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# DACA: An Overview of Benefits and Look to the Future

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# DACA: An Overview of Benefits and Look to the Future

Elif Kucuk, Seton Hall University

## What is DACA?

DACA is the “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” program that President Obama initiated in 2012. The purpose of this program was to provide relief from deportation to those eligible young people who illegally entered the country under the age of 16 with their parents and gave them the privilege to work legally.

## Objectives:

1. What is the current state of the DACA program?
2. What are the qualifications to be eligible for DACA?
3. What are the benefits provided to the current recipients?
4. What solutions should be implemented to develop a more sustainable program?



## You are eligible for DACA if you:

1. Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
2. Came to the United States before reaching your 16th birthday;
3. Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007;
4. Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making your request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS;
5. Had no lawful status on June 15, 2012;
6. Are currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and
7. Have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

The recipients of the DACA program are offered limited benefits, which consist of the protection from deportation for two years, and a 2-year work permit. In certain states, recipients were able to qualify for driver's licenses and in-state tuition for higher education. The DACA program was able to provide undocumented immigrants with the opportunity to receive an education and attain a career that not only benefits their lives, but also benefits the government's economic standing.



Although DACA is still active, the recipients are in a constant battle to keep their place within the program. With the recent lawsuits, Congress will not make a decision with regard to the status of DACA before June 30, 2019.

## What benefits are not granted by DACA?

The eligibility of receiving permanent resident status and the authorization of citizenship are rights that are not given to the recipients. Even though immigrants have lived in the U.S. for years and have contributed to the government's economy, they are still being treated as outsiders. They are being withheld from receiving the benefits and resources that they deserve.

According to a recent study done by the Center for American Progress, legalizing the “Dreamers” will raise the average income of all Americans and significantly improve the United States' economy. Congress should improve and make DACA permanent for all those who are eligible and grant them citizenship and permanent resident status. To make this program more sustainable, Congress needs to pass legislations/policies that will offer the undocumented immigrants with new and permanent lives.



## DACA UPDATE

### 5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TRUMP'S ANNOUNCEMENT TO END DACA

On September 5, 2017, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, on behalf of the entire Trump Administration, announced an end to the DACA program. Here are the top 5 things to know about his announcement:

**1. YOUR DACA IS VALID UNTIL ITS EXPIRATION DATE.**  
DACA and work permits (Employment Authorization Documents) will remain valid until its expiration date. To determine when your DACA and work permit expires, look at your I-795 Approval Notice and the bottom of your Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

**2. NO NEW DACA APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**  
United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) no longer will accept or process first-time applications after September 5, 2017.

**3. DACA ISSUANCES AND WORK PERMITS EXPIRING BETWEEN NOW AND MARCH 5, 2018 MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR RENEWAL BY OCTOBER 5, 2017.**  
If you have a permit that will expire between now and March 5, 2018, you must apply for a two-year renewal of your DACA by October 5, 2017.

**4. ADVANCE PAROLE TO TRAVEL ABROAD IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE.**  
The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will no longer grant DACA recipients permission to travel abroad through Advance Parole. Any pending applications for advance parole will not be processed and DHS will refund any associated fees.

**5. WE ARE UNITED IN THIS FIGHT.**  
You are not alone. We mobilized, organized, and marched five years ago for DACA, and we will continue to do everything in our power to protect immigrant youth and their families across the country. Visit [weareheretostay.com](http://weareheretostay.com) for resources to help you and your loved ones take care of yourselves in this difficult time as well as information on what you can do to take action now.

visit [WeAreHereToStay.org](http://WeAreHereToStay.org) to Take Action

