

New Bulletin Explains Law on Immigrants' Eligibility for Benefits

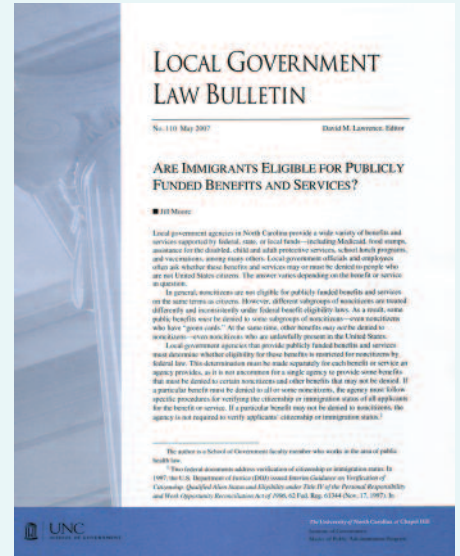
May local government agencies in North Carolina provide benefits or services to immigrants? How does the status of an immigrant affect which services may be provided? School of Government faculty member Jill Moore addresses these questions in a May 2007 Local Government Law Bulletin *Are Immigrants Eligible for Publicly Funded Benefits and Services?*

Federal, state, or local funds support a wide variety of services: Medicaid, food stamps, assistance for the disabled, child and adult protective services, school lunch programs, and vaccinations, among many others. North Carolina state and local government officials often question whether noncitizens—or certain subgroups of noncitizens, such as undocumented immigrants—are eligible to receive

publicly funded benefits or services. There is no across-the-board answer. Instead, each benefit must be considered separately.

This is not an easy task for North Carolina governments. The federal laws governing immigrants' eligibility for benefits are extremely complicated. In general, noncitizens are not eligible for publicly funded benefits and services on the same terms as citizens. However, different subgroups of noncitizens are treated differently and inconsistently under the federal laws. As a result, some public benefits *must* be denied to some subgroups of immigrants, even those who have green cards. At the same time, other benefits *may not* be denied to immigrants, even those who are undocumented.

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The bulletin describes immigrant benefit eligibility under federal laws and includes detailed information about which categories of immigrants are eligible for some of the major public benefits, such as food stamps and Medicaid.

Center Helps Organize National Conference on Paying for Water

The School of Government's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) helped organize and lead sessions at a national conference, "Paying for Sustainable Water Infrastructure," held in Atlanta on March 21–23.

More than 650 participants discussed integrative strategies to lower water system costs and increase investment in infrastructure. Sessions were organized into four tracks:

- Sustainable Water Infrastructure
- Federal Roles in Water Infrastructure Innovation
- State and Local Innovations
- International Innovations in Finance, Technologies, and Management

EFC Director Jeff Hughes led the State and Local Innovations track, and

EFC Outreach Coordinator Stacey Isaac Berahzer managed sponsorships and helped organize the exhibits. Other EFC staff presented posters on innovations in the Southeast.

The EFC serves North Carolina and seven other southeastern states through

partial funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The conference website, www.payingforwater.com, has complete information on the sessions and the presentations. For more information about the EFC, visit www.efc.unc.edu/.



Project Assists Government and Jail Personnel with Jail Health Law

In 2006, in partnership with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, the School of Government established the Jail Health Law Project. The project assists North Carolina county government and jail personnel as they deal with legal issues related to health care for people awaiting trial and people serving their sentences in jails.

The project was instituted in response to the growing number and variety of legal issues related to the government's duty to provide appropriate health care to inmates and detainees. Local governments have an obligation under state and federal law to provide adequate health care to people in custody. The project helps local jails meet the standards of

care. It offers education and training on legal health care issues to jail administrators, sheriffs, health care providers, and other local officials. It also develops written materials on jail health policies and procedures, and offers individual consultation on specific issues that may arise. The project is developing a website and a listserv to facilitate communication and share information.

An advisory committee guides the work of the project. Committee members have both experience in dealing with health care issues in the jail setting and specific professional perspectives on the issues. Sheriffs, jail administrators, attorneys, trainers, and health care providers are represented.

Day-to-day operations for the project are the responsibility of attorney Jodi Harrison, who hit the ground running when she joined the School of Government in July 2006. "I've presented at four statewide conferences so far, as well as a number of local association meetings," she says. "I've also answered more than one hundred calls asking for assistance with legal issues. I'm working closely with the advisory committee to develop and deliver materials to help jails deal with this expanding area of law."

For more information on the Jail Health Law Project or for assistance in this area, contact Harrison at 919.962.0103 or jharrison@sog.edu.

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Managing Conflict: Strategies for Elected Officials

SEPTEMBER 19, 2007
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT, CHAPEL HILL

Elected officials frequently deal with sensitive, sometimes contentious, issues at board meetings and in other public and private settings. Knowing how to successfully manage these conflicts is critical to achieving shared goals for a group or community.

Participants in this course will explore how personality types affect conflict development and resolution, and they will learn how to apply principles of interest-based negotiation to create win-win solutions.

For more information, contact Jeanna Wood at jhwood@sog.unc.edu or 919.962.9754.

Essentials of Municipal Government

JANUARY 8-10, 2008 • CHARLOTTE
JANUARY 23-25, 2008 • WILMINGTON
FEBRUARY 5-7, 2008 • GREENVILLE
FEBRUARY 19-21, 2008 • HIGH POINT
MARCH 5-7, 2008 • ASHEVILLE
MARCH 26-28, 2008 • KITTY HAWK

The Essentials of Municipal Government course is an introduction to North Carolina municipal government for new or veteran, elected or appointed officials. Participants will interact with a variety of presenters and each other to learn more about and discuss the challenges cities face and how public officials can develop an agenda to tackle these challenges.

Topics include the following: making the transition from campaigning to governing; carrying out the public responsibilities of a council member; and understanding key elements of municipal law, finance, and administration.

For more information, contact Monica Glover at glover@sog.unc.edu or 919.843.6518.



Visit www.sog.unc.edu to learn more about the School of Government's courses, publications, programs, and services.

