

Non-Citizen Registration Requirement

Community Messaging

This messaging is intended to be shared with immigrant community members related to the Non-Citizen Registration requirement, effective April 11, 2025. Messaging was developed in collaboration with various immigrant-serving organizations and immigration attorneys in Illinois. Please note that this is general information about Registration for community members, not legal advice.

What is Registration?

At the beginning of 2025 the Trump Administration announced that some immigrants will need to register online and provide their fingerprints to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS is referring to this as the “Alien Registration Requirement”; we will refer to it as the Non-citizen Registration Requirement, or, Registration.

The Requirement is set to start on April 11, 2025. However, this may be subject to lawsuits that could put a pause on implementation. **Not all non-citizens need to register through this process. Many non-citizens are already considered registered.**

Once the Registration rules goes into effect, non-citizens have 30 days to register. Failure to register may result in criminal penalties and/or fines, as outlined in this document. Non-citizens should consult with a trusted immigration lawyer or DOJ accredited representative for further guidance regarding Registration and its possible consequences.

According to this requirement, who needs to register?

The primary groups of non-citizens that must register using the new process established by DHS are:

- Non-citizens who entered without being inspected by an immigration officer, have not been encountered by DHS, or who do not have work authorization.
- Non-citizens who entered without being inspected by an immigration officer and have applied for certain benefits (including asylum and Temporary Protected Status) but do not have employment authorization documents (work permit), or who have not been issued a Notice to Appear, the document that is issued to begin removal proceedings.
- All non-citizens above the age of 14 who remain in the United States for 30 days or longer.
- Children turning 14 must register and be fingerprinted within 30 days of their birthday, even if they were previously registered.
- Canadian nationals who last entered the U.S. without receiving a Form I-94

Who is considered already registered?

The following groups are considered registered--this is not a complete list:

- Green card holders (Lawful Permanent Residents)
- People who were granted parole, including advance parole (even if expired)
- People who came to the U.S. on a nonimmigrant or immigrant visa (even if expired)
- People who are already in immigration removal or deportation proceedings
- People granted employment authorization on any basis (even if expired)
- Refugees
- People who applied for lawful permanent residence (even if application was denied)
- People who have border crossing cards or entered the U.S. as “crewman”

When does this registration requirement start?

The requirement is set to start on April 11, 2025.

Stay connected to trusted sources for info and updates:

What are the penalties associated with this requirement?

Penalties vary by violation with fines up to \$5,000, jail time, or both for some offenses.

- **Willful failure to register:** Up to \$5,000 fine and/or up to 6 months in jail.
- **Not carrying proof of registration:** Up to \$5,000 fine and/or up to 30 days in jail.
- **Not updating your address with USCIS (a separate form you can file online) within 10 days:** Up to \$200 fine and/or 30 days in jail.

Fraud in the registration process, such as providing false information, either as a US citizen or non-citizen, could also lead to criminal consequences.

What could happen if you register?

Registering can show that you are following the rules, which might help with future immigration applications.

It’s important to be honest when you register. Providing false information such as using a fake name or lying about your immigration history can lead to serious consequences. For non-citizens, this could mean being placed in removal proceedings or criminal charges. U.S. citizens could face criminal charges.

If you are undocumented, registering could lead to removal proceedings before an immigration judge, even if you haven’t done anything wrong. ICE could send you a letter asking you to report to an office, where they may detain you or start removal proceedings. If you cannot prove you've been in the U.S. for

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Immigration Legal Services
Contact us for information or appointment:
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over two years, you could face expedited removal, a fast-track deportation process with no hearing before a judge unless you have credible fear of torture or persecution.

It's important to talk to an immigration lawyer or DOJ accredited representative before registering to understand your rights.

What could happen if you don't register?

If you don't register, you could face criminal charges. This can happen if you have contact with law enforcement like ICE and they see that you have not registered. (See the question above for more details about possible penalties).

Not registering could also affect your future immigration applications. Immigration benefits are discretionary. This means the government can choose to approve or deny your application based on your history. If you don't register, it could be used against you later.

Do I need to carry documents to prove I registered?

Yes, you should carry proof of registration. There are different forms of proof based on what makes you considered registered (for example, a Notice to Appear for court, a work authorization card, proof that you have an application for permanent residency).

Once you register through this process online, and you have completed your fingerprints at a USCIS Application Support Center, USCIS will issue you a certificate "Proof of Alien Registration" document found on your online account. This document should be carried with you as proof that you have registered.

Many non-citizens in the United States already have a document that serves as proof of registration like:

- I-94 Arrival-Departure Record
- I-485 Application for Permanent Resident Receipt Notice
- I-590 Registration for Refugee Status
- Green Card (I-551)
- Employment Authorization Document (EAD) (I-766)
- Notice to Appear (I-862)
- Border Crossing Card (I-185, I-186)

Even if you carry this proof, remember, you have the right to remain silent and to talk to a lawyer if you're stopped or arrested.

Get a Legal Consultation

If you have questions about Registration and how it may impact you, consult an immigration lawyer or DOJ accredited representative who can advise you on your rights and any potential legal risks.

If you're at risk of being placed in removal proceedings, an immigration lawyer or DOJ accredited representative can help you understand any options you may have to fight your case and stay in the U.S. For example, if you have been here for more than 10 years, you might be eligible for cancellation of removal based on hardship to certain U.S. citizen or Legal Permanent Resident family members.

There is no cost to register. The only place you can register is through the [official USCIS website](#). Do not pay anyone to assist you with registering! Instead, seek a legal consultation with a trusted immigration attorney or DOJ accredited representative.

You can find options for free or low-cost legal help below:

- [Immigrant Legal Support Program Workshops](#)
- [Illinois Access to Justice](#)
- Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights [attorney](#) & [nonprofit list](#)

Additional Resources

For more information about your rights related to this policy, visit the [National Immigration Law Center](#). Stay connected to trusted sources for updates.

Valley Immigrant Advocates

Immigration Legal Services

for low income families and persons

Office location: Ottawa, IL

Contact us for information or appointment:

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