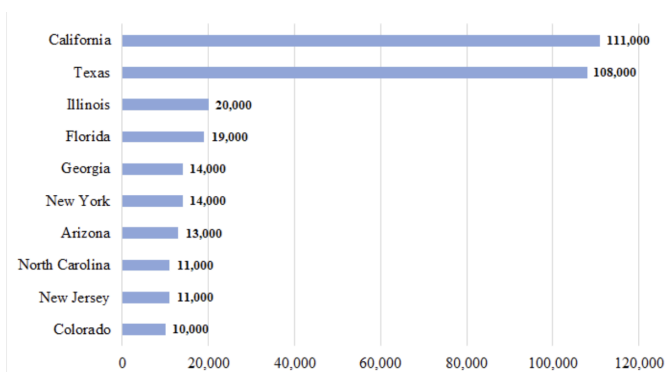


# CMS Finds Parole-in-Place Will Benefit 455,000 US Families and Improve the US Economy: Most Living in California and Texas

by Matthew Lisiecki

July 5, 2024

President Biden’s recent decision to extend parole-in-place to the undocumented spouses of US citizens who entered the country without inspection is a significant first step in strengthening American families and the US economy. Under the program, the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS) estimates that 455,000 undocumented spouses of US citizens with 1) marriages valid before June 17, 2024 and 2) proof of presence in the country since June 2014 are protected from the looming threat of deportation, have the opportunity to pursue a pathway to citizenship, and are able to obtain official work authorization. (All figures cited here are based on CMS’s estimates of the undocumented population using the 2022 American Community Survey.) With California and Texas topping the list, the top 10 states by eligible population are as follows:



This action allows those who have long lived in and contributed to the United States to stay united with their families and not face the difficult choice of either leaving the country to obtain a visa for re-entry or

remaining here with the daily fear of deportation. Under current law, these individuals must leave the country and apply for an immigrant visa at a US consulate in their home country, with no assurances that they will be allowed to reenter. This process can take several years to complete and risks triggering a three- or ten-year re-entry bar. The new parole-in-place policy aligns requirements for US citizen spouses who are present without admission or parole with those for undocumented spouses of US citizens who were overstays after admission, removing an arbitrary policy difference with real-world impacts on thousands of American families.

Undocumented individuals who decide to remain in the United States are at risk of deportation and cannot work lawfully. President Biden’s new policy makes it possible for these spouses—who are the parents of an estimated 745,000 US citizen children—to apply for work authorization, a step that will concretely improve the lives of these families and our nation’s economy. Immigration status affects individual income, with a potential increase in median earnings of \$18,000 per year. As earnings grow, so does the US tax base. Median incomes by immigration status are detailed below:

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*(Note: estimated median earnings for people age 16+ in the labor force—that is, those who are employed or actively seeking employment.)*

Employment authorization also ensures issuance of a Social Security Number, relief from fear of deportation while working, increased access to workplace benefits, rights, and responsibilities, and access to a wider range of career options. Immigration status also affects access to benefits. Only 52 percent of undocumented immigrants have health insurance coverage, compared to 84 percent of legal permanent residents and 92 percent of naturalized citizens.

CMS views this program as a positive step towards just and humane immigration reform, and will continue to work on analysis of the population eligible for parole in place status, as well as downstream effects on their families (including those with legal status and/or citizenship), communities, and the broader economy.

## About Center for Migration Studies of New York

The Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS) is a think tank and an educational institute devoted to the study of international migration, to the promotion of understanding between immigrants and receiving communities, and to public policies that safeguard the dignity and rights of migrants, refugees, and newcomers.

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### Suggested Citation

Lisiecki, Matthew. July, 2024. "CMS Finds Parole-in-Place Will Benefit 455,000 US Families and Improve the US Economy: Most Living in California and Texas." Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS) Report. New York, NY: CMS.

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