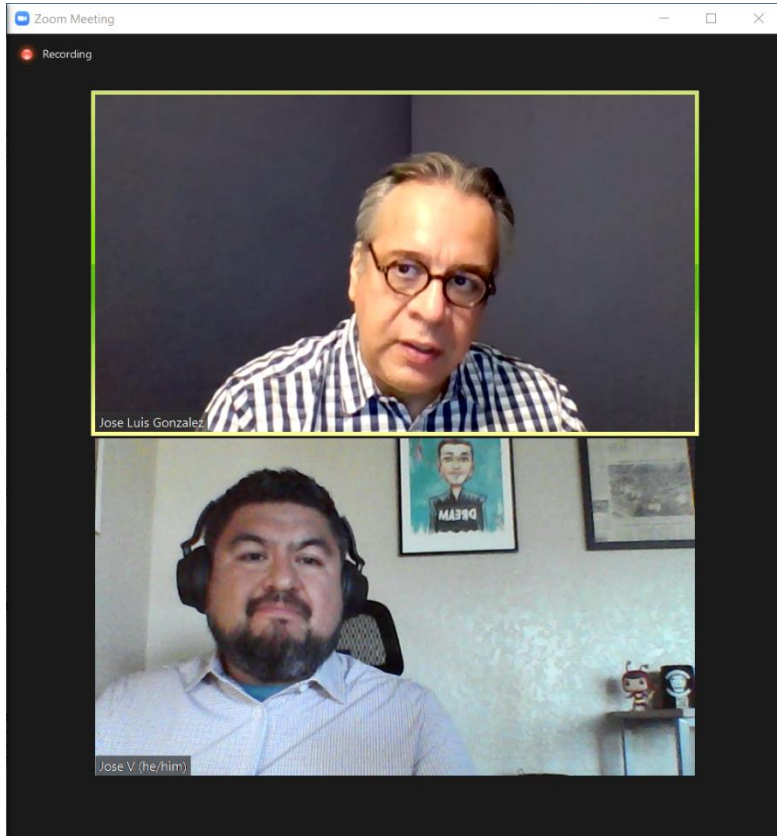


City of Seattle

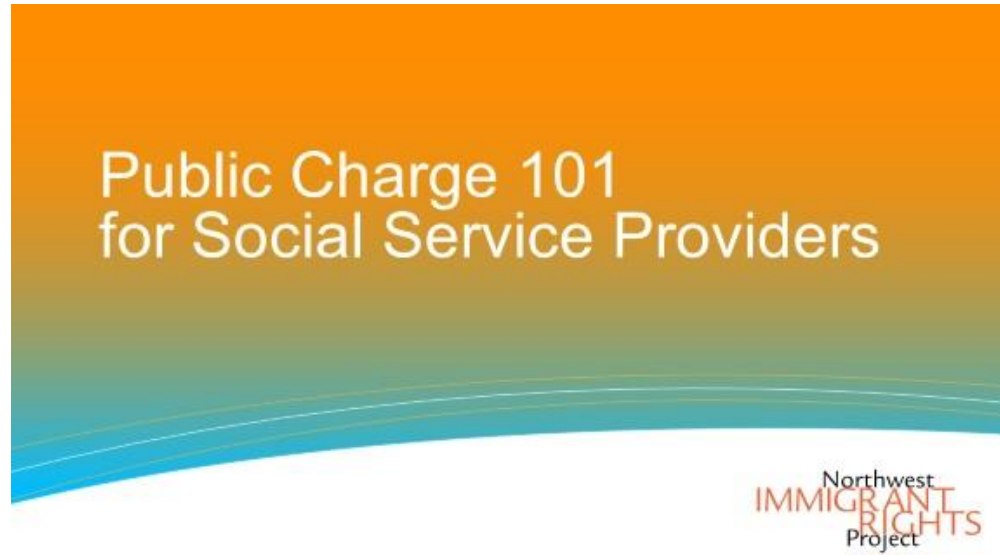
**Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs**

Focus Areas

- Public Charge
- DACA
- Immigration Fee Increases



PUBLIC CHARGE: Resources for Service Providers



- **Training for Service Providers** (90+ in-person attendees and **9,515 views** on Facebook Live)
- **Public Charge FAQs and Reference Guide** to identify risks of triggering public charge concerns.



PUBLIC CHARGE: Information for Our Communities



- **10 workshops** (in person & virtual) organized by our contracted partners
- **1,373 community members** in attendance
- **18 presentations** by Northwest Immigrant Rights Project and Colectiva Legal del Pueblo for the WA Attorney General team, law practitioners, coalitions, and CBOs



DACA: One-on-One Consultations

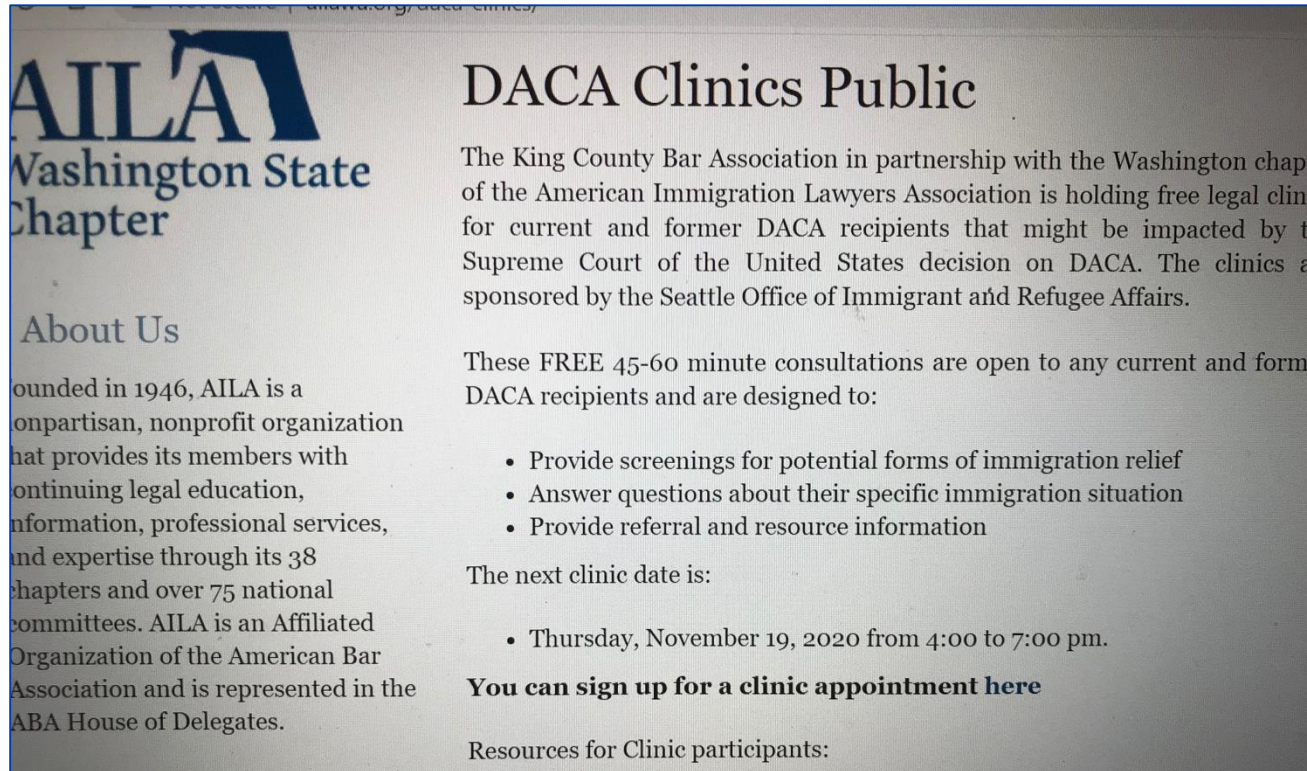


Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Colectiva Legal del Pueblo, and Catholic Immigration Legal Services provided:

- **98 free legal consultations to Seattle residents, workers and students**
- **67 DACA renewals**



DACA: KCBA/AILA Legal Clinics



AILA
Washington State
Chapter

DACA Clinics Public

The King County Bar Association in partnership with the Washington chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association is holding free legal clinics for current and former DACA recipients that might be impacted by the Supreme Court of the United States decision on DACA. The clinics are sponsored by the Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.

These FREE 45-60 minute consultations are open to any current and former DACA recipients and are designed to:

- Provide screenings for potential forms of immigration relief
- Answer questions about their specific immigration situation
- Provide referral and resource information

The next clinic date is:

- Thursday, November 19, 2020 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm.

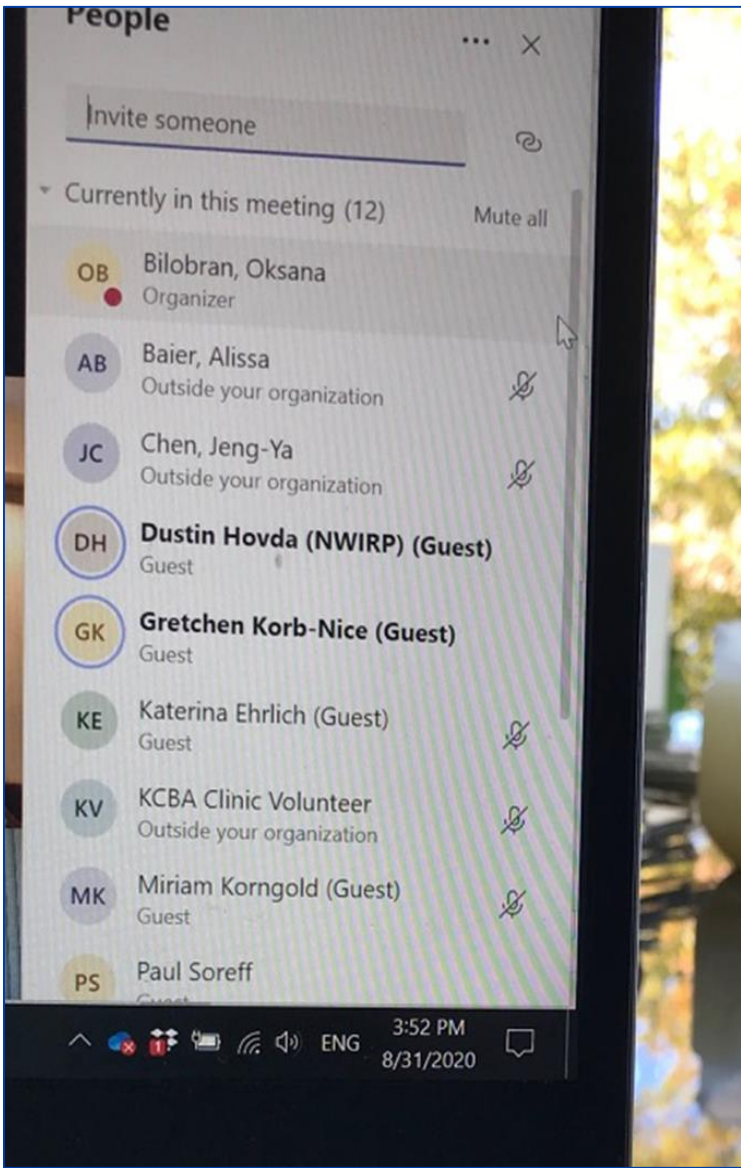
You can sign up for a clinic appointment here

Resources for Clinic participants:

About Us
Founded in 1946, AILA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides its members with continuing legal education, information, professional services, and expertise through its 38 chapters and over 75 national committees. AILA is an Affiliated Organization of the American Bar Association and is represented in the ABA House of Delegates.

- **5** virtual DACA clinics
- **77** three-hour shifts by AILA-WA attorneys
- **202** clients signed up for clinics
- **165** free consultations





DACA: Hopeful Data from Clinics

Findings on potential eligibility:

- **30** DACA, Initial (29.7%)
- **30** DACA, Renewal (29.7%)
- **39** Family Based Petitions (38.6%)
- **5** VAWA Relief (5%)
- **24** U Visa (23.8%)
- **3** T Visa (3%)
- **4** Affirmative Asylum (4%)
- **13** Removal Defense Options (12.9%)
- **2** Advanced Parole (2%)
- **20** No relief available at this time (19.8%)

Immigration Fee Increases

EL CENTRO DE LA RAZA
The Center for People of All Races

FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY
**DACA RENEWAL SCHOLARSHIPS
ARE NOW AVAILABLE.**

INTERVIEWS WILL BE
CONDUCTED BY PHONE.

YOU MUST HAVE CAPACITY TO
DO A VIDEO CHAT!

El Centro de la Raza has received funding to cover the costs of DACA renewals! This is on a first come first serve basis until funds run out!

APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS:

- Must reside in Seattle or work in Seattle or attend a school in the city of Seattle
- DACA Renewal application renewal must be completed
- No minimum or maximum level of income required
- This is only available for DACA renewals

For more information and to schedule a time to apply online, please go to:
<http://www.elcentrodelaraza.org/get-help/daca/>
or call (206) 957-4605

This scholarship was made possible by funding from the City of Seattle.

\$150,000 Immigration Fees Scholarship Fund

- **\$134,375** in fee scholarships awarded to date, including:
 - **189** DACA fee scholarships (\$93,555)
 - **36** Naturalization fee scholarships (\$26,010)
 - **7** Green Card related scholarships (\$7,890)



Highlights

- **City leadership** created the space for us to quickly respond.
- **Collaborative thinking with** our partners resulted in innovative program models.
- **Partners worked tirelessly** and found new ways to provide services and meet community needs.
- **New partnerships** with small and large community-based organizations.
- **Focus on communications** to ensure that our communities were informed.



Seattle COVID-19 Disaster Relief Fund for Immigrants



City of Seattle

Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs

Intent: to provide disaster relief to Seattle's most vulnerable low-income immigrant and refugee residents

Eligibility Criteria

- 18 years old or older AND
- Live in/attend school in/work within the Seattle city boundaries AND
- Ineligible for federal CARES Act Economic Impact Payment ("stimulus check") due to immigration status AND
- Under 50% of the median household income in Seattle in the past 9 months



We launched the fund in 6 weeks!



Oficina de Asuntos de
Inmigrantes y Refugiados
de Seattle (OIRA)

¡Fondos ahora disponibles para inmigrantes indocumentados en Seattle!

La Ciudad de Seattle está ofreciendo ayuda financiera a inmigrantes indocumentados que viven, trabajan o van a la escuela en Seattle y que han sido excluidos de recibir ayuda financiera federal COVID-19.

El Fondo de ayuda COVID-19 de Seattle para inmigrantes ya está aceptando solicitudes en línea. También puede obtener ayuda telefónica en su idioma para llenar su solicitud.

Para obtener más información y presentar su solicitud, entre a la página: seattle.gov/oira/seattlecovidfund.

La fecha límite para presentar su solicitud es el jueves 5 de noviembre de 2020.

- Design informed by community feedback through two stakeholder roundtables.
- Scholarship Junkies administered the program.
- 21 partners conducted outreach and provided in-language application assistance.
- Application and collaterals translated into 7 languages.
- Safeguards to prevent misuse and fraud, while also protecting privacy and trust of the applicants.
- Most applicants approved for funding received assistance within two months of applying.



City of Seattle

Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs

The need was great.



- **18,037** applications received.
- **3,705 (20,5%)** applicants received cash assistance.
- **\$7,964,000** was disbursed via check, direct deposit, or giftcards.
 - **89.53%** were Seattle residents.
 - **10.47%** were applicants who worked in/went to school in Seattle.
- **61%** households and **39%** individuals.
- **9936** people benefited in total.
 - **3754** were children.



Who Received Assistance?



| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| • Unaccompanied Minors | 1.54% |
| • Unhoused Individuals | 4.83% |
| • Single Parents | 34.68% |
| • Survivors of Violence | 12.58% |
| • High-Risk / Contracted COVID-19 | 31.44% |
| • Lost Income | 90.82% |
| • Renters | 91.26% |



Who Received Assistance?



1. Latin American **81.16%** (Spanish)
2. Asian/Asian American **10.69%** (Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Nepali, Laotian, Burmese, Karen, Khmer, Cambodian)
3. Black/African American **3.64%** (Amharic, Tigrinya, Somali, Oromo, Congolese, Oromifa, Garifuna)
4. Native American or Alaskan Native, Indigenous to Central America or South America **1.54%** (K'iche)
5. White **1.40%** (Russian)
6. Multiracial **0.84%**
7. Middle Eastern or North African **0.46%** (Arabic, Pashto, Dari, Farsi)
8. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander **0.27%**



What We Heard

"The stories of the people who had called made us realize how much the community needed these funds. A caller told us about how his wife had gotten COVID-19 and she ended up getting a stroke and became paralyzed from the neck down. This led him to stay home and take care of his wife, and it caused him to lose his job. It was very touching, and you could hear the anguish in his voice and that he really need the funds. We wish we could have done more."

Organización Centroamericana Organizer



Seattle Values in Action!



- **Collaborations were essential.**
 - City departments expedited internal processes.
 - Outreach partners/allies prioritized SDRF – 17% of applications were submitted by partners on behalf of applicants.
- **Language access reduced barriers to access.**
 - Outreach partners helped bridge the digital divide, reached communities who had not engaged with City of Seattle programs before.
 - Majority of applications were completed in-language.

Language Access



City of Seattle

**Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs**

“When written in Chinese, the word ‘**crisis**’ is composed of two characters - one represents danger, and one represents opportunity.”

– John F. Kennedy, 1959

危機...就是轉機



Language Access Opportunities

- Strengthen relationships between city, county, and state governments.
 - Embedded OIRA's External Affairs Team in Public Health - Seattle & King County and hosted [webinars](#) in 7 languages.
 - OIRA continues to liaise between Public Health - Seattle & King County, Department of Health, and the City of Seattle.
- Leverage City staff's language capacity.
 - Helped the Office of Economic Development established a multilingual resource team to staff their voicemail system for their helpline: (206) 684-8090.



Language Access Opportunities

- Build capacity in the community and respond to community needs promptly.
 - Built a COVID-19 Community Translator Team with 50+ local translators.
 - Can translate into Seattle's top 20 languages with a quick turnaround time.
- Sustain a centralized language access system.
 - Add more team capacity and introduce technical tools to support the workflow.
 - Elevate OIRA's team to become the in-house translation shop to directly provide services to other City departments.



Language Access Resources

Want to learn more why the City of Seattle values language access and how to do it appropriately? Start by watching this video:



- **Language Access SharePoint Site**
seattlegov.sharepoint.com/OIRA/language-access
 1. Training videos
 2. Language Access Toolkit
- **Ethnic Media SharePoint Site**
seattlegov.sharepoint.com/OIRA/ethnic-media

Centering community to achieve vaccine equity

Community concerns voiced at our vaccine roundtables:

- The current vaccine distribution is inadequate and inequitable for BIPOC communities, as immigrant and refugee elders are struggling with getting access to appointments.
- Our community health clinics and community organizations need to be supported and positioned to reach the most vulnerable.
- Digital barriers present challenges in accessing information and signing up for appointments.
- A need for a centralized waitlist.
- In-language support is minimal, and language access must be a priority.
- WA State Department of Health phone lines need to be staffed up.



Questions?



Cuc Vu

Director

cuc.vu@seattle.gov

Oksana Bilobran

**Legal Defense Program
and Policy Specialist**

oksana.bilobran@seattle.gov

Peggy Liao

**Language Access Program
and Policy Specialist**

peggy.liao@seattle.gov



City of Seattle

**Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs**