

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

Community Education Information for Clergy and Parish Staff

Last updated August 14, 2012

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a program announced by the U.S. government on June 15, 2012 that provides eligible applicants a two-year reprieve from the threat or deportation and the opportunity to apply for work authorization. Applicants may re-apply every two years. **Deferred action is not permanent residence or a green card.** Applicants must pass a background check in addition to meeting the basic requirements:

1. Arrived in the U.S. before age 16
2. Lived in the U.S. since June 15, 2007, and present in the U.S. on June 15, 2012
3. Currently in school, OR graduated from high school, OR has a GED certificate OR honorable discharge from the U.S. Coast Guard or Armed Forces
4. Never convicted of a felony conviction OR three or more misdemeanors, OR a single "significant" misdemeanor
5. No conduct posing a threat to public safety or national security
6. Under age 31

Please note that official records from a religious entity in the U.S. confirming participation in a religious ceremony (e.g. baptism, first communion, wedding) may be submitted as documents to show the residence requirement. The official DACA websites are <http://www.uscis.gov/childhoodarrivals> and <http://www.uscis.gov/acciondiferida>.

How to respond if asked whether someone should apply for DACA
Don't make assumptions about eligibility! Recommend that community members seek legal advice only from an attorney or with a non-profit agency recognized by the Department of Justice's Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). Beware of notarios and others in the community who don't have the legal knowledge and credentials to provide immigration law counseling and services. Individuals may be eligible for other benefits in addition to Deferred Action. Criminal convictions may make an individual ineligible. This is an extremely complex area of law. **Refer applicants to diocesan legal immigration program, if available, or find qualified non-profit legal service agencies by visiting www.cliniclegal.org.** Find information on nonprofit workshops at <http://www.weownthedream.org> or call 1-885-DREAM-31.

USCCB Position on DACA

This important action will provide protection from removal and work authorization for a vulnerable group of immigrants who deserve to remain in our country and contribute their talents to our communities. However this action by the President is no substitute for enactment of the DREAM Act in Congress, which would give these youth a path to citizenship. Such a program represents fair and compassionate reform to undocumented young immigrants who live in our communities. Read the USCCB statement at <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org>.

Note: This flyer is not legal advice. It is for educational and informational purposes only. Prepared by Office of Migration Policy and Public Affairs, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.