



Temporary Protected Status (TPS): An Overview

Background and Overview

A key principle in U.S. immigration policy is that we will not return migrants to a country where their life or freedom will be threatened. The U.S. can provide safe haven on an individual basis, as asylum or refugee status for those who are fleeing persecution, or to groups of people for humanitarian reasons.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is a form of protection established under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1990 (INA). The Secretary of Homeland Security can provide TPS to citizens of a country for 6 to 18 months at a time if there is serious armed conflict; a natural disaster; or if “extraordinary and temporary conditions” would prevent them from returning home. If at the end of that period conditions have not improved, TPS can be extended

Only people who were already in the U.S. at the time of TPS designation can qualify. **TPS recipients are not on a path to a green card or citizenship.** Instead, TPS is a temporary benefit and TPS holders can obtain work authorization. TPS holders are also able to apply for special permission to travel and return to the U.S. If TPS is denied or ends, individuals can be subject to deportation.

Who is covered by TPS?

The Biden Administration has issued a number of new TPS designations and redesignations (for countries that had been previously designated for TPS). Registration periods for some of these countries has not yet opened or has only recently opened. or for Venezuela, Haiti, Cameroon, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and South Sudan, and Sudan.

The most recent data available from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) indicates that there are **354,625 TPS holders living in the U.S.** as of February 2022. This number, however, doesn't include the **about 575,000 more who are estimated to have only recently become eligible for TPS** and who are expected to apply or are in the process of applying.¹ As of December 2021, more than 300,000 applications for TPS - largely from Haiti and Venezuela - were pending before USCIS. **Massachusetts is home to 13,250 TPS holders**, and this number is expected to grow significantly as individuals from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Haiti residing in the state begin to apply for and receive TPS under the more recent designations. Though state estimates are not available for all countries, as many as **14,500 people in Massachusetts could gain TPS** protection under the more recent designations.

To learn more about the Ukraine and Afghanistan arrivals to Massachusetts and immigration paths available to them, you can read our [Ukraine](#) and [Afghanistan](#) fact sheets.

How are TPS holders contributing to our communities?

Most TPS holders are not recent arrivals to this country. Many have children born in the U.S. who are now in high school or college and have little, if any, connection to their parents' country of origin. Salvadoran TPS holders have lived in the US for over 22 years and Haitian TPS holders an average of 17 years.² They also contribute greatly to the Massachusetts economy, with 5,600 TPS holders employed as essential workers in healthcare, the food industry, transportation, and critical services.³ By one estimate, TPS holders in Massachusetts hold well over \$200 million in spending power.⁴ Without TPS holders from Haiti and Central America, the state economy would lose an estimated \$646 million per year.⁵

What do we do now?

MIRA strongly supports the continuation of the TPS program as a moral and humanitarian imperative. The U.S. has a proud tradition of providing safe harbor to people fleeing dangerous conditions, and TPS is an important mechanism to do this. **We call on the Biden administration to extend TPS to Guatemalans, and to redesignate Honduras, El Salvador and Haiti for TPS so those who entered the US after the last designation may also be eligible for protection.**

At the same time, we support legislation to enable TPS holders, especially if they have lived in the U.S. for many years, to apply for permanent residency. Thus, in the 117th Congress, we strongly support the Dream and Promise Act, which would protect both Dreamers and TPS holders and provide them with pathways to citizenship, as well as other proposals which would provide a path to permanent status and citizenship.⁶ **We need to keep urging Congress to permanently protect TPS holders.**

TPS holders & potential beneficiaries in the US and Massachusetts

Country (most recent designations in bold)	Required arrival in the US date	Current expiration date	Total TPS holders (or estimated eligible for TPS) in the U.S. ⁷	Total individuals with TPS (or estimated eligible for TPS) in Massachusetts ⁸
Afghanistan	March 15, 2022	September 2023 (exact date not yet announced)	(74,500 eligible) ⁹	(2,000 eligible) ¹⁰
Burma	March 11, 2021	November 25, 2022	380 (1,600 eligible)	unknown
Cameroon	April 14, 2022	October 2023 (exact date not yet announced)	(40,000 eligible) ¹¹	(1,100 eligible) ¹²
El Salvador	February 13, 2001	December 31, 2022*	193,940	10,397
Haiti	July 29, 2021	February 3, 2023	42,275 (155,000 eligible) ¹³	4,561 (6,000-10,000 eligible) ¹⁴
Honduras	December 30, 1998	December 31, 2022*	58,625	1,300
Nepal	June 24, 2015	December 31, 2022*	9,355	776
Nicaragua	December 30, 1998	December 31, 2022*	3,130	30
Somalia	September 16, 1991	March 17, 2023	370	17
South Sudan	March 1, 2022	November 3, 2023	75	0
Sudan	March 1, 2022	October 19, 2023	535 (6,900 eligible) ¹⁵	12
Syria	March 19, 2012	September 30, 2022	3,910	309
Ukraine	April 11, 2022	October 19, 2023	(59,600 eligible)	(1,000+ eligible) ¹⁶
Venezuela	March 9, 2021	September 9, 2022	40,400 (323,000 eligible)	(400 eligible) ¹⁷
Yemen	September 3, 2015	March 3, 2023	1,335	18

* Termination of TPS for these countries had been announced but TPS has been extended as a result of ongoing court litigation (Ramos, et al v. Nielsen, et al). See www.uscis.gov/tps for more information.

References

1. This number includes the estimated eligible population appearing in parenthesis in the chart in this fact sheet for Afghanistan, Burma, Cameroon, Haiti, Sudan, Ukraine and Venezuela, subtracting the number of current TPS beneficiaries from those countries.
2. Center for American Progress. Svajlenka, N. (2019). What We Know About Immigrants with Temporary Protected Status. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2019/02/11/466081/know-immigrants-temporary-protected-status/>
3. Center for American Progress. Svajlenka, N. & Jawetz, T. (2020). A Demographic Profile of TPS Holders Providing Essential Services During the Coronavirus Crisis. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2020/04/14/483167/demographic-profile-tps-holders-providing-essential-services-coronavirus-crisis/>
4. New American Economy. (2019). Immigrants and the Economy in Massachusetts. <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/massachusetts/>
5. CAP Immigration Team. (2017). TPS Holders in Massachusetts. https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2017/10/19130146/101717_TPSFactsheet-MA.pdf
6. National Immigration Forum. (2021). Bill Summary: American Dream and Promise Act. <https://immigrationforum.org/article/bill-summary-american-dream-and-promise-act-of-2021/>
7. Data on current TPS holders in the US is drawn from: Congressional Research Service, (updated April 19, 2022) Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesecc/RS20844.pdf>. For more recent designations, where the current TPS holder data does not reflect the population of eligible individuals, an estimate of the eligible population has been provided in parenthesis with separate citations.
8. Data on current TPS holders in Massachusetts is from 2018 and is drawn from: USCIS, Total number of current I-821 Temporary Protected Status (TPS) individuals (November 2018), available at https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/Total_number_of_current_I-821_Temporary_Protected_Status_TPS_individuals_as_of_November_29_2018.xlsx
9. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11903>
10. Based on current population of Afghan humanitarian parolees in the state.
11. <https://rollcall.com/2022/04/18/biden-administration-offers-protection-to-cameroonians/>
12. <https://cmsny.org/tps-cameroon-sudan/>
13. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/08/03/2021-16481/designation-of-haiti-for-temporary-protected-status>
14. Estimates from advocates in Massachusetts based on state's share of TPS holders under prior administration and the national estimate provided by DHS.
15. <https://cmsny.org/tps-cameroon-sudan/>
16. <https://cmsny.org/tps-ukraine-022522/> estimating 800 undocumented Ukrainians living in MA in 2019, plus 200+ recent arrivals with humanitarian parole
17. <https://cmsny.org/tps-venezuela-2021/>