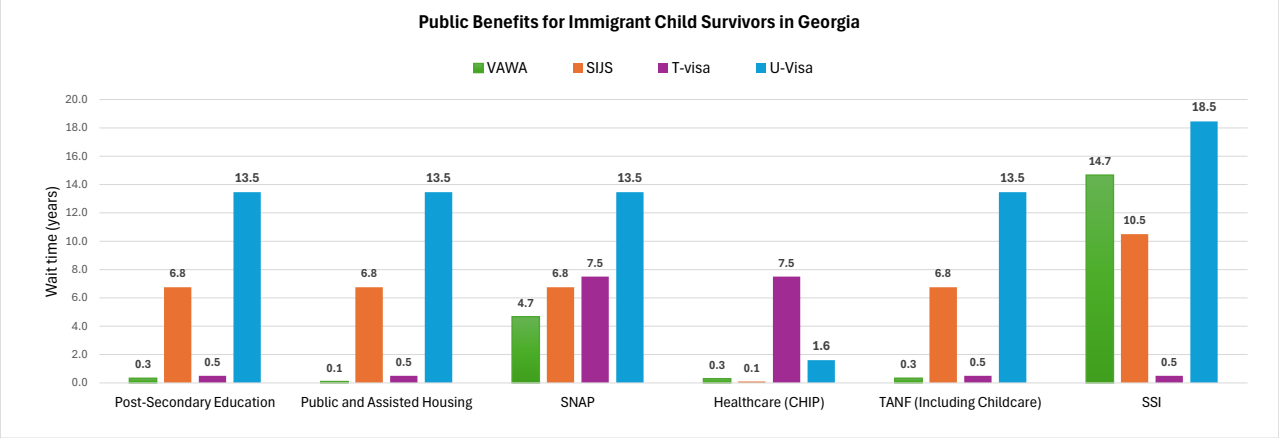
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SJI State Justice Institute

American University Washington College of Law

Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivor Children in Georgia						
By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)						
	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Conditions Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.3	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants** to qualify for federal scholarships and financial aid. In Georgia, **qualified immigrants** are eligible for in-state tuition to the same extent as U.S. citizens.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWAs eligible upon filing, T visas, U visas and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	4.7	6.8	7.5	13.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents.** Must also be under 18 , disabled, elderly who was lawfully residing in the U.S. on 8/22/96, have been a qualified immigrant for 5 years or a lawful permanent resident with 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit measured from the date they receive work authorization. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visa victims are exempt from the 5 year bar and 40 quarter requirement. SIJS (age 18+) and U visa victims who work become eligible 10 years after receiving work authorization and those who do not have 40 quarters of work credit when they become lawful permanent residents would need to wait to complete the 5 year bar. SIJS or U child who can use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less.
Healthcare (CHIP)	0.3	0.1	7.5	1.6	State	In Georgia, full-scope medical assistance, prenatal care, and 12 months postpartum care are available for **lawfully present** children up to age 19 and pregnant children.
TANF (Including Childcare)	0.3	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar). Georgia, provides state-funded TANF to **qualified immigrants** during the federal 5-year bar.
SSI	14.7	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	Federal laws apply no state funded SSI.
						0.1 = immediately eligible at filing



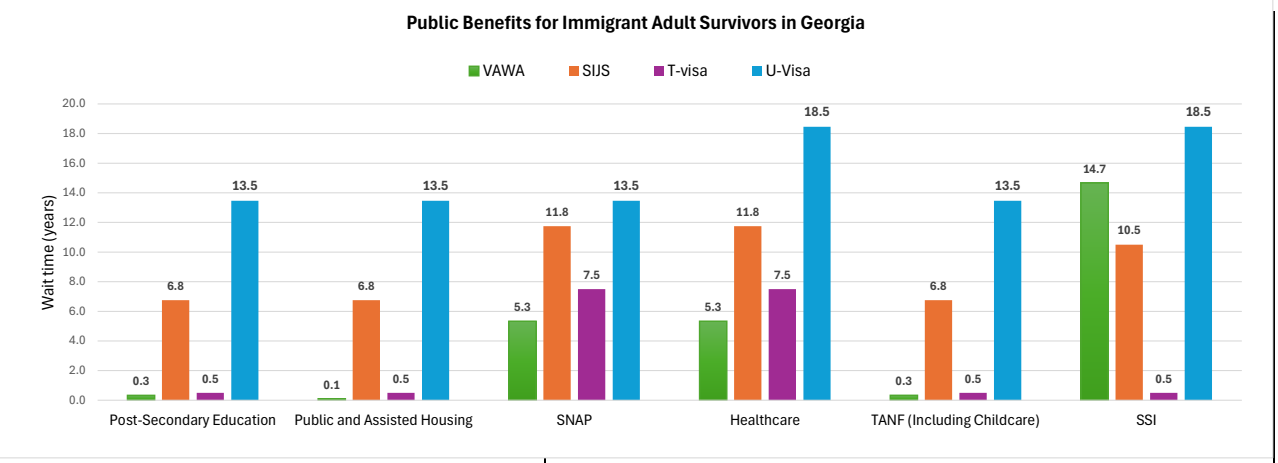
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Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivor Adults in Georgia						
By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)						
	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Conditions Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.3	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants** to qualify for federal scholarships and financial aid. In Georgia, **qualified immigrants** are eligible for in-state tuition to the same extent as U.S. citizens.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWAs eligible upon filing, T visas, U visas and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	5.3	11.8	7.5	13.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents.** Must also be under 18 , disabled, elderly who was lawfully residing in the U.S. on 8/22/96, have been a qualified immigrant for 5 years or a lawful permanent resident with 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit measured from the date they receive work authorization. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visa victims are exempt from the 5 year bar and 40 quarter requirement. SIJS adults and U visa victims who work become eligible 10 years after receiving work authorization and those who do not have 40 quarters of work credit when they become lawful permanent residents would need to wait to complete the 5 year bar. SIJS or U child who can use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less.
Healthcare	5.3	11.8	7.5	18.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar). In Georgia, full-scope medical assistance, prenatal care, and 12 months postpartum care available for **lawfully present pregnant individuals**.
TANF (Including Childcare)	0.3	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar). Georgia, provides state-funded TANF to **qualified immigrants** during the federal 5-year bar.
SSI	14.7	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	Federal laws apply no state funded SSI.
						0.1 = immediately eligible at filing



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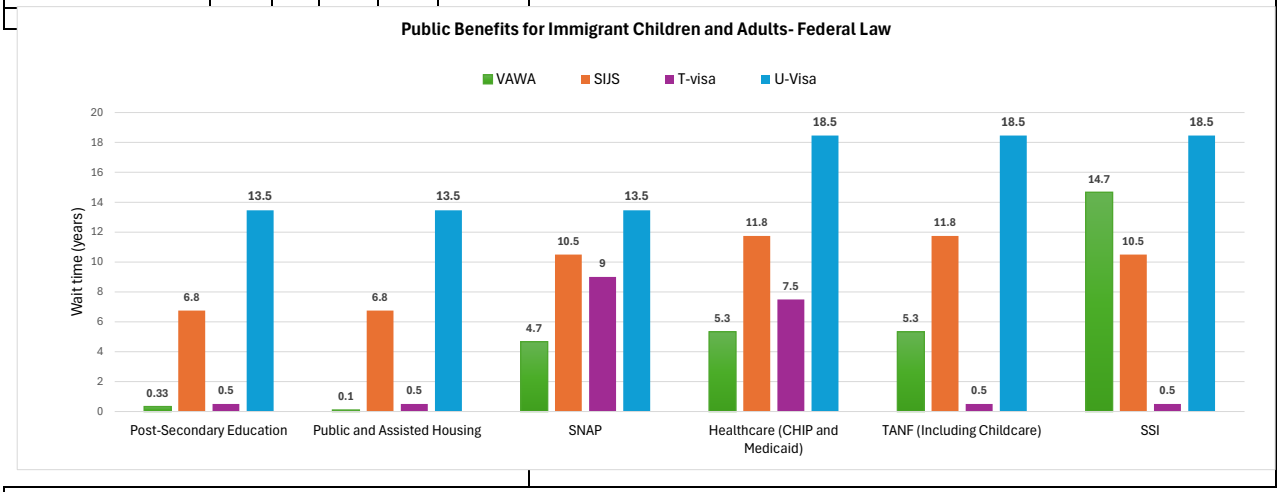
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American University Washington College of Law

Federal Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivors

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)

	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.33	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants**.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWA self-petition eligible upon filing; T visa, U visa and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	4.7	10.5	9	13.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents**. Must also be under 18 , disabled, elderly who was lawfully residing in the U.S. on 8/22/96, have been a qualified immigrant for 5 years or a lawful permanent resident with 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit measured from the date they receive work authorization. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. **T visa** victims are exempt from the 5 year bar and 40 quarter requirement. **SIJS and U visa** victims who work become eligible 10 years after receiving work authorization and those who do not have 40 quarters of work credit when they become lawful permanent residents would need to wait to complete the 5 year bar. SIJS or U child who can use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less.
Healthcare (CHIP and Medicaid)	5.3	11.8	7.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be lawful permanent residents**. If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar and VAWA self-petitioners complete the bar 5-years after receiving prima facie determinations).
TANF (Including Childcare)	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered the U.S. before 8/22/96 subtract 5 years. (T visa exempt from 5-year bar)
SSI	14.7	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be a lawful permanent resident and have 40 quarters (5-10 years) of work credit, and subject to 5 year bar if arrived after 8/22/96**. The 5 year bar and 40 quarters can be earned simultaneously. T visas exempt from 40 quarter and 5 year bar and are eligible for 7 years after becoming a qualified immigrant. Children can use credit from themselves and their parents that was earned when the child was under the age of 18. When children can use a combination of their own work credit and their parents' work credit, this could result in a reduction in wait time of up to 5 years. U visa victims are eligibe 5 years after lawful permanent residence if they earned 40 quarters work credit. VAWAs will have 40 quarters of work credit 10 years after attaining work authorization. Since VAWA spouses of citizens receive work authorization 3.7 years earlier than VAWA spouses of lawful permanent residents, they will be eligible for SSI 3.7 years faster.



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VAWA - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Georgia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years citizen spouse/parent/ stepparent	Total years LPR spouse/parent/ stepparent	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category		
Filing VAWA Self-petition	0						VAWA self-petitioners who are abused by citizens can file their green card applications at the same time as they file their self-petitions.	PRUCOL		
Prima Facie Determination	3 to 4	Months		0.33	0.3	0.3	VAWA self-petitioners abused by citizens who file green card applications together with their VAWA self-petition receive **work authorization i**n a similar time frame.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
VAWA Self- Petition Approval	48.5	Months		4.04	4.0	4.0	All VAWA self-petitioners receive **deferred action** a formal protection against deportation.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Apply for Green Card	0			0.00	4.0	4.0	VAWA self-petitioners who are abused by lawful permanent residents receive **work authroization** and are eligible to file green card applications once their self-petition is approved.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Green Card Approval	#######	Months		1.25	**4.0**	**5.3**	Lawful Permanent Residence	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant	average	4.7
Apply for Naturalization	3	Years		3	7.0	8.3		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Naturalization approval	11.5	Months		0.96	**8.0**	**9.3**	Naturalized Citizen	Citizen		
Naturalization (N-400)	Months									
Atlanta, GA	11.5									
Green Card (I-485)	Months									
Atlanta, GA	15									

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SIJS - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Georgia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category
Judicial Findings						Must obtain judicial findings before the child turns the age of majority in the state.	None
Filing for SIJS	0				0.1	Must file before child turns age 21.	Lawfully Present
SIJS Adjudication - Approval	6	Months		0.50	0.5		Lawfully Present
Apply for Green Card	40	Months		3.33	3.8	The SIJS applicant's priority date is date USCIS accepts the SIJS application for processing.	Lawfully Present
Green Card Approval	35	Months		2.92	**6.8**	When SIJS applicants are granted lawful permanent residence they are **work authorized** and receive protection from deportation.	Qualified Immigrant
Apply for Naturalization	5	Years		5.00	11.8		Qualified Immigrant
Naturalization approval	11.5	Months		0.96	**12.7**	Naturalized Citizen	Citizen
Naturalization (N-400)	Months						
Atlanta, GA	11.5						
Green Card (I-485)	Months		*SIJS is employment based				
SCOPS	35						

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T Visa - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Georgia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years if trafficking case is completed when victim is granted a T visa	Total years if case not completed	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category		
T visa Declarations							Best practice (not required).	None		
Filing for T visa	0			0.00				PRUCOL		
Bona Fide Determination	6	Months		0.50	0.5	0.5	Includes **deferred action** a formal protection against deportation and **work authorization.**	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
T Visa Adjudication - Approval	29.5	Months		2.5	2.5	2.5		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Apply for Green Card	3	Years		3.00	0.0	5.5	Either three years or when trafficking investigation complete whichever is sooner.	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Green Card Approval	42.5	Months		3.54	**6.0**	**9.0**		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant	average	7.5
Apply for Naturalization	5	Years		5.00	11.0	14.0		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Naturalization approval	11.50	Months		0.96	**12.0**	**15.0**		Citizen		
Naturalization (N-400)	Months									
Atlanta, GA	11.5									

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U Visa - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Georgia

By Sarah Register, Juliana Nascimento and Leslye E. Orloff (November 18, 2026)

				Year calculation	Total years	Notes	Benefits Eligibility Category
U Visa Certification						Obtaining a certification from a government official is a required prerequisite to filing for a U visa.	None
Filing for U visa	0	Months		0.00	0.0	Certification is valid for 6 months. Must file within 6 months of the certification date or must obtain a new certification.	PRUCOL
Bona Fide Determination	19	Months		1.6	1.6	Includes **deferred action** a formal protection against deportation and **work authorization.**	Lawfully Present
U Visa Adjudication - Approval	8.5	Years		8.5	8.5	As of October 2025 they began issuing U visa approvals for cases filed in early 2017.	Lawfully Present
Apply for Green Card	3	Years		3.00	11.5	Eligible to apply three years after receiving a U visa.	Lawfully Present
Green Card Approval	23.5	Months		1.96	**13.5**		Qualified Immigrant
Apply for Naturalization	5	Years		5.00	18.5		Qualified Immigrant
Naturalization approval	11.5	Months		0.96	**19.4**		Citizen
Naturalization (N-400)	Months						
Atlanta, GA	11.5						

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