

ADVANCE PAROLE: WEIGHING THE BENEFITS AND RISKS

Choosing to apply for and travel with Advance Parole is a big decision. It's important to learn as much as you can about the process and consider all the advantages and drawbacks, in order to choose the path that's right for you. Some people have successfully traveled with Advance Parole without an attorney, but to get low-cost legal advice to help you make your decision, or to help applying, search for a nonprofit immigration law office near you at: [ImmigrationLawHelp.org](https://www.immigrationlawhelp.org).

Benefits

Traveling with AP has several benefits and can create new opportunities that might not otherwise be available to you, such as:

- **Seeing family members and reconnecting with your roots.**

▶ Click here to listen to Anjali's Story: **Reconnecting with family**

- **Evaluating what life abroad might be like for you.**

▶ Click here to listen to Jesús' Story: **Testing out life in Mexico**

- **Pursuing unique professional or educational opportunities.**

▶ Click here to listen to Iliana's Story: **Pursuing a research opportunity abroad**

- **Expanding your worldview or changing your perspective.**

▶ Click here to listen to Diana's Story: **Defining freedom**

- **Adjusting your status.**

In some cases, reentering the U.S. with Advance Parole can make future immigration options easier to attain. We recommend talking to an immigration attorney about how Advance Parole travel could potentially affect the adjustment of your status.

▶ Click here to listen to Estefanía's Story: **Seeking a "lawful entry" back into the U.S.**

Risks

Traveling while undocumented always involves some risk, and Advance Parole is not an exception. Some of the risks include, but are not limited to:

- **Not being able to return.**

Advance Parole approval does not guarantee that you will be allowed to re-enter the United States.

Individuals must be "admissible" in order to re-enter the U.S. after a trip abroad. Admissibility is a term that is defined within U.S. immigration law and refers to a non-citizen entry by inspection into the United States. There are many reasons why someone can be found "inadmissible." One of the most common reasons is that they have a previous removal (deportation) order, sometimes without the person's knowledge. Also, certain criminal convictions, even if they have been expunged, dismissed or occurred long ago, could present problems. For more information about inadmissibility and the potential risks of traveling abroad, check out [American University's guide](#) on traveling for educational purposes with Advance Parole.

The Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer at the airport or port of entry has the final say on whether to allow you to re-enter. If possible, talk to a legal representative before you leave to understand all the risks involved.

▶ Click here to listen to Jesús' Story: **Risks involved in AP travel**

▶ Click here to listen to Silvia's Story: **Going through Customs**

- **Negative interaction with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).**

It is likely that when you are returning to the U.S. from your trip, you will be flagged for what's called "secondary inspection." That means, you'll be brought to a separate room to be interviewed by a CBP officer. This experience can be anxiety-inducing and in some cases, traumatic. (For more on what to expect from this process see the "Preparing to Travel with AP" section under our Advance Parole Travel Guide at immigrantsrising.org/AP).

▶ Click here to listen to Renata's Story: **Difficult interactions with CBP officers**

- **Overall emotional toll.**

Traveling outside the country as an undocumented person is very vulnerable and it can have a lasting mental and emotional impact on you. Some emotions that may come up include extreme stress, fear, familial or other relationship tensions, depression, and isolation. As you're deciding whether or not Advance Parole is right for you, remember that you are not alone and that any and all feelings that may come up for you throughout the process are real and valid.

Reflection Prompts: Considering Advance Parole

Use these prompts as a tool to weigh the benefits and risks of Advance Parole, and to reflect on whether this feels like the right time for you to apply.

- **What excites me about the prospect of traveling abroad?** What experiences do I want to have? (It's okay to include fantasies and dreams. Visioning requires bold imagination.)
- **What scares me about the prospect of traveling abroad?** What fears do I have about traveling with Advance Parole or being in another country? What feels like the worst case scenario to me?
- **What is going on in my life right now that is influencing my thinking?** What are my priorities, obligations, goals?
- **When I think about the possibility of applying for Advance Parole, which impulse is stronger: the one telling me to go? Or the one telling me to stay?**
- **What parts of the Advance Parole process feel confusing or foreign to me?** What do I need to research more in order to feel as informed as possible?
- **Who can I talk to about making this decision?** Who can serve as a source of support for me throughout the process?

This resource is part of the Advance Parole project. It was created by Claire Calderón. Visit immigrantsrising.org/AP to learn more.

Immigrants Rising helps you make decisions based on your potential, not your perceived limits. Visit our website so you can see what's possible: immigrantsrising.org. For inquiries regarding this resource, please contact our Legal Services Team at legalintake@immigrantsrising.org.