

DACA: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

On September 5, 2017 the Trump Administration formally announced the end of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA). The termination of DACA, which has provided legal protection for over 800,000 individuals who entered the country illegally as children, is a cruel tactic set in place to roll back another Obama administration policy, while punishing thousands of undocumented immigrants. Studies have shown that DACA has been critical in providing a safety net for young undocumented immigrants, giving them the opportunity to pursue an education and create financial stability without fear of deportation. What's more, DACA has granted a new path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants through the U.S. legal system.

What Is DACA?

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program was an immigration policy implemented by former President Barack Obama that allowed individuals who entered the country as minors--children or teens--the opportunity to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation, as well as a work permit. DACA was available to individuals who had entered into the U.S. before 2007 and before they had turned 16.

Those who were in the program must have lived in the U.S. continuously since 2007; be enrolled in high school or college; have a degree, diploma, GED, or be an honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. military; and must have no felony criminal convictions or significant misdemeanor convictions.

The Trump administration's announcement of DACA detailed a 'phase out plan', with the last applications for renewal being October 5, 2017 and the complete termination of the program on March 5, 2018. In a strange twist, Trump urged Congress to pass the DREAM Act before the March 2018 termination date. The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act, or the DREAM Act, would grant legalized status to all those enrolled in the DACA program, as well as provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented minors who have entered the country illegally.

The most recent versions of the Dream Act were introduced in July 2017, in the Senate by Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Richard Durbin (D-IL) and in the House by Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL).



On February 26, 2018 the Supreme Court declined to take up a key case involving DACA, thereby reinforcing the rulings of lower courts in New York City and California that ruled the March 5 deadline arbitrary and without merit.

This, in short now means that DACA participants will not lose their status in mass on March 5. However, this does not provide assurance for Dreamers. The absence of a legislative safety net has created a gray area around those receiving DACA. Many of those in who's DACA status is set to expire will not receive renewal.

Who Are The Dreamers?



DREAMers was a term derived from the original DREAM Act introduced in 2001, however today it has taken on a deeper meaning, representing the hopes and goals of young immigrants in the U.S. Today, approximately 690,000 people are enrolled in DACA with most recipients coming from Latin America. Most of the recipients are under the age of 25. A study done by the Center for American Progress, the National Immigration Law Center and United We Dream found that among DACA enrollees, over 72% of them were currently pursuing a bachelor's degree or some form of higher degree and 92% of respondents stated that DACA gave them the ability to pursue educational opportunities that they previously could not. All in all, most DREAMers are college educated, under 25, and live in metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles and New York City. When the program was first introduced, the largest number of enrollees were located in California, Texas, and New York.

Why This Matters To NOW

The creation of DACA was a watershed moment in domestic immigration policy. It not only granted access to hundreds of thousands of young undocumented immigrants, it also acknowledged the potential of these young children and teens within the U.S. For most DREAMers, America is the only home they have known, with many coming to the U.S. as toddlers. Moreover, most DACA recipients are young progressive women. These women are not just advocates for a more progressive society, through programs like DACA they have the ability to become leaders that will inevitably incite change and move us forward. As of September 2017, 13,176 people have lost their DACA status.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Ask your representative to support a CLEAN DREAM Act!



EMAIL YOUR SENATOR [HERE!](#)



We must pass the DREAM Act before March 2018 to protect those who will be affected by the termination of DACA. NOW has created a petition allowing you to email your Senator and urge them to support the DREAM Act.



CALL YOUR SENATOR!



Want to go directly to the source? Contact your representative at (202) 224-3121

Volunteer & Support Organizations That Stand With Dreamers!

There are dozens of organizations that support undocumented immigrants and DREAMers. Here are a few that we recommend:

United We Dream

United We Dream is a network of activists specifically focused on the protection of DREAMERS and Latinx individuals within the U.S. United We Dream has spearheaded a number of campaigns related to DACA over the past 6 months and is comprised of both allies and DREAMERS, alike.

Unite Here!

Unite Here is a NOW ally that works to protect the rights of labor and domestic workers across the country. Much of their work has focused on the sexual and physical abuse of domestic workers as well as the protection of DACA and TPS.

WeAreHereToStay.org

A direct action network, We Are Here To Stay is an organization that provides activists with campaigns, protests, and actions that they can support.

National Immigration Law Center

The NILC is a legal organization that represents low-income immigrants. Since the announcement of the termination of DACA, the NILC has held webinars and trainings for those looking for resources and ways to help DREAMers.