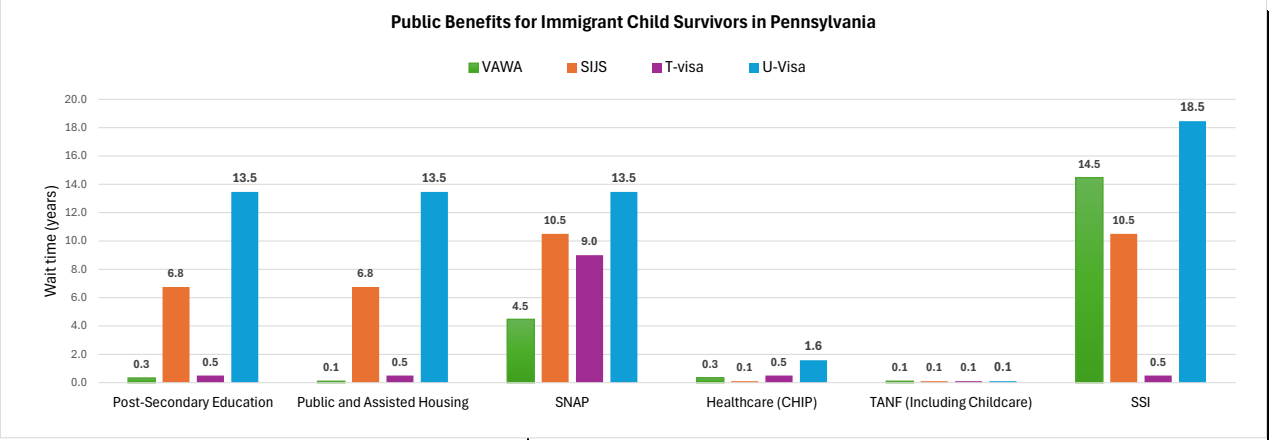
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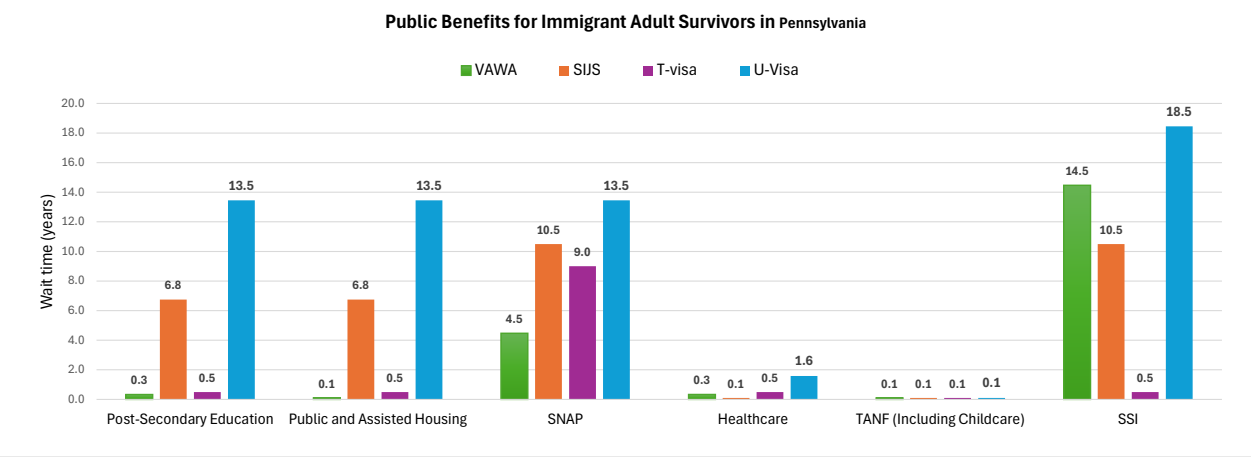
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Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivor Children in Pennsylvania						
By Sarah Register and Leslye E. Orloff (May 18, 2026)						
	VAWA	SIJS	T-visa	U-Visa	Governing Law	Conditions Notes
Post-Secondary Education	0.3	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal/State	**Must be qualified immigrants.** Pennsylvania State University extends in-state tuition to students in the state who meet the university's residence requirements without regard to immigration status.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWAs eligibe upon filing, T visas, U visas and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	4.5	10.5	9.0	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)	0.3	0.1	0.5	1.6	State	In Pennsylvania **lawfully present children and pregnant persons** are eligilbe for state funded CHIP up to age 21.
TANF (Including Childcare)	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	State	In Pennsylvania **qualified immigrants and Persons Residing Under Color of Law (PRUCOL)** who have applied for immigration relief are eligible for state-funded TANF.
SSI	14.5	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 Pennsylvania						
By Sarah Register and Leslye E. Orloff (May 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.** Pennsylvania State University extends in-state tuition to students in the state who meet the university's residence requirements without regard to immigration status.
Public and Assisted Housing	0.1	6.8	0.5	13.5	Federal	VAWAs eligibe upon filing, T visas, U visas and SIJS **must be qualified immigrants.**
SNAP	4.5	10.5	9.0	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	0.3	0.1	0.5	1.6	State	In Pennsylvania **lawfully present immigrants and pregnant persons** are eligible for state funded medical assistance.
TANF (Including Childcare)	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	State	In Pennsylvania **qualified immigrants and Persons Residing Under Color of Law (PRUCOL)** who have applied for immigration relief are eligible for state-funded TANF.
SSI	14.5	10.5	0.5	18.5	Federal	Federal laws apply no state funded SSI.
						0.1 = immediately eligible at filing



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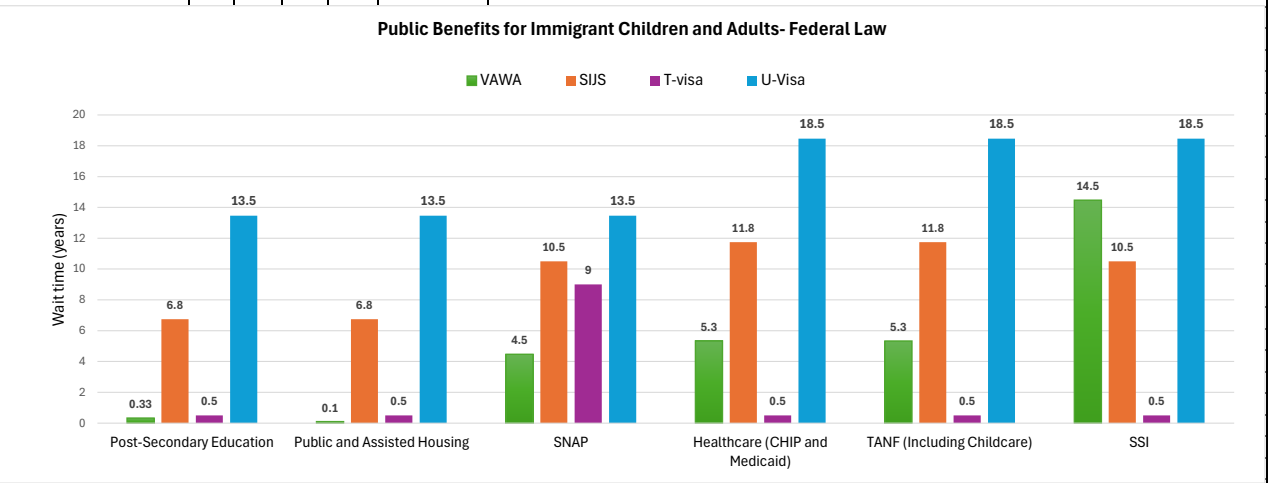
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American University Washington College of Law

Federal Public Benefits for Immigrant Survivors

By Sarah Register and Leslye E. Orloff (May 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	4.5	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	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 bar)
TANF (Including Childcare)	5.3	11.8	0.5	18.5	Federal	**Must be qualified immigrants.** If entered before 8/22/96 have a 5 year bar. (T visa exempt from bar)
SSI	14.5	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 themsleves and that their parents earned when they were under the age of 18. Children who use the work credit for themselves and a parent, could be up to 5 years less. U visa victims eligibe 5 years after lawful permanent residence if have earned 40 quarters work credit. VAWAs calculated as 10 years after attaining work authorization. Spouses of citizens will be eligible 3.4 years faster.



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VAWA - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Pennsylvania

By Sarah Register, Suzana Coelho and Leslye E. Orloff (May 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	10.25	Months		0.85	**4.0**	**4.9**	Lawful Permanent Residence	Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant	average	4.5
Apply for Naturalization	3	Years		3	7.0	7.9		Lawfully Present and Qualified Immigrant		
Naturalization approval	8.50	Months	average	0.71	**7.8**	**8.6**	Naturalized Citizen	Citizen		
Naturalization (N-400)	months									
Philadelphia, PA	8									
Pittsburgh, PA	9									
Green Card (I-485)	months									
Philadelphia, PA	10.5									
Pittsburgh, PA	10									

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SIJS - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Pennsylvania

By Sarah Register, Suzana Coelho and Leslye E. Orloff (May 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	35.00	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	8.50	Months	average	0.71	**12.5**	Naturalized Citizen	Citizen
Naturalization (N-400)	months						
Philadelphia, PA	8						
Pittsburgh, PA	9						
Green Card (I-485)	months		*SIJS is employment based				
SCOPS	35						

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T Visa - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Pennsylvania

By Sarah Register, Suzana Coelho and Leslye E. Orloff (May 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	8.50	Months	average	0.71	**11.7**	**14.7**		Citizen		
Naturalization (N-400)	months									
Philadelphia, PA	8									
Pittsburgh, PA	9									

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U Visa - Immigration and Public Benefits Timeline Calculations - Pennsylvania

By Sarah Register, Suzana Coelho and Leslye E. Orloff (May 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	8.50	Months	average	0.71	**19.2**		Citizen
Naturalization (N-400)	months						
Philadelphia, PA	8						
Pittsburgh, PA	9						

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