

MARISTAN

Community Guide to the Immigration Crisis & the “Muslim Ban”

Mental Health and U.S.
Policy History



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The authors of this document do not assume responsibility for the content or political beliefs of included resources. We have done our due diligence to ensure all of the information is accurate, up-to-date, and we have attempted to avoid biased language.

Table of Contents

Historical Context	6
<u>Defining Citizenship and Immigration Policies in the New Republic</u>	6
<u>Current US Policy and Policy Changes</u>	8
<u>Executive Orders</u>	9
<u>The Executive Order Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats</u>	10
<u>The Executive Order Guaranteeing the States' Protections Against Invasion Act</u>	11
<u>Executive Order Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program</u>	12
<u>Free Speech</u>	12
<u>Letter on Toleration</u>	13
Legal Divides: How Immigration Status Shapes Rights and Consequences	14
<u>American Citizens</u>	14
<u>Detention of American Citizens Advocating for Palestinian Rights</u>	16
<u>Visa Holders</u>	17
<u>How are Student Visas Different From Nonimmigrant Visas</u>	17
<u>Crackdown on Student Visas</u>	17
<u>Impact on Student Activists</u>	18
<u>First-Person Account of Visa Revocation: Rümeyza Öztürk</u>	19
<u>Asylum Seekers and Refugees</u>	19
<u>Green Card Holders</u>	21
<u>Humanitarian Parole and Temporary Protected Status (TPS)</u>	23
<u>Undocumented Immigrants</u>	24

Table of Contents

<u>DACA Recipients</u>	27
<u>The Alien Enemies Act</u>	28
<u>Islamic Context</u>	29
<u>Understanding Injustice in Islam</u>	32
Mental Health	34
<u>First-Person Account: Eduardo's Story</u>	34
<u>Educational Disruption Due to Immigration Enforcement</u>	35
<u>Impact of Family Separation on Children's Development</u>	35
<u>Collective Trauma</u>	37
<u>Psychological Toll on Undocumented Youth</u>	38
<u>Layered Trauma: Compounding Mental Health Trauma</u>	38
<u>Moral Injury</u>	40
<u>Resilience</u>	40
<u>Faith-Based Tools</u>	41
<u>Grounding Techniques</u>	43
Know Your Rights: Navigating Immigration-Related Encounters	45
Prepared by CAIR-SFBA	
Community Resources	46
<u>Safety Planning</u>	46
<u>Community Healing</u>	47
<u>Mental Health Resources</u>	48
<u>Educational Resources</u>	49
<u>Books</u>	50
<u>Lesson Plans and Teaching Tools</u>	50
<u>Legal Resources</u>	50
<u>References</u>	53
<u>Appendix A</u>	66

Table of Contents

Appendix B

67

Appendix C

68

Appendix D

70



Historical Context

Native Displacement and the Architecture of American Borders

The United States' immigration policy has evolved over the centuries, seemingly shifting in response to changing political priorities, economic needs, and fluctuating social attitudes. Although a country hailed as a land of political freedom, its history reveals a complex web of policies that have affected communities of all kinds, at times alienating the very individuals who helped propel it to its modern stature. This is particularly true for indigenous peoples who were forcibly expelled, killed, and driven off their ancestral land to make way for European settlers. Viewing the land as a commodity, early settlers signed treaties with neighboring tribes to exchange or relocate them westward, making way for larger colonies (Jenkins & Gray, 2023).

The Indian Removal Act of 1830, enacted by President Andrew Jackson, was a seminal piece of legislation that greenlighted the removal of tribes east of the Mississippi River to unspecified land west of the river, leading to the emigration and death of thousands of Native Americans in the "Trail of Tears" (Jenkins & Gray, 2023). Although this legislation did not directly affect foreign immigrants, it codified existing law and set a precedent for how those deemed threats to American domestic policy or national security could be legislatively addressed.

Defining Citizenship and Immigration Policies in the New Republic

As the American population boomed, so too did immigration, and consequently, the laws pertaining to who is deemed vital to the nation's economic and political progress. This consequently manifests in laws restricting specific populations from immigrating and naturalizing.

This distinction explicitly defines national identity and clarifies who is granted political rights as well as natural rights, marking a clear shift in who is welcome to participate in the nation's political process (Butera, 2024).

Although the nation was built on immigration, the predominant settlers, European landowning men, got to define who could be a citizen, and with it came a deeply racialized definition. The Naturalization Act of 1790 established the first definition of a naturalized citizen, allowing free white European settlers to become naturalized if they lived in the United States for at least two years and were of good character (Naturalization Bill, 1790). This definition would change multiple times; however, its key purpose would continue to be to define who a citizen can be narrowly, thereby controlling who has access to rights in the country.

This was especially true once slavery became prevalent in America, further broadening the ethnic and racial makeup of the nation. The Antebellum Era witnessed an increase in legislation aimed at strictly defining who was granted rights. The Fugitive Slave Act restricted who was awarded their natural rights by criminalizing the movement of slaves, classifying them as property and therefore granting them no legal standing (Baker, 2012). This granted the federal government control over the movement and rights of a large disadvantaged population, and made it unlawful to help fugitive slaves escape to free states in the North. This deepened racial injustice and further fueled questions concerning who could be granted rights and the power the federal government has in deciding who these laws apply to. The Dred Scott case (1846) additionally denied citizenship to all African Americans, reinforcing the Fugitive Slave Act ruling, upholding the idea that Black individuals, even in free states, remain property (Frost, 2021; see Appendix A). Although this did not directly affect immigration to the country, it does give insight into how foreign policy was crafted to enforce a curated image of who an American can be and the

subsequent rights they have access to. In addition, it set a precedent for allowing a portion of the population to have no procedural protections under the law.

None highlighted this exclusionary lawmaking more than the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which effectively prohibited the immigration of Chinese nationals for ten years and further regulated their naturalization (Lee, 2002). This was a seminal moment as it was the first time America introduced a restrictive immigration policy based on race and class, displaying a clear effort to exclude a particular group from immigrating. This forms the bedrock of legal architecture, written and passed to exclude or deport nationalities deemed undesirable to the American hegemonic image the government was trying to promote. Although the first of its kind, it was followed by similar measures aimed at filtering who was afforded the right to enter the nation and gain liberties once touted by the founding fathers as rights for all who call the country home.

Current U.S Policy and Policy Changes

In January 2017, the Trump administration announced Executive Order 13769, a travel ban on seven Muslim majority countries, which became known as the Muslim Ban. The ban claimed to protect American soil from potential immigrants associated with terrorist organizations, and countries incapable of regulating their laws due to political instability. However, this ban posed uncertainty to the First Amendment protecting freedom of religion, as Muslim individuals became targeted by traveling officials and some were detained at airports (Panduranga et al., 2017). This ban was associated with a 17% increase of hate crimes in 2017, in comparison to 2016 before Trump was inaugurated, according to a report by the Council on American-Islamic Relations-Philadelphia (2018). In the president's second term, he prepared a second executive order that included 43 additional countries, with three categories indicating the level of danger these countries are perceived to pose.

In retaliation, Congressman Don Beyer and other representatives introduced the NO BAN ACT, arguing that the Muslim ban is discriminatory in nature and does not reflect American values, given that the Immigration and Nationality Act protects immigrants regardless of their religion (Beyer, 2025). While the ban has been inconsistent and susceptible to case-by-case exceptions, it is important to highlight that many families were broken apart due to the prejudices in our legal system.

One example of the long-term effects of this ban is the story of Anisa and her sister, who resettled in the U.S. 10 years ago in Seattle, Washington. She and her sister worked to build their finances and bring their mother to live with them and support their family. In 2017, their mother and brother were granted their refugee status and relocated with their daughters/sisters. However, while boarding a plane headed to the U.S., the Trump administration published the executive order, resulting in the detention of the family during a layover and denying them entry due to the executive order banning Somalian refugees. As of 2021, their case is still denied “as a matter of discretion.” (International Refugee Assistance Project, 2022). While it is unclear if this family has been reunited and granted entry, it is evident that the ban targets individuals often victims of violence and uncertainty out of their control. The overuse of executive orders created further chaos in their lives and painted the U.S. in a negative light.

Executive Orders

According to Anders (2025), an executive order serves as a directive from the president directing the federal government on policies that need to be followed and actions needed (Appendix B). According to the Office of the Federal Register (2025), since President Trump’s inauguration, he has signed 170 executive orders. In the following section we will discuss some of the orders affecting immigration and understanding the consequences it has on our communities:

The Executive Order Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats

This order was made to tighten regulations and domestic safety from individuals that pose a terrorist or a safety threat to the United States of America, it allows the government to revoke visas to ensure the safety of the country. It is designed to enhance the screening process and adjust immigration status for individuals who advocate for principles that do not align with American fundamental beliefs and prioritize people who are projected to have an easier assimilation transition. Additionally, the order evaluates the information-sharing policies of foreign nations. Countries that lack effective mechanisms for sharing information are more likely to face restrictions and encounter greater difficulty in securing immigration status (The White House, 2025). However, the order goes against core American values of free speech and the importance of challenging the government's beliefs. In a letter to Abigail Adams, Thomas Jefreson stated that: "The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions that I wish it to be always kept alive. It will often be exercised when wrong, but better so than not to be exercised at all" (Jefferson, 1787).

While our founding fathers acknowledged that protesters' causes will not always be favorable to our government, they still encouraged it. However, when Mahmoud Khalil, a Palestinian student with a green card, attending Columbia University, took part in the student protests for Palestine, he was arrested and transferred to a detention center in Louisiana without explicit reason to his transfer out of the state. His deportation documents stated that the Secretary of State determined his activism "would have serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States" making him a threat to American relationships and alleged grounds to his deportation and revoking his green card" (Silva et al., 2025). The Executive Order does not explicitly define what constitutes American values. Notably, the individual in question was

targeted for peacefully protesting a genocide that had been formally recognized by the United Nations. In the absence of a clear articulation of fundamental American principles, it becomes difficult to determine which behaviors may render individuals vulnerable to the order's enforcement.

The Executive Order Guaranteeing the States' Protections Against Invasion Act

The Trump administration issued the Executive Order Guaranteeing the States' Protections Against Invasion Act (2025), which enabled the president to restrict access through the majority of the southern border and limit entry to non-US citizens. To combat the rise of asylum seekers and refugees from the southern border and limit resources provided to assist these individuals with assimilating into American communities, the president referred to this population as invaders, stating that they are becoming an overwhelming population (White House, 2025). Additionally, the order allows for the US to deploy the military to the border to enforce the act and limit domestic law enforcement, and encourage local law enforcement to expand their role in detaining, identifying, and removing undocumented immigrants from their states, with expedited removal (deportation without a full court hearing).

In *Noem v Abrego Garcia* (2025), Kilmar Abrego Garcia was unlawfully deported to El Salvador without due process, after fleeing his country of origin almost a decade ago due to safety concerns. While accused of affiliation with the MS-13 gang, Garcia denied this claim and stated that he has lived in the US without any history of crimes. However, he was denied due process and faced expedited deportation. Abrego Garcia challenged the administration through the courts and presented his case to the Supreme Court, where they deemed this deportation to be unlawful and demanded that Abrego Garcia be returned to the U.S and be presented with his right to due process (*Noem v. Abrego Garcia*, 2025).

Executive Order Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program

According to The Office of Homeland Security Annual Flow Report (2024), in 2023 the United States accepted 60,050 refugee cases out of 125,000 total. This was an increase compared to 2022, causing the administration to raise concerns about the overacceptance of refugees and asylum seekers to the United States. While the growing case acceptance can be attributed to the rise of political and climate instability, the Trump administration attributed it to fraudulent claims. However, only 2.1% of asylum cases have been accepted in 2023, and the majority of cases from 2016 through 2023 are still pending, insinuating that it is difficult to maintain an asylum or refugee status (Schofield & Yap, 2024). The Executive Order halts acceptance of asylum seekers, and suspends refugee applications to a case-by-case acceptance that benefits the United States, and evokes existing resettlement programs designed to assist and mentor families in integrating to their new lives ("Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program," 2025). While individuals who have been accepted into the United States previously will maintain their status, they are susceptible to other mentioned executive orders that can influence their interviews and the public attitude towards their perceived "Americanness".

Free Speech

Free speech has always been considered a core American value, however recently, questions have been raised about the limits of this right, especially when discussing who is considered a citizen. Although codified in the Constitution's First Amendment, this right was selectively applied, further indicating that it was tied to legal and cultural notions of belonging, as those deemed unfit for citizenship were stripped of this right.

Most recently, this right has been contested as the Trump Administration tries to crack down on pro-Palestinian protesters. Most recently, the Washington, D.C.-based think tank, the Heritage Foundation, released a policy paper, “Project Esther,” outlining its hopes for President Trump’s second term, while highlighting an ambitious plan to combat antisemitism. It outlined how anyone, from students to university faculty and visa holders, could have their diplomas, positions, and legal status at stake if they were found to be sympathetic to the Palestinian cause (Baker, 2025). Although such threats have existed for decades, most notably after 9/11, this direct threat to free speech is concerning as it points to historical efforts to suppress non-citizens and disenfranchised communities residing in the United States from exercising their protected right to free speech.

Letter on Toleration

Although a restrictive definition of what it means to be an American was adopted in post-independence America, this was not always the case. English Philosopher and Enlightenment thinker John Locke states, “neither Pagan nor Mahometan (Muslim) nor Jew ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth because of his religion” (1689). Although written decades before America was formed, these ideals helped shape what American democracy and pluralism could look like. This curiosity about Muslims and their place in the Free world was not isolated as religious freedom was codified in the Constitution through the First Amendment. Lawmakers began articulating what this freedom could entail, as well as the limits of a secular republic that was initially created out of a need for religious pluralism. Various philosophers and policymakers endorsed the richness that comes from embracing religious pluralism (Jackson, 2018).

Although the Founding Fathers debated Muslim inclusion, the fact remains that in the early inception of the country, most were slaves from West Africa whose identities as slaves trumped all other self-identification (Aghdassi, 2017). Therefore, such inclusions in language is

likely a product of their travels, setting the stage for how Muslims in America would be viewed, directly affecting their rights to immigrate, assimilate, and become naturalized citizens (see Appendix C for more details).

Legal Divides

How Immigration Status Shapes Rights and Consequences

Citizenship and immigration status directly influences the legal rights and protections of individuals, dictating the extent to which they can reside in the U.S. without deportation. Each status - citizens, lawful permanent residents, visa holders, refugee and asylum seekers, those under temporary protected status or humanitarian parole, Dreamers, or undocumented immigrants - comes with a set of rights and limitations. However, policy decisions under the current administration have blurred the lines of these defined categories. Revamped enforcement practices and rapid shifts in policy have sparked widespread feelings of uncertainty.

American Citizens

American citizens are typically legally protected from immigration-related policy changes. However, recent developments surrounding immigration policies may challenge this protection. As shifting policies create unfamiliar grounds, this current reality is particularly jarring for American citizens who hold birthright citizenship.

A significant development is the administration's attempted reinterpretation of the 14th Amendment's Citizenship Clause (U.S. Const. amend. XIV, § 1), which states that all individuals born in the United States are American citizens. Historically, the implication of

birthright citizenship has been interpreted broadly, granting citizenship to children born within the country unless they are children of foreign diplomats or enemy occupiers (see Appendix D for more details). On January 20, 2025, the administration signed Executive Order 14160 (2025), which argued that citizenship does not automatically extend to all those born in the U.S. The order is stalled in courts due to lawsuits from state and district courts, which claim that it violates constitutional principles.

If the order moves forward, children born in the U.S. will no longer count as citizens through birthright and will subsequently become stateless, losing access to legal protections and critical services like healthcare. Furthermore, families may be separated due to differences in immigration status, leading to increased consequences of social integration (Cho Immigration Law, 2024) and an unknown future for children with birthright citizenship.

There have been cases of immigration enforcement officials detaining American citizens based on racial profiling. Cases like these show the dramatic shifts in immigration policy and volatile conditions for those with varying immigration and citizenship statuses. While American citizens may have certain protections from aggressive immigration policy change, they are not immune to the effects of rapid changes.

Additionally, Muslim Americans have experienced intensified surveillance under the pretext of national security. Policies post-9/11 have normalized the securitization of Muslims (Abbas, 2021). Even prior to the current administration's increased efforts to surveil members of minority communities, earlier administrations piloted social media monitoring programs through the Department of Homeland Security (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2017), raising concerns about invasions of privacy and violations of First Amendment rights.

The expansion of government-sanctioned surveillance, including social media scrutiny and data collection, has led to a known phenomenon referred to as the “chilling effect,” or the self-censorship and withdrawal from spaces of public discourse and civic engagement (Murray et al, 2023). Studies show that increased surveillance and monitoring leads to increased stress and anxiety, prompting individuals who feel targeted to shelter themselves from detection. They may avoid participation in activism efforts, attending protests, or displaying their political stances online to shield themselves from any potential repercussions, such as losing their jobs or getting suspended from their universities.

Detention of American Citizens Advocating for Palestine

There has been a notable increase in surveillance surrounding activists who advocate for Palestinian rights, and increased threats for backlash and fallout from governmental and professional authorities. The current administration has been shown to indiscriminately arrest, detain, and question activists regardless of their citizenship status.

A clear example is the mass labeling of activists and protesters for Palestinian rights as “anti-semitic,” and their consequential arrests. In May, over 70 protestors were reportedly arrested at Columbia University in New York City (Matza & Yousif, 2025). In 2024, thousands were arrested across numerous college campuses, including Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, University of California, Los Angeles, and University of Texas at Austin, with university authorities threatening academic consequences (Cochrane, et al., 2024). In May 2024, police intervened to dismantle a student encampment, dressed in riot gear and using pepper spray, ultimately arresting 27 protestors for trespassing.

Instances such as these show heightened efforts to shut down efforts that draw attention to Palestine. These incidents show a pattern of utilizing law enforcement to suppress political dissent, using the

propositions of antisemitism and national security as guises. This sets a harrowing precedent for the protection of civil liberties in the U.S. Those who are not protected by citizenship are at a greater risk, with newer policies making it more likely that they may face detention or deportation for participating in activism projects and political engagement.

Visa Holders

Under the Trump administration, visa holders, including international students and skilled workers, have faced heightened scrutiny and policy rollbacks. Some key impacts on visa holders include increased visa denials and processing delays.

How are Student Visas Different from Nonimmigrant Visas

Student visas, primarily F-1 (academic study), J-1 (vocational studies), or M-1 (exchange programs) are nonimmigrant visas designed for educational purposes. Student visas are only valid as long as the students are enrolled in an approved school full-time. Their visas are tracked through the use of a central electronic database that is managed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) called the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Universities must keep SEVIS updated on students' initial admission, their course load, whether they have transferred, extend their stay or engage in employment (Dalal-Dheini et al., 2025). Consequently, ICE has easy access to student information. These visas however, are non-dual intent, meaning, they are not designed for people who intend to migrate permanently, although transitions through different legal statuses are possible (eg. F-1 → H1B → Green Card).

Crackdown on International Student Visas

The Trump administration has also intensified scrutiny of Chinese international students, citing national security concerns (Ma & Binkley, 2025). This crackdown involves visa revocations, paused visa interviews, and increased border interrogation, even for those with valid visas. The State Department has also announced a new initiative,

'catch and revoke,' which will pursue immigrants and revoke their status for any violation of US law, even minor violations like traffic infractions (Villagran, 2025). They have also outlined increased social media scrutiny for international students to monitor for content deemed supportive of terrorism or posts defined as anti-semitic (Moller & Truitt, 2025). One Brown University doctor, Rasha Alawieh, who was initially granted an HB1 visa, had her visa revoked upon re-entry into the United States after Customs and Border Patrol found images of a Hezbollah leader on her phone (Moller & Truitt, 2025). As of mid-April, over 240 universities have identified over 1,150 international students whose status has been changed (Dhawan, 2025). These policies will fundamentally change the college landscape as more than half of all international students in the United States come from either China or India (Ma & Binkley, 2025). These new measures threaten educational access and institutions financial stability. These policies are damaging the appeal of US universities to future students and may result in subsequent brain drain from the lack of recruitment of international talent.

Impact on Student Activists

The Trump administration has implemented stringent measures to quell student protestors, especially those protesting the genocide in Gaza. Over 1,000 student visas have been revoked, with students participating in political protests making up the majority of the targets (PBS, 2025). One student identified as 'T' for her safety stated that "I now move with paranoia. Every time I leave my house, I'm emotionally and mentally preparing myself for detention. Any man on the street or any white or black van that I see sparks some sort of panic within me" (Florida, 2025b). Universities are now facing legal and financial pressures surrounding their ability to host international students. President Trump signed Executive Order 14188 in January, which mandated federal agencies combat anti-semitism, with a focus on vetting educational institutions (The White House, 2025). The order pushes for the monitoring of alien students and staff, which has led to increased surveillance and vetting of international students, particularly in universities with active Palestinian protests. This crackdown has

recently escalated to the government revoking institutions' ability to enroll international students (Zurcher, 2025). The administration has also called for universities to terminate diversity programs, reform admission and hiring practices and screen foreign students for views hostile to 'American values' (Zurcher, 2025). Although legal experts warn that revoking visas based on political speech infringes on first amendment protections, and a judge recently blocked his efforts, the Trump administration is still continuing to enforce this policy (Epstein, 2025). International students who are involved in political activism for Gaza have now been forced to self-censor or withdraw from activism to avoid being targeted as many fear being labeled security threats.

First-Person Account of Visa Revocation: Rümeyisa Öztürk

Rümeyisa Öztürk, a Turkish doctoral student and Fulbright Scholar at Tufts University, endured a harrowing experience in March 2025 after being abducted by ICE agents (Florida, 2025). Öztürk was in the country legally under an F-1 Student Visa, however, her visa status was revoked, claiming her political activism toward the genocide in Gaza as the reason for her apprehension, citing an op-ed she co-wrote in *The Tufts Daily* (Florida, 2025a). However, no concrete evidence was brought to substantiate their claim. Öztürk was transferred to a detention center in Louisiana, where she reported inadequate medical care after suffering from multiple asthma attacks, poor sanitary conditions and stated that a nurse within the facility removed her hijab without permission (Crampton & Cheney, 2025; Atkins & Burke, 2025). On May 9th, after successfully filing a habeas corpus petition challenging her detention, she was freed. Her case draws attention as it highlights the intersection of freedom of speech and immigration enforcement, as people's immigration status is now being weaponized as a tool of political repression, creating a climate of fear.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

There have been significant policy shifts and attempts to reshape US immigration guidelines surrounding asylum seekers and refugees. A

refugee is defined as one who is located outside of the country of their nationalization and fears persecution due to their race, religion, nationality, group affiliation, or political opinion (8 U.S. Code § 1101(a) (42)). The United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is a federal initiative that identifies, screens, and selects refugees for assistance and resettlement in the U.S.

On January 20, the President signed Executive Order 14163 (2025), titled “Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program.” This order, effective on January 27, 2025, served to suspend the entry of new refugees indefinitely. The order also suspended the Welcome Corps program within USRAP, which allowed American citizens to sponsor refugees, halting the processing of current applications and prohibiting the intake of new ones (Welcome.US, 2025). Tens of thousands of vetted refugees were left in a limbo, their applications stalled with no specified timeline for the resumption of processing. Over 10,000 refugee flights were cancelled, effectively stranding at least 22,000 refugees who were cleared to travel into the country, and halted the consideration of at least 600,000 refugees for admission to the U.S (Johnson, 2025). Although the terms of this executive order have been challenged in litigation, the order still remains in place.

On January 24, the administration expanded the use of expedited removal, a process under the INA §235(b)(1)(A)(iii)(I) which gives the Secretary of Homeland Security sole discretion to select categories of noncitizens subject to quick removal from the U.S. The expedited removal process is applicable throughout the country, giving low-level immigration officers the authority to remove noncitizens from the U.S. without proceeding through a hearing with an immigration judge, leading to concerns of unfounded deportations, insufficient protection asylum seekers, and an oversight on due process (American Immigration Council, 2025). While individuals who seek to apply for asylum are meant to be referred for a credible fear interview to address their eligibility for asylum, the quick timeline associated with expedited removals may likely inhibit individuals from seeking sufficient legal counsel, potentially restricting them from asylum-seeking status.

On January 20, the administration issued Proclamation 10888 (2025), claiming that the southern U.S. border is under “invasion” due to the number of migrants, and giving states the authority to deploy the National Guard or state police forces to block or remove migrants at the border. This labels numerous asylum seekers as being “ineligible” if they do not enter the country through official channels, bypassing traditional asylum laws and ignoring due process. Additionally, the administration has reinstated the “Remain in Mexico” Policy (MPP). The MPP forces people seeking asylum in the U.S. to remain in Mexico under dangerous conditions while their cases proceed. The program was ruled by a federal court to be a violation of statutory law in 2020, and terminated by the previous administration in June 2022 due to concerns of violating humanitarian standards (American Immigration Council, 2025), but the current reinstatement is yet to be challenged in courts.

It is also important to note that some individuals also face the dilemma of being stateless, which has complex implications under U.S immigration and refugee laws. Palestinians from the West Bank for example are considered stateless as most do not possess full citizenship in any sovereign country that is nationally recognized. This legal ambiguity leaves many people ineligible for asylum even when they face threats of displacement under occupation.

The maintaining of the executive order, alongside the invocation of additional acts overhauling current laws surrounding refugee and asylum-seeking laws, leaving the future of thousands of refugees uncertain.

Green Card Holders

Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs), or green card holders, have specific significant rights within the U.S. Certain policy shifts under the current administration have surfaced increased risks and overall uncertainties with individuals holding this status. LPRs can face deportation if they commit an aggravated felony, two or more crimes involving moral turpitude, or if they were involved in perpetrating a hate or xenophobic crime.

The current administration has emphasized that there is no specific time frame during which violations of U.S. law can impact LPR status, and any violation can lead to green card revocation. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), has made it clear that it is now grouping LPRs with temporary visa holders, saying, “Green cards and visas will be revoked if an alien breaks the law (2025).” This conflation and associations of lawful permanent residents with those who hold temporary visas has led to legal experts urging those with LPR status to exercise extreme caution while residing in the U.S., and to be prepared for increased and continuous social media surveillance and background checks.

Under the new administration, the detention of LPR status holders is not an impossibility. On March 8, 2025, Mahmoud Khalil, a student at Columbia University and an LPR status holder with a green card, was detained by ICE officers, allegedly due to his involvement in pro-Palestinian campus protests. Immigration authorities stated his deportation is allowed if they deem his presence to be detrimental to U.S. foreign policy interests, a provision ruled to be unconstitutional by a federal judge (Offenhartz, 2025). Khalil is still detained at an ICE detention facility in Louisiana, facing deportation proceedings.

Further, the previously active “Public Charge Rules” sought to bar admission to LPR applicants based on their likelihood to “become a public charge” (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(4)). In the past, the term focused particularly on past use of cash assistance, such as Social Security Income, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, or need for long-term institutionalized care. However, in 2020, the Departments of State and Homeland Security expanded the definition to include past use of benefits such as Medicaid, food benefits, or housing assistance, and instructed offices to determine if an applicant is likely to use public benefits at any point in the future (Lowrey & Van Hook, 2021). Although the previous administration largely reinstated the previously accepted definition of public charge in 2022, past implications still cause LPR status holders and applicants to have apprehensions and confusion about the safety of their status if they access critical public benefits.

Revisions to immigration laws have often led to immigrants not using public benefits they are eligible for, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid. In 2020, the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) found that, during the first Trump administration,

participation in these programs declined almost twice as fast in noncitizens than in citizens (Capps et al., 2020). This is also a manifestation of the “chilling effect.” Increased immigration enforcement is expected to contribute to chilling effects through the active avoidance of immigrant families with social services, police, and other spaces where they may feel subject to increased scrutiny and exposure to immigration enforcement.

Humanitarian Parole and Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

The rollback of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and humanitarian parole has left thousands of individuals in legal struggle. TPS, granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, is a longstanding form of humanitarian relief that protects nationals of countries in ongoing wars, natural disasters, epidemics, or other instability and repression. Established under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) §244, TPS protects nationals from countries including Yemen, Sudan, Venezuela, Afghanistan, and Ukraine (National Immigration Forum). TPS holders are granted six-, 12-, or 18-month designations that can be extended repeatedly, and are protected from deportation during this time (Casagrande, 2025). However, TPS does not offer a pathway to permanent residency or citizenship.

Humanitarian parole was established under INA §212(d)(5)(A), and is a discretionary tool that allows individuals to enter or remain in the U.S. temporarily for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit (IRC, 2025). Being granted parole does not provide legal status or long-term protection (IRC, 2025). Parole is often used in emergency contexts, such as to reunite separated families, to admit individuals in need of urgent medical treatment, or to evacuate populations in crisis, but it is granted on a case-by-case basis and may be revoked at any time (IRC, 2025). Unlike TPS, which applies to broader national groups, parole is usually individualized and temporary.

Since 2017, TPS has become a point of legal and political tension. During his first administration, President Trump attempted to revoke TPS designations for six countries: El Salvador, Haiti, Sudan, Nepal, Honduras, and Nicaragua. This would have put around 400,000 people who have been living and working in the US for decades at risk for deportation, potentially sending them back to unsafe conditions in their home countries (Hesson, 2025). These attempts were challenged successfully by legal courts. However, during his second term, Trump has rekindled the crackdown on TPS designations. The Trump administration and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem are re-targeting countries and attempting to reverse the Biden administration's expansion of TPS and humanitarian parole designations (National Immigration Forum).

Most notably, on May 30, 2025, the Supreme Court upheld Trump's decision to terminate humanitarian parole for over 500,000 immigrants, overturning a lower court's previous injunction (AlJazeera, 2025). In the same month, the Supreme Court also ruled in favor of ending TPS for around 350,000 Venezuelans (AlJazeera, 2025). In January 2025, the Trump administration also terminated the Uniting for Ukraine parole program and the CHNV program that provided parole for people from Haiti, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba (IRC, 2025). These developments signal an aggressive rollback of humanitarian relief and amplify the risk of deportation for vulnerable populations who have built their lives in the U.S. With few legal avenues for permanent status, TPS and humanitarian parole recipients now face heightened uncertainty, despite decades of residence, deep community ties, and having U.S.-born children.

Undocumented Immigrants

An undocumented immigrant, also known as an unauthorized immigrant, is a noncitizen who lives in the U.S. without legal permission and is the main target of the 287(g) program. This program was established under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and introduced through the 1996 Illegal

Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA). It permits the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to collaborate with local and state law enforcement agencies, and authorize certain local officers to engage with federal immigration enforcement duties, such as identifying, detaining, and starting deportation for undocumented immigrants. As of December 2024, ICE maintained active 287(g) agreements with 135 local and state law enforcement agencies across 21 states (American Immigration Council, 2021).

Once local officers are deputized through a 287(g) agreement, they are required to follow all federal civil rights laws. Their duties generally include questioning people about their immigration status, checking federal databases, requesting local jails to keep individuals in custody for up to 48 additional hours so ICE can take them into immigration custody, adding case details into ICE's database to help track and manage immigration enforcement actions, and issuing Notice to Appear (NTA) to start the deportation process (American Immigration Council, 2021).

There are currently two active forms of 287(g) agreements in use: the Jail Enforcement Model (JEM) and the Warrant Service Officer (WSO) model. Under the JEM, authorized local officers can question people in custody on local charges, which refer to violations of state or municipal laws, such as driving without a license or shoplifting, to find out their immigration status. As of December 2024, this model was in place with 60 law enforcement agencies in 16 different states. The WSO model allows certain law enforcement officers to be trained and approved by ICE to carry out administrative immigration arrests. Their authority is limited to making arrests inside jails or detention facilities, and they are not allowed to question people about their immigration status. As of late 2024, 75 agencies across 11 states in the U.S. were using this model (American Immigration Council, 2021). Immigration enforcement is not allowed in 'sensitive' areas like places of worship, schools, or healthcare facilities (National Immigrant Justice Center, 2025; Wake Forest Law Review, 2025).

Multiple concerns have been raised regarding the implementation and impact of the 287(g) program. The program has resulted in widespread and increasing racial discrimination, with Latino and Black communities being impacted the most. A notable case revealing patterns of racial profiling involves the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office in Arizona. In 2011, the Department of Justice found that under the leadership of Sheriff Joe Arpaio, the department carried out policing that unfairly targeted Latino residents. The investigation showed that Latinos were stopped by deputies at rates nine times higher than others (American Immigration Council, 2021). Additionally, many immigration arrests made consisted of individuals with minor offenses, such as traffic violations. University of North Carolina in 2009 and 2010 revealed that one-third of all individuals processed through the 287(g) program were charged with traffic-related offenses. The highest proportions were found in Gaston County (56.6%) and Alamance County (40.7%) (Nguyen & Gill, 2010).

Under the current Trump administration, the 287(g) program has significantly expanded to intensify immigration enforcement across the country. These efforts are part of Trump's broader goal to carry out tough immigration policies "to the fullest extent possible" (National Immigrant Justice Center, 2025). Since January 2025, numerous new agreements have been signed to increase the number of deputized local officers to carry out enforcement duties, also known as the Task Force Model (TFM). One of these agreements includes Executive Order 14159, titled 'Protecting the American People Against Invasion,' and focuses on reinstating the TFM, alongside significantly expanding the JEM and WSO model (National Immigration Forum, 2025).

A day after President Trump's inauguration on January 21, 2025, his administration ended the long-standing policy of limiting enforcement activities in sanctuary areas. Now, ICE and local enforcement officers are allowed to conduct duties in these previously protected spaces, further destabilizing the lives of undocumented immigrants. On April 28, 2025, Trump signed an Executive Order threatening non-compliant

Nonetheless, ICE raids in major cities across the country have increased due to the Trump-issued quota of 3,000 DHS arrests per day (Lenthang, 2025, The Guardian, 2025). On March 11, 2025, DHS announced that immigration detention had been filled to capacity. On May 5, 2025, DHS announced its voluntary self-deportation program for undocumented immigrants, giving them the opportunity to avoid arrest, detention, and forced removal in exchange for travel and financial assistance of \$1000 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2025).

Alarming, ICE quietly took back requirements that it would comply with state and local laws during courthouse raids (Thompson, 2025). The federal agency made more arrests on June 3, 2025 than in any day in its history with 2,200 arrests, including hundreds made at the appointments of undocumented immigrants deemed non-threatening by ICE itself. These vulnerable individuals are faced with the impossible decision of attending their appointments and risking being taken into custody or missing their appointments and risking deportation (Ainsley, Strickler, & Martinez, 2025).

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Recipients

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a policy established by President Obama's administration in 2012 that provides work authorization and temporary, renewable two-year protections from deportations to certain undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children (USCIS, 2025). Between 2021-2023, federal courts consistently ruled that the original terms of DACA exceeded the scope of what could be established through executive action. These rulings prohibited the processing of new applications, but allowed for renewals.

On March 10, a federal court of appeals ruled for continuing to allow for renewals but did not bring any immediate changes for the more than 500,000 "Dreamers" who are a part of DACA (AP News, 2025). There has been no further proposed legislation to address DACA, and there is still a stall in processing new applications (Benenson & Matthey, 2025).

DACA is a discretionary program. USCIS has the authority to terminate an individual's status as a Dreamer at any time. DACA can be terminated without notice if a Dreamer is convicted of any offenses relating to national security or public safety. In other cases, USCIS often provides a Notice of Intent to Terminate (NOIT) with a grace period to allow the recipient to respond before formal termination (USCIS, 2025).

There has not been any reported change or revocation of DACA sponsorship for any Dreamer within the program, but recipients continue to feel uncertainty, as the current administration incessantly works towards increasing deportations (Acevedo, 2025). Dreamers worry that their documented protections may not be enough to protect them from deportation when the administration has been vocal about deporting those who have even more legal protections such as those with LPR status.

The Alien Enemies Act

The Alien Enemies Act authorizes the President to detain or deport any male non-U.S. citizen over the age of 14 who is a native of a nation at war with the U.S (Elsea, 2025). Historically, the Act has only been invoked three times: during the War of 1812, World War I, and World War II (Blakemore, 2025).

In March 2025, the President introduced Proclamation 10903 (2025), "Invocation of the Alien Enemies Act Regarding the Invasion of the United States by Tren de Aragua." Tren de Aragua (TdA) is a designated terrorist organization by the US in 2025 (Otis, 2025). The President claimed that the TdA is "conducting irregular warfare against the territory of the United States," and authorized the expedited removal of all Venezuelan citizens in the U.S. over the age of 14 who are believed to be part of the organization, and are not U.S. citizens or LPRs. This was the first time the Act was invoked.

The invocation was met with legal action by civil rights organizations who sued the administration (ACLU & Democracy Forward, 2025). A Federal Judge issued an order prohibiting the government from using the act to carry out deportations. However, the Trump administration deported an estimated 238 Venezuelans on March 15 and detained them at the *Centro de Confinamiento del Terrorismo* prison in El Salvador, a maximum-security prison that holds them without trial (Shamim, 2025). Advocates argue that many deportees had no known ties to the gang.

Many detainees were awaiting processing of their asylum applications when they were arrested. Others held refugee status, temporary visas, or were admitted into the U.S. on humanitarian parole (Marcos, 2025). U.S. immigration courts are throwing out the immigration cases of the detainees, citing reasons such as a lack of jurisdiction and failure to appear in court (Romero, 2025), fully knowing that the detainees do not have the means to leave the CECOT prison.

Islamic Context

Islam details ethical obligations Muslims have towards migrants and oppressed peoples. God (SWT [Glory Be to Him]) says in The Holy Quran: "People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should recognize one another. In God's eyes, the most honored of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all knowing, all aware" (Qur'an, 49:13). God (SWT) chose the race and ethnicity of every human, thus, humans should not treat one another according to this. Humans have been designed with diversity, but are equal and judged according to worship.

Modeling the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) was narrated by Abu Hurairah (may God be pleased with him) to have said, "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is! You will not enter Jannah until you believe, and you shall not believe until you love one another.

May I inform you of something, if you do, you love each other. Promote greetings amongst you" (Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 96, n.d.). It was narrated from Jarir bin Abdullah Al-Bajali that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Whoever is deprived of gentleness, he is deprived of goodness" (Ibn Majah, Hadith 3687, n.d.). Finally, the Prophet (PBUH) quotes God (SWT) saying, "O My Servants, I have forbidden injustice upon myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not commit injustice" (Muslim, Book 45, Hadith 2577a, n.d.). Hence, love and gentleness are actionable and meaningful qualities of human relationship, and injustice is forbidden in Islam.

The Prophet (PBUH) also specified that neighborliness and hospitality are manifestations of belief. Abu Shuraih Al-Khuzai said that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Whoever believes in the Last Day, let him treat his neighbour well. Whoever believes in Allah and Last Day, let him honor his guest. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him say something good or else remain silent" (Ibn Majah, Book 33, Hadith 3672, n.d.). Because we are equally at the mercy of God as humans, we obey His commands and follow the example of Muhammad (PBUH).

In addition to ethnicity, God (SWT) has also chosen other details such as time of birth, economic status, and political environment, positioning humans with varying challenges which are tests. During the first Islamic migration, Muslim refugees were protected by a just Christian king named Negashi in Abyssinia, or modern-day Ethiopia and Eritrea (Ahmed, 1996). Some asylum seekers stayed in the new land even when it was safe to go to Madina, and others passed away and were buried in Abyssinia (Mukhtar, 2023). King Negashi rejected bribes from the oppressing Quraysh and chose to recognize the similarities between his people and the Muslims.

God (SWT) says, "The poor emigrants who were driven from their homes and possessions, who seek God's favour and approval, those who help God and His Messenger- these are the ones who are true-

[shall have a share]. Those who were already firmly established in their homes [in Medina], and firmly rooted in faith, show love for those who migrated to them for refuge and harbor no desire in their hearts for what has been given to them. They give them preference over themselves, even if they too are poor: those who are saved from their own souls' greed are truly successful" (The Qur'an, 59:8-9). The harsh reality of poor migrants will not go unrewarded, and the hospitality, generosity, and sacrifice of hosting Muslims will not either.

Muslims have also been commanded to help non-Muslims. Allah revealed to Muhammad (PBUH): "If any one of the idolaters should seek your protection [Prophet], grant it to him so that he may hear the word of God, then take him to a place safe for him, for they are people with no knowledge [of it]" (The Qur'an, 9:6). Therefore, practice Islam through embodying its justice.

Beyond hosting and protecting the downtrodden, God (SWT) asks humans why they do not liberate those begging for their freedom: "Why should you not fight in God's cause and for those oppressed men, women, and children who cry out, 'Lord, rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors! By Your grace, give us a protector and give us a helper!'" (The Qur'an, 4:75). Muslims are expected to combat injustice *and* prevent it.

The tradition of protecting all people's humanity is strong in the Islamic heritage. Sultan Bayezid II of the Ottoman Empire offered refuge to expelled Jews and persecuted Christians during the Spanish Inquisition of 1492 (Restaino, 2018, Sonyel, 1992). During the Holocaust, King Mohammed V famously said, "There are no Jews in Morocco. There are only Moroccan subjects," in his refusal to deport Moroccan Jews to concentration camps (Wagenhofer, 2012). Imam Si Kaddour Benghabrit, rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris, gave Jews a sanctuary in the mosque and even Muslim identity paperwork to help them evade Nazis (Katz, 2012).

Up until its recent civil war intensified, the Muslim-majority country of Sudan hosted over one million Muslim and Christian refugees despite being classified as a low-income country (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2025, World Bank, 2022). Furthermore, the two countries granting asylum to more refugees than any other country today are Iran and Turkey (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2025). Given Islam's call for justice along with the legacy of Muslim-led humanitarian aid and advocacy, modern efforts should be recognized as acts of worship of a timeless religion.

Understanding Injustice In Islam

The central theological challenge in any religion is understanding the existence of injustice in a world created by a merciful and omnipotent being. Islamic tradition presents a framework in the quran and the sunnah, which addresses theodicy. At its core suffering serves as a means of spiritual awakening, a moral test, and a reminder of the limitations of human knowledge when it comes to divine wisdom. Suffering serves to reawaken the soul and realign it with Allah. Suffering is a tool that draws people back to focus on their purpose. Throughout the Quran, Allah never criticizes turning to Him during times of calamity; rather He criticizes the Muslims who forget to mention Allah after the calamities are lifted (Surah 10:12; Surah 39:49). At its core, suffering can be understood through knowing that Allah's divine wisdom is beyond human comprehension. Therefore, while Muslims may not understand why they suffer, they should resign to the knowledge that God understands what they do not. Additionally, Muslims believe that there is purpose to all human trials and suffering, where suffering can be seen as a means of spiritual growth, or getting close to Allah through His remembrance, dua, patience, etc. Moreover, with a large emphasis on achieving Jannah, or heaven, Muslims are encouraged to remember that true justice is not achieved in this life, rather, it is measured out in the next life, and on the Day of Judgement (Qadhi, 2018). In summary, Islamic thought does not necessarily seek to resolve the problem of suffering in a purely philosophical sense.

Instead, it shifts the question from " why does God allow suffering?" to "what is the believer's response to suffering?"

The Quran provides many tangible examples of how to respond to hardship through the stories of the prophets. The Quran recounts the story of Prophet Ayyub who lost everything: his wealth, his health, his community and even his children. Yet through it all, he never lost faith, and only continued calling out to Allah. Surah Al-Anbiya, narrates the supplication of Prophet Ayyub when he was afflicted with adversity. He cried out to his Lord, saying, "Indeed, adversity has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful" (Surah 21:83). The Quran also reflects on the life of Prophet Yusuf, whose journey was defined by the betrayal of his brothers, unjust imprisonment in Egypt, and exile from his family. At the end of his story, Prophet Yusuf summarizes the islamic viewpoint when he states, "Surely whoever is mindful 'of Allah' and patient, then certainly Allah never discounts the reward of the good-doers" (Surah 12:90). His story, and the stories of other prophets is a testament to resilience and divine wisdom.

And of course, there's no greater example than the Prophet Muhammad, whose life was marked by trials. One of the most painful moments which he himself described as the most difficult day of his life was his visit to Taif. After facing harassment and discrimination in his hometown of Makkah, he was forced to search for a safe place for him and the other muslims in Makkah to migrate to, and he hoped to find that safety in Taif. Instead, the prophet was met with hostility and was followed out of the city, while its residents threw rocks at him and his feet, to the point where he was profusely bleeding. The prophet narrates after leaving the city, then the angel of the mountains called [him], greeted [him] and said: 'O Muhammad, Allah listened to what your people had said to you. I am the angel of the mountains, and my Rabb has sent me to you so that you may give me your orders. If you wish I will bring together the two mountains that stand opposite to each other at the extremities of Makkah to crush them in between.'" But

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "I rather hope that Allah will raise from among their descendants people as will worship Allah the One, and will not ascribe partners to Him (in worship). (An-Nawawi, Hadith 642).

The prophet's rejection from Ta'if and his eventual migration to Yathrib is not just a lesson in patience, but also a deeply human moment. For migrants today, especially those facing the trauma of family separation and/or deportation, the emotional weight of being cast out, criminalized, and treated as unwanted is heavy. It can be comforting to know that the most beloved of Mankind, the prophet (PBUH) felt similar pain. He was driven from his homeland of Mecca, reached out to cities seeking sanctuary and finding none open. Yet, after being pelted by rocks and rejected from one of the most wealthy cities in Arabia, he called out to Allah with a dua of mercy. His example reminds Muslims that to be rejected in this world is not a sign of being forgotten by Allah. Rather, it is even in those moments of displacement that we should uphold mercy for others and get closer to Allah. This is only one of the many trials that the prophet experienced. The believer finds strength in these moments of hardship, as they demonstrate a prophet who wept, who confided in his loved ones, and who called out to Allah for help, giving people a guide for how to process their own pain.

Mental Health

First-Person Account: Eduardo's Story

Eduardo M. an eleven-year-old boy from Guatemala, was forcibly separated from his father upon entry into the United States. After separation, Eduardo found himself in a government shelter unsure of where his father was: "I didn't know where my father was for over 20 days. . . . During those 20 days, I did not know if my father was dead or alive, if he was sent back home, or where he was. I was scared and sad. I asked everyone to help me find my father but they told me they could not tell me where he was" (Bochenek, 2024). Eduardo recounted to Human Rights Watch that the rare times he could speak to his father

were often cut short as they ran out of money. The moments he hears his father's voice bring him fleeting comfort, but they are overshadowed by persistent fear: "I'm so scared they will deport him and I'll be here alone" (Bochenek, 2024). His story demonstrated not only the trauma of separation but also the psychological burdens that come along with it, like economic hardships, helplessness, and the resounding uncertainty that surrounds his situation and other individuals like him.

Educational Disruption Due to Immigration Enforcement

Youth and children under the age of 18, especially those who grow up in mixed immigration and citizenship status families, experience significant educational setbacks due to immigration law enforcement. Due to 287(g) agreements, the risk of such surveillance and policing creates fear and instability and motivates immigrants to move away from counties with active 287(g) enforcement, discourage families from moving into affected counties, and keeps children out of school due to fear of exposure to immigrant authorities. A Stanford research study presents evidence on the impacts of this fear-driven climate in reducing U.S. public-school enrollment of Hispanic students (Dee & Murphy, 2018). It was found that in counties where these agreements were implemented, Hispanic student enrollment declined by nearly 10% within two years, with elementary school students being the most impacted.

Impact of Family Separation on Children's Development

Deportation and family separation can have profound psychological effects on individuals and families. Immigration enforcement reflects a broader pattern of chronic stress and trauma exposure that places children at increased risk for serious mental health challenges and disruption of developmental milestones. Consistent emotional support

Deportation and family separation can have profound psychological effects on individuals and families. Immigration enforcement reflects a broader pattern of chronic stress and trauma exposure that places children at increased risk for serious mental health challenges and disruption of developmental milestones. Consistent emotional support from parents and family members is essential during early childhood to support language development, emotional regulation, healthy social relationships, and long-term cognitive health (American Immigration Council, 2021). However, when this emotional bond is abruptly severed due to the detention or deportation of a caregiver, a child's developmental trajectory can be seriously altered (Merrick et al., 2017; Mersky et al., 2013). Children as young as 3 or 4 years of age can show signs of developmental and behavioral decline, such as social withdrawal and speech delays. Children who experience trauma and removal of a caregiver can also show symptoms of post-traumatic stress, emotional numbness, and abandonment fears (Chaudhry et al., 2010). Household instability and loss of income due to detention or deportation of a breadwinner can create further stress and mental instability in the family, especially among children (McPherson et al., 2024). Moreover, in the aftermath of a parent's detention or deportation, along with financial instability and educational setbacks, children are more likely to engage in alcohol consumption, act out with aggressive behavior, and have thoughts of suicide (American Immigration Council, 2021).

One of the most pervasive mental health concerns is chronic anxiety and hypervigilance, especially in families with mixed-status backgrounds who live with the daily fear of being separated from a loved one. Youth who experienced deportation-related parental separation were seventeen times more likely to have thought about running away and were four times more likely to have considered suicide (McPherson et al., 2024). These findings suggest that deportation trauma alters an individual's perception of safety, belonging, and trust. This feeling, often called anticipatory grief or ambiguous loss, has no resolution as families live in a constant state

of chronic worry, exhibiting signs of sadness, clinginess, and withdrawal as they emotionally brace for a loss that feels inevitable (Solheim et al., 2016). This persistent fear can result in symptoms like sleep disturbances, separation anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and regressive behaviors (e.g., bedwetting) (Hampton et al., 2021). Additionally, ambiguous loss and anticipatory grief do not fit traditional grief models like the Kubler-Ross five-stage grief model, meaning behavioral symptoms are often not attributed to this unresolved trauma, thus going unrecognized by providers.

Collective Trauma

Punitive immigration enforcement and displacement result in collective and shared trauma, affecting families and society, and manifests as identity issues, impaired motivation, poverty, avoidance, social withdrawal, emotional remoteness, and mistrust (Thamotharampillai & Somasundaram, 2021; Amri & Bemak, 2013). Collective trauma can also be passed down through generations as transgenerational trauma. This inherited emotional burden can have detrimental effects and pose serious mental health challenges, such as suicide, depression, hyperactivity, anxiety, and substance addiction (Thamotharampillai & Somasundaram, 2021). Often, the emotional and behavioral coping strategies and patterns developed and adopted by older generations get passed down to future generations, hence, continuing the cycle of trauma (Lehrner, & Yehuda, 2018). Furthermore, social stigma and cultural mistrust regarding seeking mental health services in immigrant communities further heighten the risk of developing trauma. Mental struggles are expected to be dealt with internally to avoid stigmatization and 'othering', especially for males expected to appear strong for their family (Cauce et al., 2002; Vogel, Wade, & Hackler, 2007). Health service seeking behavior is further discouraged due to experiences of moral injury, where immigrant families feel betrayed and angered by the institutions surveilling them they once trusted. Despite the weight of collective and inherited trauma, communities continue to show resilience through connection and care. Youth and intergenerational

dialogue, shared narratives, education and advocacy, collective decision making, and community-based organizations such as mosques push the migrant communities forward.

Psychological Toll on Undocumented Youth

While public attention often centers on children who are separated from deported family members, undocumented youth themselves, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, live in a constant state of fear and instability. Gonzales et al., (2013) describe undocumented children as experiencing ‘transitional liminality’ suspended between two worlds. Although the children are fully immersed in American life, they are simultaneously excluded from the protections of citizenship. This dissonance causes a rupture in identity formation, particularly during critical developmental stages, such as early adulthood. Even if they excel within their community and in school, they still face barriers in college, employment, and travel that reveal their exclusion. Psychological consequences of living in such a state include anxiety, especially if DACA protections are revoked or under threat (Garcini et al., 2021). DACA political debates have caused stress, fear, anxiety, and depressive symptoms (Moreno et al., 2020). The temporary nature of protection and the threat of policy reversal create a sense of heightened vigilance as well as social isolation, as individuals fear disclosing their status, even to close friends, for fear of retaliation.

Layered Trauma: Compounding Mental Health Burden

For many immigrant and refugee families, the trauma experienced from family separation or deportation is layered upon previous experiences of displacement and violence. Refugees and asylum seekers often arrive in the United States already carrying the psychological weight of political

repression or displacement. Many refugees experience pre-migration trauma, which includes threats to life, violent death of a family member, or temporary separation from a parent (Heptinstall et al., 2004). Some individuals may also experience immigration stressors such as forced removals, immigration raids, and detentions, which may re-trigger trauma and compound the negative psychological effects. The uncertainty that many people face about asylum status, fear of deportation, and chronic exposure to anti-immigration rhetoric can deepen emotional distress. This phenomenon of compounding unresolved past trauma is called complex trauma and can make recovery more difficult (Lewis et al., 2021). Children from war-affected countries or individuals displaced by persecution or natural disasters are particularly susceptible as they must contend with past traumatic experiences that led to their migration while adapting to a new country, experiencing legal insecurity and family separation.

These compounding stressors can disrupt developmental trajectories, affecting children's memory, and may lead to behavioral outbursts and emotional numbing (Hampton et al., 2021). Recovery after such traumatic experiences necessitate community-based settings where families can safely access resources, like mental health clinicians, as well as support with employment and school enrollment.

Even after relocation, many families experience post-migration concern for the family left behind, feelings of isolation, physical illness of a family member, and financial difficulties (Heptinstall et al., 2004). These worries involve daily anxieties about safety, how to feed one's family, and the continued persecution of family members who are unable to migrate. The deep sense of guilt and helplessness that follows such experiences often leads to heightened symptoms of anxiety and depression (McQuaid et al., 2021). Newly arrived individuals often experience social isolation, face language barriers, and discrimination from their host country while lacking familiarity with local systems.

These challenges contribute to increased feelings of alienation, linked to poorer psychological outcomes (Hong et al., 2023). Without access to trauma-informed care that accounts for both pre-migration and post-migration experiences of trauma, these individuals may be underserved, as the continuum of trauma must ensure long-term stability, not just short-term crisis intervention.

Moral Injury

In the wake of forced separation, deportation and legal disputes, many immigrants and refugees experience moral injury, a deep psychological wound that arises when core values are violated by systems or authorities that they believed were put in place to protect them. In immigration contexts this may take the form of institutions promising refugees fairness in the process, but instead enacting policies that tore families apart or prolonged suffering. Examples include arbitrary detentions without due process, family separation at the border due to 'zero tolerance' policies, years-long asylum backlog, and rapid deportations without proper legal proceedings. These experiences go against the fundamental ideals of safety and fairness and can lead to profound feelings of betrayal, especially if families migrated with the hope of beginning a better life. Such policies can cause deep guilt and distress.

Moral injury has been linked to higher levels of depression, spiritual distress, demoralization and even suicidal ideation (Litz et al., 2009). Addressing moral injury thus requires collective healing spaces and systems-level changes that restore communities and individuals' sense of justice and humanity.

Resilience

Although psychological harm results from political instability, individuals also demonstrate remarkable resilience. Protective factors can act as psychological buffers, shielding individuals from the full weight of harm.

A strong connection to one's cultural and ethnic heritage has been shown to increase self-worth and lead to better physical health outcomes (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). Strategies such as social and family support, religiosity, spirituality, and social advocacy have been found to benefit individuals experiencing political instability (Moreno et al., 2021). Forced separation and political instability can also foster post-traumatic growth (PTG), which is a positive psychological transformation following adversity. Individuals who go through PTG note a deeper appreciation for life, build stronger relationships, have a more defined sense of self, and experience increased inner strength (Tedeschi et al., 2004). Religiosity and spirituality often catalyze this growth, as it can lead to positive religious coping, religious openness, religious participation, and a readiness to face existential questions, which are all associated with post-traumatic growth (Shaw et al., 2005). Faith-based practices can provide meaning in suffering and provide support networks that individuals can utilize. Faith institutions also play a central role as safe havens and distribution points after raids or detention. Religious institutions support families with meals, money, and childcare. Unlike public agencies, people gravitate toward seeking help from religious institutions as they do not collect information on immigration status and do not need to verify the family's information before providing assistance (Capps et al., 2007). Thus, they offer a natural outreach mechanism and provide religious support.

Faith Based Tools

In addition to stories, the Quran and the Sunnah also offer practical, faith-based tools for the believer to endure hardship. The spiritual practices are not abstract ideals but embodied acts that connect the believer to Allah and deeply personal and transformative ways. One of the most powerful among these is Salah, and in particular Tahajjud, the voluntary night prayer that the prophet was commanded to uphold early in the sirah. Allah says in the quran, "Stand all night 'in prayer' except a little" (Surah 73:2). Prayer is often performed alone; as such it becomes a sanctuary for a soul in the chaos of this world. It is in the

stillness of the night when the world is asleep, that the believer can speak most vulnerably with Allah. The Quran promises, “Indeed, worship in the night is more impactful and suitable for recitation” (Surah 73:6). Always remember that before going to anyone else, go to Allah: talk to him, cry to him, complain to him, explain to him. Salah is the anchor of the believer. Do not miss it for the trials and tests of this world. Indeed the prophet (SAWS) said this entire world and everything in it is not worth the two sunnah prayers before Fajr (An-Nawawi, Hadith 1102). If this is true for two non-obligatory or *Nafl* prayers, imagine the weight and the value for the mandatory five prayers of the believer.

Dhikr, Remembrance of Allah, also holds an immense power during moments of hopelessness. The Prophet said “The example of the one who celebrates the Praises of his Lord (Allah) in comparison to the one who does not celebrate the Praises of his Lord, is that of a living creature compared to a dead one.” (al-Bukhari, Hadith 6407). Dhikr Allows the believer to sit with their emotions while anchoring their heart to the Eternal. Dhikr is an action of the body but affects the mind. It allows for a constant state of remembrance that allows your physical actions to reflect your spiritual composition.

Dua, or calling out to Allah, is also an essential lifeline during trying times. There are certain phrases that are emphasized in the Quran and the Sunnah. For example, the prophet on his expedition to Khaybar made the following dua:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْحَزَنِ وَالْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَالْجُبْنِ وَضَلَعِ الدَّيْنِ وَغَلَبَةِ الرِّجَالِ

O Allah! I seek refuge with You from distress and sorrow, from helplessness and laziness, from miserliness and cowardice, from being heavily in debt and from being overcome by men. (Al-Bukhari, Hadith 2893)

While eloquent supplications exist in the Quran and Sunnah, the most powerful duas are the ones made in one's own language. It is the

language of the heart: a one-way connection between a person and their master. Furthermore, as the prophet (PBUH) said in authentic hadith, “Be afraid of the curse of an oppressed person as there is no screen between his invocation and Allah” (al-Bukhari Hadith 4347). Particularly during moments of crisis and clear oppression, be reassured that a person’s prayer is always answered.

Some people mistakenly believe that for a dua to be answered a person must get exactly what they asked for. However, this is not the case. Classical scholars give many possible meanings for a Muslim’s dua always being answered. Firstly, Allah may choose to delay their request, and give it to a person better time for their deen, their dunya, and/or their akhira. Alternatively, Allah may choose to open an alternative pathway for a believer that is better than the road ahead for them. Finally, Allah may choose to only show the value of the dua in the hereafter, where it will be far more valuable than anything a person could have received in this world.

Lastly, action itself is a form of worship. In Islam, spiritual resilience is not limited to inward rituals. Even outward efforts (such as activism, service, advocacy) when carried out with sincerity and for the sake of Allah, are acts of worship. The Quran says, “And say, ‘Do [righteous] work, for Allah will see their deeds, and [so will] His Messenger and the believers’” (Surah 9:105). Success is not always measured by results but by intention. To struggle for justice, to care for the vulnerable, or to speak the truth even when it is unpopular, all of these actions become sacred when aligned with sincere intention. The Prophet (PBUH) never abandoned the people, even when they rejected him. He kept walking, kept working, kept hoping. So too should a believer.

Grounding Techniques

While spiritual tools can help provide meaning and strength during times of difficulty, psychological coping mechanisms can offer more immediate tangible techniques to regulate the body. One such approach is the use of grounding exercises, which are especially helpful during an

anxiety attack or when feeling overwhelmed. These practices work by anchoring a person in the present moment, drawing attention away from spiraling thoughts to the real world. A widely used method is the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique. A person must identify five things they can see, four they can touch, three they can hear, two they can smell, and one they can taste.

If a person is for whatever reason unable to find something around them (ex. cannot smell two things), then imagine something such as their favorite food instead (Imran, 2020). Research suggests that sensory-based grounding techniques activate the parasympathetic nervous system and can effectively lower symptoms of anxiety and trauma-related disorders (Shuper et. al., 2021).

Another technique that has been shown to be quite effective is breath-focused meditation exercises. Breathwork or the deliberate control of breath has been shown in several randomised-controlled trials across various institutions to have been associated with statistically significantly decreased levels of stress than control groups (Fincham et al., 2023). There are a variety of methods that have been used and studied. The most popular of these breathwork methods is box-breathing, which involves inhaling for four seconds, holding for four, exhaling for four, and holding again for four seconds.

Another similar but slightly different model is the 4-7-8 model, developed by Dr. Andrew Weil, which involves inhaling for 4 seconds, holding the breath for 7 seconds, and exhaling for 8 seconds. Though rooted in modern psychology, these techniques align with Islamic values of mindfulness. In a world where chaos and justice often drowns out clarity, grounding the body is an important first step in grounding the soul.

Know Your Rights: Navigating Immigration-Related Encounters

Prepared by CAIR- San Francisco Bay Area

Understanding your rights is essential—not just for your legal protection, but also for your mental and emotional well-being. Encounters with immigration or law enforcement can be stressful and even traumatic, especially in today’s climate. Knowing what you’re entitled to under the law can help you stay grounded and safe.

You Have the Right to:

Remain Silent

- You are not required to answer questions about your immigration status, where you were born, or how you entered the country. You can say, “I choose to remain silent.”

Speak to a Lawyer

- You have the right to consult with an attorney before answering questions or signing any documents.

Refuse a Search Without a Warrant

- Immigration or police officers need a signed warrant to enter your home. You can ask to see it and confirm it’s signed by a judge.

Be Free from Discrimination

- You are protected from harassment or targeting based on your race, religion, or national origin.

Carry a Know Your Rights Card

- If you feel unsafe speaking, you can present a card that asserts your right to remain silent and request legal counsel.

If You’re Stopped or Approached:

- Stay calm. Do not run, argue, or resist.
- Ask, “Am I free to leave?” If yes, walk away calmly.
- If detained, clearly state, “I want to speak to a lawyer,” and do not sign anything without one.

Mental Health Reminder

It's normal to feel fear or anxiety after an immigration-related encounter. These moments can be traumatic. You are not alone. Reach out to mental health professionals, community-based organizations, or faith leaders who can help you process and heal.

For free and low-cost legal support, contact CAIR-SFBA:

Phone: 408.986.9874

Email: info@sfba.cair.com

Website: ca.cair.com

Community Resources

Safety Planning

In times of heightened immigration enforcement and instability proactive safety planning can offer critical protection and reduce panic when in crisis.

Create a Local Emergency Contact List

Having a ready to use contact list of local emergency contacts during an immigration crisis can help individuals act quickly and effectively if detained. Include numbers of trusted family, friends, immigration attorneys, a community organizer or local mutual aid group. Including diverse contacts ensures you have both emotional and legal support on hand at all times. Include phone numbers, full names and their physical addresses if needed, as well as notes on their availability. Store this information in multiple formats (e.g. digital and print) and share the information with trusted individuals.

Register with a Local Mutual Aid or Immigration Rights Organization

Connecting with local organizations ensures you have access to rapid

response networks, legal support, and community alerts. Many organizations offer hotlines and direct assistance during ICE raids or detention. For example, United We Dream and Freedom for Immigrants provide real-time support and legal referrals, as well.

Assign a Check-in Buddy

It is useful to designate a trusted person to regularly check in on you and your family during this time. This is important because it ensures someone is aware if you are detained or unreachable, and they can then alert your contacts or initiate legal support.

Prepare Legal Documents and Know Your Rights Material

Make sure to collect your key documents, including your identification, legal paperwork, power of attorney forms, etc. Keep copies in a secure and easy-to-access location. It is also useful to carry “Know Your Rights” cards and familiarize yourself with your legal rights during any potential encounter with immigration authorities.

Secure Digital Privacy

Protect your sensitive information on all of your devices. Use strong passwords and enable two-factor authentication. Also, be cautious about sharing personal details online.

Community Healing

Community healing is a collaborative approach where individuals come together for the emotional and social recovery of their community. Acknowledging its significance, community healing is widely understood as a key approach to confronting shared trauma and supporting lasting emotional and social health. This approach helps to reconnect individuals with their community, foster mutual understanding and awareness, promote integrity and empowerment, break down barriers of shame and stigma, and build resilience (The Recovery Center, 2024). Individuals must become active participants in the process through various efforts. Establishing masjid-based support

groups can be especially valuable for youth seeking trusted guidance and a safe space to discuss, ask questions, and navigate mental health challenges through an Islamic lens (MOHID, n.d.). Organizing awareness events at mosques or community centers, such as know-your-rights and immigration education workshops and seminars, is another path to community healing. This offers space for attorneys and experts to share materials on legal rights and detentions, and answer questions. Organizing community members for storytelling based on lived experiences is a powerful way to build resilience and tackle stigma surrounding this topic. Lastly, joining local protests against ICE raids, anti-immigration policies, and Islamophobia, where peaceful demonstrations help bring awareness and solidarity, can uplift underrepresented communities.

Mental Health Resources

An-Nu'man ibn Bashir narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion, and sympathy are just like one body. When any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever" (Sahih al-Bukhari 6011). As Muslims, we may feel collective pain for our brothers and sisters suffering under this new immigration crisis, understanding that their struggles are intertwined with our own. Their pain is our pain, their resilience is our strength, and their healing is our shared responsibility. As Muslims of the global community, whether as educators, community leaders, or parents, we form the other limbs of this aching body. It is our duty to advocate for and support mental health initiatives that address the psychological impact of displacement and conflict. Evidence from the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) encourages us to care for our mental and emotional health (Yaqeen Institute, 2020). Allah (ﷻ) says, "Surely with hardship comes relief" (Surah As-Shahr 94:6). In this verse, the Quran reminds us of Allah's mercy and the importance of patience during times of hardship. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness nor a sign of weak faith. In fact, intertwining mental health

support (ie. therapy) with Islamic practices such as salah, dhikr, and reading the Quran, can provide an integrated approach to healing. May Allah (ﷻ) ease the burdens of people, grant them healing, and inspire us to be instruments of His mercy. There are many resources that Muslims can seek, including Maristan, the Khalil Center, the Ruh App, and the first 24/7 Muslim mental health hotline, Naseeha Helpline.

The organizations listed below offer faith-based support and culturally congruent counseling services that are designed to meet the unique needs of the Muslim community and provide them with the tools needed to navigate mental health challenges.

- Maristan
- Khalil Cedocumnter
- Naseeha Helpline: 1 (866) 627-3342

Maristan

- Khalil Center
- Naseeha Helpline: 1 (866) 627-3342
- Ruh Care
- Collaborators - Institute for Muslim Mental Health
 - Email: admin@muslimmentalhealth.com
 - Phone number: 1 – 800 – 273 – TALK (8255)

Educational Resources

As immigration enforcement intensifies, it has become even more important to become educated in order to support immigrant communities and advocate for justice on their behalf. With raising surveillance, evolving laws and intensified enforcement, it is important to engage in immigration education.

Books

1. Undocumented America by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio
 - a. Deeply personal narrative that centers the lives of undocumented immigrants, highlighting everyday realities and the stories of individuals living in America's shadows.
2. Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions by Valeria Luiselli
 - a. Luiselli draws on her experience as a volunteer interpreter for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in the US, to craft an essay exploring the trauma and uncertainty the children face. The book is structured around the forty official intake questions US immigration asks during legal screenings.

Lesson Plans and Teaching Tools

1. Learning for Justice:
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/topics/immigration>
 - a. Provides age appropriate lesson plans and multimedia materials that can help educators teach students about immigration issues.
2. PBS: Teaching Stories of the Immigration Debate
<https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/teaching-the-stories-of-the-immigration-debate/>
 - a. Provides educators with age appropriate news articles, interviews, videos and classroom resources providing historical context and explaining current events.

Legal Resources

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

National Headquarters contacts are below. You can email or call to request legal help or file a complaint about an immigration or civil rights issue.

- Phone: (202) 488-8787

- Civil Rights Department: (202) 742-6420
- Email: civilrights@cair.com
- Online complaint form on their website:
<https://www.cair.com/report/>

The CAIR Washington Immigrant Justice Project: This project under CAIR was specifically made to serve Muslims in Washington State.

- They offer immigration delay representation, removal defense, travel assistance, immigration application assistance, and educational opportunities. Their Civil Rights team and Immigration Justice Project provide free legal counseling and referrals for Muslim immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the state. You can call or email to request legal help, schedule a consultation about an immigration issue, or report a discrimination case.
 - Phone: (206) 367-4081
 - Civil Rights Team: (206) 624-0506
 - Email: info@wa.cair.com

Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA): MLFA is a national nonprofit that provides pro bono legal services in criminal, civil, and immigration law at the federal level. MLFA defends Muslims facing immigration denials, travel restrictions, and any other challenges that are related to national security policies.

- Visit their website at www.mlfa.org to submit a request for legal assistance, case intake, and support requests.

Muslim American Society (MAS) Immigrant Justice Center: This center has offices in Raleigh, Charlotte, and other satellite services across the country. They provide direct legal services for adjustment of status, DACA, naturalization, family visa petitions, removal hearings, asylum, and anti-discrimination education. They offer services at little to no cost, and each client gets individualized service.

- Phone number: (919) 345-8105

Arab Resource and Organizing Center (AROC): This is an organization based in the San Francisco Bay Area that offers immigration legal services for low and moderate income Muslim and Arab immigrants. Their services are widespread, and include legal representation, deportation defense, asylum applications, and case processing. You can call or email AROC to schedule a consultation or get information on legal services.

- Phone: (415) 861-7444
- Email: info@araborganizing.org
- Website: www.araborganizing.org

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Dred and Harriet Scott

This came to a head in 1846 when Dred and Harriet Scott filed a lawsuit claiming they and their daughters were free, as they had lived in free states, including Illinois, and the Wisconsin Territory, and their children were born North of the Mason-Dixon line (Frost, 2021). Harriet and Dred argued that they were entitled to freedom; however, their case became more than that, as it raised the question of who is considered an American citizen and what rights such individuals are entitled to under the law. As the case made its way to the Supreme Court, the country held its breath as it would draw precedent for who was considered free or a slave. On March 6th, a seven-member majority ruled that the Scott family was not free, citing that although they lived in free territory, they were still considered property. In addition, the case invalidated earlier statutes allowing states to prohibit slavery, and most pressingly reinforced that no African American, whether a slave or born to freedom, could ever be an American citizen (Frost, 2021). This expansion of slavery further highlighted the growing need to codify who can be a citizen explicitly, and called into question what racial or ethnic communities were deemed American enough to warrant citizenship.

Understanding the Difference Between Executive Orders and Federal Laws

The president can use the executive order to extend their power and create policies that align with the privileges they already have; they can not create an act extending power granted to them by the law, nor can they use it to surpass laws approved by congress, such as allowing a third term of presidency. While executive orders are made to help the president control and implement existing laws and tackle pressing issues threatening the nation, an executive order can be dismissed as quickly as they are made, and they hold less power to federal laws. Federal laws have a heavier standing and are harder to revoke, as it has to go through congress to repeal a law. While executive orders can be abolished at any point by the president or the following president. They can also only be executed by the executive branch, affecting foreign nations and domestically in a broader sense. If states perceive the executive orders to be unjust or exceed the president's authority, they can challenge the orders in courts (Anders, 2025).

Letter on Toleration

Although a restrictive definition of what it means to be an American was adopted in post-independence America, this was not always the case. An oft-quoted line attributed to English Philosopher and Enlightenment thinker John Locke states, “neither Pagan nor Mahometan (Muslim) nor Jew ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the commonwealth because of his religion” (1689). Although written decades before America was formed, these ideals helped shape what American democracy and pluralism could look like, as Locke was often cited by the American Founding Fathers. This suggests a populace eager to reform from the rigid religious sectarianism that had fueled the initial West European migration to the American colony.

This curiosity about Muslims and their place in the Free world was not isolated, but pointed to a political and social milieu that looked to the world for inspiration for what religious and political pluralism could look like. As religious freedom was codified in the Constitution through the First Amendment, lawmakers who would shape American discourse began articulating what this freedom could entail, as well as the limits of a secular republic that was initially created out of a need for religious pluralism. Various philosophers and policymakers touted the richness that comes from embracing religious pluralism, with some, like John Locke, stating religious minorities should be tolerated in societies, while others like Thomas Jefferson went a step further and imagined them as full citizens, pointing to different views on whether minorities deserved the same rights as those viewed as part of the hegemonic majority (Jackson, 2018). However, it is important to note that this liberal interpretation of his stance on minority assimilation did not free him from harboring harmful misconceptions about Islam and its practices. Therefore, many argue that he was inspired by the spirit of universal religious tolerance, yet was less tolerant himself (Jackson, 2018).

Appendix C

Although the Founding Fathers rhetorically expounded ideas of Muslim inclusion, the fact remains that in the early inception of the country, few Muslims are recorded to have called America home, most being slaves from West Africa whose identities as slaves trumped all other self-identification (Aghdassi, 2017). Therefore, pointing to their inclusion of Islamic tolerance as a product of their travels and transoceanic contact is likely the cause of such inclusions in language, setting the stage for how Muslims in America would be viewed, directly affecting their rights to immigrate, assimilate, and become naturalized citizens.

Historical Grounding of Birthright Citizenship

Historically, the implication of birthright citizenship has been interpreted broadly, granting citizenship to all children born within the country unless they are children of foreign diplomats or enemy occupiers. Additionally, there is precedent that affirms parental status does not affect a child's birthright citizenship. In 1898, 30 years after the 14th Amendment was ratified to grant citizenship to formerly enslaved people, the U.S. Supreme Court case *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* established that Wong Kim Ark, a Chinese-American born in California, was, in fact, a U.S. citizen. While the order is currently stalled in courts due to immediate lawsuits from state and district courts claiming that it violates principles of the United States Constitution, the administration's haste in introducing this order immediately after inauguration set the stage for an immediate and dramatic overhaul of the nation's stance on immigration.