



July 2020 DACA Memo: What You Need to Know

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What is the July 2020 DACA Memo?

On July 28, 2020, the Acting Secretary of Homeland Security [issued a memo](#) on the DACA program.¹ The memo is in response to the [recent 5-4 decision](#) by the Supreme Court of the United States striking down the Trump Administration's September 2017 attempt to end the DACA program.²

Does this memo end DACA?

No. The July 2020 DACA Memo does not end the DACA program, but it does limit the program.

What limitations does the July 2020 DACA Memo put on the DACA program?

The July 2020 DACA Memo limits three main elements of the DACA program: (1) it limits the work authorization period from two years to one; (2) it does not allow for new individuals to apply for the DACA program; and (3) it ends advance parole for all DACA applicants.

What are the implications of these changes on DACA youth and their families?

These changes will have substantive negative impacts on DACA youth and their families.

First - the limiting of the work authorization period from two years to one will heighten the feelings of anxiety and uncertainty that DACA recipients are already facing. Additionally, it will cost DACA recipients and their families more money to renew as they will have to do so more frequently. Currently, the fee for DACA and work authorization renewal is \$495. This fee will now be required by DACA recipients once a year versus every two years.

Next - the decision to not let new DACA applicants apply limits the ability of the program to help young people brought by their parents to come out of the shadows and fully contribute to our communities, our country and our Church. There are approximately 65,000 new young people who have aged into the DACA program who will not be allowed to apply due to the July 2020 DACA Memo.³

What else is notable about the July 2020 DACA Memo?

While the July 2020 DACA Memo does not cancel the DACA program, it is notable since it signals the Trump Administration's intent to likely cancel the program. In the memo, Acting DHS Secretary Wolf notes that he is reviewing the DACA program in light of the June 18, 2020 Supreme Court decision. The memo outlines initial justification by the Trump Administration for its efforts to end the DACA program a second time in the future.

Why does the Catholic Church care about this issue?

Pope Francis has long spoken of the importance of family, in his address at the 2015 World Meeting of Families he said that, “family life is something worthwhile, and that a society grows stronger and better, it grows in beauty and it grows in truth, when it rises on the foundation of the family.”⁴ As Catholics, we believe that the dignity of every human being, particularly that of youth and families, must be protected. The Catholic Bishops have long supported Dreamers and their families and continue to do so. As Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the USCCB and Bishop Mario Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop of Washington and chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Migration have stated: “The Catholic Church in the United States has long advocated for the Dreamers and we will continue to stand with them. Many were brought to this country as infants and young children and they have grown up in our schools and parishes and now are making important contributions in the Church and in almost every area of American life.”⁵

What can you do to protect Dreamers and DACA?

(1) *Urge your Senators to pass [legislation](#) giving Dreamers immediate protections and longer term permanent protection in the form of a path to citizenship* — [Urge](#) your Senators to support legislative protections for DACA recipients generally, and in the Dream Act and American Dream and Promise Act specifically.

(2) *Pray for Dreamers* — [Pray](#) for Dreamers during this difficult and uncertain time so that they and their families may feel supported as well as feel the support of the Lord. Pray also that our elected leaders exhibit moral leadership and provide a path to citizenship for Dreamers.

(3) *Help stand in solidarity* — Access to trusted legal resources at this time is vital. Share resources from reputable sources such as [CLINIC](#), the Catholic Legal Immigration Network.

Endnotes:

¹ Memo from Acting DHS Secretary Chad Wolf, Reconsideration of the June 15, 2012 Memorandum Entitled “Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children”, (July 28, 2020), https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/20_0728_s1_daca-reconsideration-memo.pdf.

² *Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California*, No. 18-587 (Supreme Court of the United States, June 18, 2020), https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/19pdf/18-587_5ifl.pdf.

³ Sarah Pierce and Jessica Bolter, *Dismantling and Reconstructing the U.S. Immigration System: A Catalog of Changes under the Trump Presidency*, MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE, (July 2020), <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/us-immigration-system-changes-trump-presidency>

⁴ Pope Francis, Prayer Vigil For The Festival of Families (Sept. 26, 2015), *available at*, http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/september/documents/papa-francesco_20150926_usa-festa-famiglie.html.

⁵ Archbishop José Gomez and Bishop Mario Dorsonville, *U.S. Bishops’ President Joins Migration Chairman Urging Trump Administration to Reinstate Full DACA Program; Calls for Congressional Action*, (July 30, 2020), *available at*, <https://www.usccb.org/news/2020/us-bishops-president-joins-migration-chairman-urging-trump-administration-reinstate-full>.