

Dec. 3, 2021: National Advocacy Update

AMA supports strengthening DACA

The AMA recently provided comments to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on the proposed rule regarding Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

The AMA strongly supports the intent to preserve and strengthen DACA through this rulemaking, as DACA provides baseline support for many individuals' careers, education and personal growth. The AMA's comments included recommendations (PDF) that would strengthen the program's administration and adjudication. These proposals included:

- Expanding eligibility for federal student aid and education loans to DACA recipients
- Adding DACA recipients to the list of employment authorization categories that receive an automatic 180-day extension of their timely filed employment authorization renewal
- Ensuring that DACA-based employment application document processing times do not increase substantially
- Extending eligibility to purchase Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace coverage to DACA recipients
- Extending USCIS jurisdiction to permit full and immediate adjudication of both detained and non-detained DACA applicants alike without reliance on decisions by ICE.

Overall, the AMA applauded the administration for beginning the process of strengthening the DACA program and urged DHS to take the additional steps outlined above to improve the proposed rule to better protect DACA recipients.

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