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A program of Simpson United Methodist Church

**Park Avenue Walk-in Legal Clinic**  
3400 Park Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
A project of Peace and Hope International and  
Park Avenue United Methodist Church  
Thursdays, 3 :00 p.m. free walk-in legal advice



## DEFERRED ACTION IMMIGRATION PROGRAMS 2014 TIPS FOR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### Background

On November 20, 2014, President Obama announced executive actions to address problems in the U.S. immigration system, including an expansion of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the creation of the Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) program. Under deferred action, the government will not deport people who meet certain requirements. It does not give a legal immigration status, visa, or green card, and is not a path to U.S. citizenship. Deferred action protects people from deportation temporarily and provides a work permit for three years. The programs will begin processing applications in February and May of 2015. Each application will cost \$465 and there may be other fees. In the interim, there is **nothing** to apply for nor any application process in place.

Those eligible are neighbors, friends, and community members and even attend the same churches! Between 25,000 and 40,000 people in Minnesota may be eligible for these programs. Of these, most live in the Twin Cities, but others live in small towns and cities. Most are hard working families who have lived in fear for years. All have close ties to the U.S., including U.S. born children. Many are low-income and may not speak English well or have access to trustworthy and competent local resources. Many are susceptible to unauthorized and unscrupulous consultants who promise to help but steal people's money.

### An Opportunity

God is giving the Church and the broader community an opportunity to put into practice Jesus' command to love God and our neighbor. As the Body of Christ and a community, we can help to ensure that potential applicants, service providers, churches, community groups, and others have access to reliable information and referral services to prevent fraud and ensure all those who are eligible have the opportunity to apply.

Here are some practical tips for coming alongside our neighbors:

- **Inform your congregation or constituents** from the pulpit, website, letters, newsletters, etc. with reliable information about the programs and referral sources. Do not assume your congregation or constituents are not affected! (See Important Information sheet in Spanish and English.)
- **Warn people to be on guard for fraud** and that they should not seek help from anyone, who is not a known immigration attorney or person accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and who currently works for an agency recognized by the BIA (see agency referral list).
- **Encourage people to get informed.** Make sure people know there is nothing to apply or pay for yet and to seek information from reliable free resources. Refer them to reliable sources of information (see Important Information sheets and agency referral list).
- **Help applicants save money** for fees; establish loan or giving funds to help people with fees.
- **Help people collect documentation** they will need to prove eligibility. Provide letters for members of congregations or community groups to help applicants document their case.
- **Contact us to do a presentation** in your church or community. Email us at [simpsoncsm@gmail.org](mailto:simpsoncsm@gmail.org).
- **Pray and advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.** Not everyone will be eligible for these programs.
- **Volunteer.** Contact us to see how you can help. We need lawyers, interpreters, organizers and others to help.
- **Respect privacy and confidentiality.** This is a sensitive subject and people need the freedom and right information to make the best decision for themselves and their families.

**IMPORTANT: This is a timely subject and information may change quickly. Created November 24, 2014.**  
Visit [www.simpsoncsm.org](http://www.simpsoncsm.org) for updated information and resources.