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Immigrant Affidavit of Support: Realistic or Not?

Victoria Melendez

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Here's the Facts

- One-third of all immigrants live in families in which the head of the household lacks a high school education.
- First-generation immigrants and their families now comprise 9% of the U.S. population, but 17% of all poor persons in the U.S.
- **Immigrants initially earn less than similarly qualified U.S. natives because the specific skills and knowledge associated with their years of schooling and experience are not valued as much by U.S. employers as are the skills of individuals who were raised and educated in the U.S.**

What is the current poverty line?

- \$12,140 for individuals
- \$16,460 for a family of 2
- \$20,780 for a family of 3
- \$25,100 for a family of 4
- \$29,420 for a family of 5
- \$33,740 for a family of 6
- \$38,060 for a family of 7
- \$42,380 for a family of 8

Why is this information important?

- These statistics are based on the average income the number of people per household receive.
- The amount of money that an immigrant family approximates these amounts and is significantly less than the minimum income requirement for the Affidavit.

For the 48 Contiguous States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:

Sponsor's Household Size	100% of HHS Poverty Guidelines*	125% of HHS Poverty Guidelines
	For sponsors on active duty in the U.S. armed forces who are petitioning for their spouse or child	For all other sponsors
2	\$16,460	\$20,575
3	\$20,780	\$25,975
4	\$25,100	\$31,375
5	\$29,420	\$36,775
6	\$33,740	\$42,175
7	\$38,060	\$47,575
8	\$42,380	\$52,975
	Add \$4,320 for each additional person	Add \$5,400 for each additional person

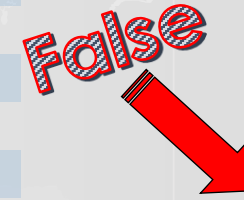
The information above represents the minimum income requirements when completing Form I-864, Affidavit of Support

What is the presenting issue with the Affidavit of Support?

- The minimum income requirement for immigrants is unrealistically unobtainable for an immigrant who has just come to the United States.
- The Affidavit creates an unsupportive cycle where immigrants will constantly need federal public benefits.

What is the Immigrant Affidavit of Support?

- A document that an individual signs to accept financial responsibility for another person, usually a relative, who is coming to the United States to live permanently.
 - The person who signs the Affidavit of Support becomes the sponsor of the relative or other individual coming to the United States.
- Used to determine the minimum income requirement needed to sponsor most family-based immigrants and some employment-based immigrants to show that they have adequate means of financial support and are not likely to rely on the U.S. government for financial support.



What should it include and how can social workers assist?

- The Affidavit should include ESL Classes and immigrant assimilation workshops.
- Social workers can provide information and help clients to apply for these programs, as well as run these workshops.

Why is it important for social workers?

- Advocating for the Affidavit is important for social workers because their advocacy would help immigrants substantially, therefore preventing them from falling into a revolving cycle of needing assistance because of their undervalued skills.
- The Affidavit also affects the sponsors who will be more willing to become sponsors if they know who they are taking responsibility for will be accountable.

SOURCES

- <https://www.heritage.org/immigrant/report/importing-poverty-immigration-and-poverty-the-united-states-book-charts>
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- <https://cis.org/Immigrants-United-States-Profile-Americas-ForeignBorn-Population-0>
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