

Facts about DACA

What is DACA?

DACA is a federal government program created in 2012 under Barack Obama to allow people brought to the US illegally as children the temporary right to live, study and work in America. Those applying are vetted for any criminal history or threat to national security and must be students or have completed school or military service. If they pass vetting, action to deport them is deferred for two years, with a chance to renew, and they become eligible for basics like a driving license, college enrollment or a work permit.

Who are the Dreamers?

Those protected under DACA are known as “Dreamers” – by the time Trump announced his decision to rescind the program, 787,580 had been granted approval. To apply, they must have been younger than 31 on 15 June 2012, when the program began, and “undocumented”, lacking legal immigration status. They must have arrived in the US before turning 16 and lived there continuously since June 2007. Most Dreamers are from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras and the largest numbers live in California, Texas, Florida and New York. They range in age from 15 to 36, according to the White House.

President Trump Decision

The administration announced last week that it would begin “an orderly, lawful wind down” of DACA, including “the cancellation of the memo that authorized this program”, which was sent from homeland security secretary Janet Napolitano to immigration chiefs in 2012, telling them not to enforce deportation of Dreamers. Trump gave Congress six months to come up with a legislative solution. Because Obama created the DACA program as an executive policy decision, Trump had the power simply to reverse the policy. He indicated that the government will “generally not take actions” to remove law-abiding DACA recipients.

What will happen to the Dreamers?

Under the Trump administration, new applications under DACA will no longer be accepted. For those currently in the program, their legal status and other DACA-related permits (such as to work and attend college) will begin expiring in March 2018 – unless Congress passes legislation allowing a new channel for temporary

or permanent legal immigration status – and Dreamers will all lose their status by March 2020.

Technically, as their statuses lapse they could be deported and sent back to countries many have no familiarity with. It is still unclear whether this would happen. Fear had been rising in the run-up to last week's announcement. Those with work permits expiring between 5 September 2017 and 5 March 2018 will be allowed to apply for renewal by 5 October.

Quick FACTS about DACA recipients

- Removing 800,000 people from the workforce will cost \$433.4 billion in GDP loss over a decade.
- Dreamers who receive DACA received a 45 percent on-average wage increase; in fact, 87 percent of recipients are currently working.
- DACA recipients pay taxes
- Undocumented immigrants cannot receive public benefits
- Only know the United States as home