



Keeping Families Together: A New Path for Certain Undocumented Spouses and Stepchildren of U.S. Citizens

As of August 26, 2024, due to a court order, USCIS may accept Keeping Families Together parole applications but may not approve them. Visit <https://www.uscis.gov/keepingfamiliestogether> for the latest information.

On August 19, 2024, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) implemented “Keeping Families Together,” a process allowing certain noncitizen spouses and stepchildren of U.S. citizens to request parole-in-place.

What Is Parole-in-Place?

Parole-in-place allows specific individuals who entered the United States without presenting themselves to an immigration officer at an official checkpoint to remain in the country for up to three years and possibly apply for their green card in the United States rather than having to travel abroad to apply at a U.S. consulate.

Who May Be Eligible?

Noncitizen spouses of U.S. citizens who:

- Are present in the United States without admission or parole;
- Have been continuously physically present since at least June 17, 2014, through the date of filing their request; and
- Have a valid marriage to a U.S. citizen on or before June 17, 2024.

Noncitizen stepchildren of U.S. citizens who:

- Were under 21 and unmarried on June 17, 2024;
- Are present in the United States without admission or parole;
- Have been continuously physically present since at least June 17, 2024, and through the date of filing their request; and
- Have a noncitizen parent who married a U.S. citizen on or before June 17, 2024, and before the stepchild’s 18th birthday.

An applicant must:

- Not have any disqualifying criminal history;
- Not commit acts that are a threat to public safety, national security, or border security; and
- Undergo required background checks and national

security and public safety vetting. You may be required to go to an application support center to submit photographs and fingerprints.

How to Apply:

- Create a [myUSCIS online account](#)
- File Form I-131F (one form per applicant)
- Pay the \$580 filing fee (no fee waivers available)
- Submit the required documentation
- Attend biometrics appointment
- Provide documentation that will demonstrate who you are, how long you have been in the United States, and your relationship with the U.S. citizen, as well as any criminal records and evidence that shows positive discretionary factors.

If a Parole-in-Place Application Is Approved, the Applicant Can:

- Stay in the United States legally for up to three years
- Apply for work authorization
- Apply for other immigration benefits, like a green card, if you qualify

Important Considerations:

- Each eligible family member must file separately
- Approval is discretionary and not guaranteed
- Criminal history or prior immigration violations may affect eligibility
- Travel outside the United States may affect eligibility for parole status or terminate parole status once granted
- DHS can end your parole at any time

Next Steps:

If you believe you may be eligible, it is very important to consult a qualified immigration attorney to assess your case and prepare your application given various risk factors. If you do not have an attorney, you can find one at <https://www.ailalawyer.org/> by selecting “parole in place”.

Note: This is general information, not legal advice. Immigration laws are complex and can change. Always consult a qualified immigration attorney for advice on your specific situation.