



Archdiocese of Los Angeles
Responses to Frequently Asked Questions from Families on
Immigration Policies and Resources for Families

In response to current attention to immigration matters in the United States, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles is providing answers to these Frequently Asked Questions for you to use with the families and students in your Catholic schools. Questions 1-4 are the direct questions we anticipate you are hearing from your families. You should share them with your entire staff and feel free to share them with your families, as well.

Question 5 includes details regarding workshops and resources that the Archdiocese already is providing to support families in parishes throughout Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. The dates of the remaining workshops are listed. All schools are invited to participate in those workshops. We encourage you to actively participate and involve your families and parent leadership.

In addition, as outlined in Question 5, in response to requests from a number of schools who want to address the concerns in their communities, the Archdiocese and DCS have teamed together and will assist schools that want to coordinate with other schools to develop teams by offering additional workshops for school staff and parent teams. The dates of the workshops will depend on your responses. Our aim is to support students and families with immigration status and related issues and to inform our entire school communities about rights and responsibilities with regard to immigration policies.

NOTE: These FAQ's are not directed to international students who are on I-20 visas in Catholic schools. Questions regarding those students should be directed to the Department of Catholic Schools.

Immigration Policies

Question 1: Do Catholic schools inquire about the immigration status of a student or family member for enrollment or educational purposes?

Answer 1: No. Catholic schools do not inquire about the immigration status of students or family members.

Question 2: Do Catholic schools share a student's immigration status or confidential student records information with federal immigration officials?

Answer 2: Catholic schools do not collect a student's immigration status and information (unless a student or parent informs the school that he or she is enrolling under a foreign student or business visa). Therefore, Catholic schools would not have this information to provide to federal immigration officials. If Catholic schools inadvertently becomes aware of a student's status, that information is not retained.

However, there may be exceptional circumstances under which a school could be required to provide pupil records information to federal immigration officials, including the following: if there is a valid subpoena, warrant, or court order; and if there are emergency circumstances, such as a confirmed danger to public safety.



Question 3: Can federal immigration officials come onto Catholic school campuses?

Answer 3: Federal immigration officials have a policy restricting enforcement actions at “sensitive locations,” including coming into schools, hospitals, and institutions of worship. The policy is still valid at the time of this writing. Also, as noted above, as with other law enforcement agencies, federal immigration officials may come onto campuses under exceptional circumstances, such as immediate public safety issues, or when there is a valid search warrant, subpoena, or court order.

Question 4: What could happen if I am a recipient of DACA?

Answer 4: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ([DACA](#)) is a policy implemented under the Obama Administration in June 2012. At this time, the new presidential administration has not released guidance on whether it will modify or remove DACA. Until Administration clarifies, it is recommended that new DACA applications not be submitted. (This at the recommendation of CLINIC and Catholic Charities).

Information about DACA can be found on the National Immigration Law Center webpage at <https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/>.

Question 5: What is the Archdiocese doing to address the immigration issues?

Answer 5: The Archdiocese is mindful that we are a Church of many peoples, with different backgrounds, different stories, and different family histories. While for many, the focus is often on the immigrant communities from Mexico and Central America, our concerns are for immigrants from ALL over the world—and that impacts nearly every parish in our Archdiocese. The Office of Justice Life and Peace, with support from the Bishops of the Archdiocese, has been sponsoring “train the team” Regional/Deanery/Parish Workshops to prepare parish teams to work with and lead their community members through these issues. Parishes are expected to involve everyone (not just immigrants) in their parish sessions so that there can be a full parish (and school) community effort.

Many people have been turning to the Church for answers since they trust the Church and feel safe in our schools and parishes. Teams of volunteers and staff from parishes (sometimes with school representation) are currently being trained to assist families in their parish prepare for immigration enforcement by helping them to know their rights and to develop a family readiness plans. To date, about 700 persons have participated in nearly 100 workshops. School teams that wish to attend the current parish workshops on the calendar should RSVP to their parish for participation.

If schools are interested—and a number have expressed that interest- the Archdiocese and DCS will take the lead on the workshop training, but the schools will be expected to coordinate dates with the Archdiocese and to work together so that one school can host and several schools can participate in the same workshop, The individual schools would form the team to go to the workshops. If you are interested in hosting or participating, please contact you Assistant Superintendent at DCS.



Like the workshops to date, the school workshops would be “train the team” events and will prepare the teams of staff and interested parents to return to their school and work with families in collaborative sessions at the location. Preparing a readiness plan can be a daunting effort for any family, but if the families can work together with a trained team leader, the task becomes easier and families find they have support from others in their school and parish.

The dates of the workshops are listed below. We encourage you to actively participate and involve your families and parent leadership.

Question 6: Where are the scheduled Parish Workshops?

Answer 6: Parish workshops are still available and schools are encouraged to participate and send a team of staff and parents. Please confirm by school and numbers attending to either the San Pedro Regional Office or St Anne Parish in Santa Monica:

March 8	6.30-9pm	Deanery 19 – San Pedro Region	Holy Family-Wilmington
March 9	7-9pm	Deanery 17 – San Pedro Region	St Rose of Lima-Maywood
March 15	7-9pm	Santa Monica/West LA parishes	St Anne-Santa Monica
March 25	9.30-12noon	Deanery 18 – San Pedro Region	St John of God-Norwalk

Question 7: Should we encourage families in our school to designate guardians and should students in our schools who are US citizens to get a US passport?

Answer 7: Yes, it is very important for all families to have a child care plan in place as part of their readiness plan. The plan should include designating a guardian for their children and preparing a caregiver affidavit and/or guardianship authorization. In addition, when the children are US citizens, the family should get each child a US passport. These topics are covered at the workshops and the materials and resources distributed at the workshops include these materials.

The Archbishop has also announced a special grant from the Cardinal McIntyre Fund to allow parishes and schools to assist families with the cost of obtaining passports. Details will be included in the workshops.

Question 8: What should I do if I have more questions about immigration laws and procedures?

Answer 8: School personnel cannot give legal advice concerning specific immigration matters. However, the Archdiocese has been working with several groups and bar associations to develop a list of immigrations specialists to whom families can refer their issues. Some of the services are on a *pro bono* (free basis) and others are on a fee for services arrangements. Information will be provided at the workshops. Also, the Archdiocese view is that licensed immigration attorneys are the most likely to provide reliable legal



advice on immigration matters. For their protection, families are discouraged from seeking legal advice from non-attorney “notarios.” A directory of free or low-cost nonprofit immigration legal service providers also can be found at <https://www.immigrationlawhelp.org>. Please note that the advice provided by people found on this website do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the archdioceses or of any of our parishes or schools or other locations.

Note: The Archdiocese acknowledges with appreciation information posted by the Los Angeles Unified School District which was used as a resource in these FAQs.

Dated: March 3, 2017