



Temporary Protected Status (TPS): An Overview

December 2022

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 re-designations (for countries that had been previously designated for TPS). Registration periods for some of these countries have opened recently, and so data about how many people will be covered is not yet available.

The most recent data available from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) indicates that there are **535,075 TPS holders living in the U.S.** as of November 2022, an increase of nearly 200,000 people from February 2022. This number, however, doesn't include the **thousands more who have only recently become eligible for TPS** and who are expected to apply or are in the process of applying. As of the end of June 2022, there were more than 250,000 TPS applications pending before USCIS, and this number is sure to increase in light of more recent TPS designations. **Massachusetts is home to 17,135 TPS holders**, and this number is expected to grow significantly as individuals from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Haiti residing in the state continue to receive TPS under the more recent designations. Though state estimates are not available for all countries, several thousands more people 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.

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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 under the 2011 designation have an average of 17 years in the US. 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 during the pandemic. By one estimate, TPS holders in Massachusetts hold well over \$200 million in spending power. Without TPS holders from Haiti and Central America, the state economy would lose an estimated \$646 million per year.

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. The administration has taken important steps in making additional designations for TPS as well as announcing redesignations to extend protections to more recent arrivals. **We call on the Biden administration to extend TPS to Guatemalans, and to redesignate Honduras and El Salvador for TPS so those who entered the US after the last designation made more than 20 years ago 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 118th Congress, we will strongly support legislation that would protect and offer a path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants, including Dreamers and TPS holders. **We need to keep urging Congress to permanently protect TPS holders.**

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- <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS20844/67>
 - https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/I821_RADP_FY22_Q3.pdf
 - 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/>
 - 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/>
 - New American Economy. (2019). Immigrants and the Economy in Massachusetts. <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/massachusetts/>
 - CAP Immigration Team. (2017). TPS Holders in Massachusetts. https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2017/10/19130146/101717_TPSFact-sheet-MA.pdf
 - National Immigration Forum. (2021). Bill Summary: American Dream and Promise Act. <https://immigrationforum.org/article/bill-summary-american-dream-and-promise-act-of-2021/>
 - Data on current TPS holders in the US is drawn from: Congressional Research Service, (updated November 28, 2022) Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS20844/67> and from USCIS fiscal year data available at www.uscis.gov/data. 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.
 - 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
 - <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN11903>
 - Based on current population of Afghan humanitarian parolees in the state.
 - <https://rollcall.com/2022/04/18/biden-administration-offers-protection-to-cameroonians/>
 - <https://cmsny.org/tps-cameroon-sudan/>
 - <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/08/03/2021-16481/designation-of-haiti-for-temporary-protected-status>
 - Estimates from advocates in Massachusetts based on state's share of TPS holders under prior administration and the national estimate provided by DHS.
 - <https://cmsny.org/tps-cameroon-sudan/>
 - <https://cmsny.org/tps-ukraine-022522/estimating-800-undocumented-Ukrainians-living-in-MA-in-2019-plus-200-recent-arrivals-with-humanitarian-parole>
 - <https://cmsny.org/tps-venezuela-2021/>

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TPS holders & potential beneficiaries in the US and Massachusetts

**As of December 2022*

Country	Required arrival in the US date (under most recent designation)	Current expiration date	Total TPS holders (or estimated eligible for TPS) in the U.S.	Total individuals with TPS (or estimated eligible for TPS) in Massachusetts
Afghanistan	March 15, 2022	November 20, 2023	25 (74,500 eligible) ¹⁰	(2,000 eligible) ¹¹
Burma	September 25, 2022	May 25, 2024	1,195 (1,600 eligible)	unknown
Cameroon	April 14, 2022	December 7, 2023	645 (40,000 eligible) ¹²	(1,100 eligible) ¹³
El Salvador	February 13, 2001	June 30, 2024*	193,865	10,397
Ethiopia	October 20, 2022	June 12, 2024	(26,730 eligible)	unknown
Haiti	November 6, 2022	August 3, 2024	87,060 (more than 155,000 eligible)	4,561 (10,000 eligible) ¹⁵
Honduras	December 30, 1998	June 30, 2024*	57,605	1,300
Nepal	June 24, 2015	June 30, 2024*	8,545	776
Nicaragua	December 30, 1998	June 30, 2024*	3,085	30
Somalia	July 19, 2021	March 17, 2023	370	17
South Sudan	March 1, 2022	November 3, 2023	80	0
Sudan	March 1, 2022	October 19, 2023	570 (6,900 eligible) ¹⁶	12
Syria	September 30, 2022	September 30, 2022	4,025	309
Ukraine	October 19, 2023	October 19, 2023	9,520 (59,600 eligible)	(1,000+ eligible) ¹⁷
Venezuela	March 10, 2024	March 10, 2024	171,550 (323,000 est)	(400 eligible) ¹⁸
Yemen	March 3, 2023	March 3, 2023	1,510	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.*

This fact sheet was updated in December 2022.