

What Does TPS Mean for Haitian Nationals in the U.S.?

On January 15, 2010, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, announced that Haitian nationals who were in the United States as of January 12, 2010, would receive Temporary Protected Status (TPS). This designation is part of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) ongoing efforts to assist Haiti in the wake of its devastating earthquake. Authorities believe as many as 70,000 Haitians in South Florida and 200,000 nationwide could apply for TPS.

Individuals who apply for and receive TPS cannot be removed from the United States, cannot be detained by DHS for immigration violations, and may work and travel with proper authorization. This status should improve the financial stability of Haitian nationals living in the United States and help them meet the needs of their families in Haiti.

This fact sheet is intended to provide general information regarding the TPS designation. Access to U.S.-issued identification documentation stands to support Haitians in the United States with greater access to mainstream banking and other financial services.

What are the benefits of having TPS?

Foreign nationals who are granted TPS will receive the following benefits:

- protection from being deported or removed from the United States,
- authorization to work and the ability to obtain a work permit,
- the opportunity to obtain a Social Security number,
- the opportunity to apply for a driver's license, and
- permission to travel outside the United States if advance permission is received from the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS).

How could TPS improve financial stability for Haitian nationals in the United States?

Haitian nationals with TPS will be able to integrate financially into the U.S. economy. These individuals' eligibility to apply for U.S. and state identification should improve access to mainstream banking. Financial education, credit counseling, asset-building initiatives, and small business development programs can provide additional assistance to Haitian nationals living in the United States.

What is the TPS application process?

TPS applicants must prove they were born in Haiti (a birth certificate or passport is a valid document) and that they were in the United States before January 12, 2010. Applicants must also pass a criminal background check and pay application fees.

Haitians in the United States who are eligible to apply for TPS should go to www.uscis.gov or call CIS toll-free at (800) 375-5283. A TPS fact sheet is available on the CIS Web site.



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Several nonprofit and community-based organizations, particularly in Miami, are providing TPS-related assistance to Haitian nationals. These organizations are helping people decide whether they should apply for TPS. They also assist with completing the TPS application and the documentation and fee requirements of the TPS application process. Following is a partial list of organizations providing TPS assistance and information.

Catholic Charities Legal Services

150 S.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 200, Miami, FL 33131

Phone: (305) 373-1073

Fax (305) 373-1173

City of Miami

Edison/Little River Neighborhood Center

150 N.W. 79 Street, Miami 33150

Phone: (305) 795-1552

Haitian Lawyers Association

470 N.E. 13th Street, Suite 102, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

Richard Champagne, president

Phone: (305) 731-2007, ext. 104

Haitian Women of Miami (FANM)

181 N.E. 82 Street, Miami, FL 33138

305-756-8050

<http://fanm.org/contents/index.php>

Homestead's Minor League Club House

1601 S.E. 28th Avenue, Homestead, FL 33035

Phone: (305) 257-6917

Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center

5000 Northeast Biscayne Blvd., Miami, FL 33137-3218

(305) 573-4871

www.santla.org

What if language barriers exist?

Creole speakers who need translation assistance may contact one of the following organizations:

American Red Cross: <http://www.miamiredcross.org>

Catholic Charities Legal Services: (305)-373-1073

Florida International University Law Center: <http://news.fiu.edu.hopeforhaiti>; (305) 348-2232

Homestead Call Center: (305)-224-4454

Switchboard of Miami: 305-358-1640

Translators Without Borders: <http://tsf.eurotexte.fr>