

**One Big Beautiful Bill Act  
Unaccompanied Children Provisions  
Frequently Asked Questions  
July 2025**

**About the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)**

On July 4, 2025, President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), a large budget reconciliation bill, into law. The Senate and House of Representatives narrowly passed this version of [HR 1](#) on July 1 and July 3, respectively.

The OBBBA makes sweeping changes across the U.S. immigration system on enforcement, work authorization, fees, and access to services like Medicaid and SNAP.

**Who are unaccompanied children?**

According to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, unaccompanied children, also known as “unaccompanied alien children” (UAC), are defined as children under the age of 18 who have no lawful immigration status in the United States and do not have a parent or legal guardian in the United States, or whose parent or legal guardian in the U.S. is not available to provide care and physical custody ([6 U.S.C. 279\(g\)](#)). To learn more, please read [Global Refugee’s Frequently Asked Questions about UCs](#).

**What is Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)?**

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) is an immigration status established by Congress that is available to certain unaccompanied children under the age of 21 who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned by one or both parents and who meet specific requirements. (See [8 C.F.R. 204.11](#)).

**What is the new SIJS application fee under OBBBA?**

Section 100005 of the OBBBA adds a new Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) fee of \$250 that is non-waivable. Previously, there was no fee for an SIJS application.

**Is there funding for vetting potential sponsors of unaccompanied children?**

Yes. Section 87001 provides \$300 million to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (to be available through September 30, 2028) for potential sponsor vetting for unaccompanied children. The funding covers background checks and home studies of potential sponsors for children and all adult residents living in the potential sponsor’s household.

**Does the OBBBA introduce examinations of children for gang-related markings?**

Yes. Section 87001 provides funding allowing government agents to examine children of any age for tattoos and markings while the child is in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Section 100051 provides funding for “removal of specified unaccompanied alien children” who are found by an immigration officer at a land border or port of entry including “criminal and gang checks of

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unaccompanied alien children” who are 12 years of age and older, which includes “examination for gang-related tattoos and other gang-related markings.”

**Does the OBBBA provide funding to increase family detention?**

Yes. Section 90003 provides \$45 billion to build immigration detention centers for single adults and “family residential center capacity.” Section 90003, Subsection (D) on “duration and standards” permits detention of families pending removal decisions and/or removal.

This section makes no reference to the requirements of the [Flores Settlement](#) agreement, which limits the detention of children. In 1997, the U.S. government reached a legal settlement in the case of *Flores v. Reno*, a class action lawsuit filed on behalf of immigrant children detained by the U.S. government. In May 2025, the Trump Administration filed a [motion to terminate](#) the *Flores Settlement*, which is currently in [litigation](#).