BREAKING COMMUNITY UPDATE

What is happening with Salvadoran TPS?

On Wednesday, September 9, 2026, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) allowed the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designation for El Salvador to expire without formally announcing whether it will be extended or ended. But DHS said that **Salvadorans who currently have TPS still have legal protection and work authorization in the United States for now.** The agency said legal protection and work authorization will continue until they make an official decision, which is expected soon.

What is Temporary Protected Status?

Congress created TPS in 1990 to protect people living in the United States who are not able to return to their countries of origin due to war or other disasters. **People who have TPS cannot be detained or deported while their status is valid, and are also eligible for work permits.**

What does the TPS redesignation process mean for El Salvador TPS?

Once they have designated a country for TPS, DHS is also supposed to reevaluate that designation on a regular basis and decide whether to keep TPS for people from that country or to terminate it. There are approximately 232,000 Salvadorans in the United States with TPS. Many Salvadorans in the United States have had TPS since 2001, when DHS redesignated the country for the status following two massive earthquakes. But TPS has been under attack during the Trump administration, and many Salvadorans have feared that the administration intends to uproot them from their lives in the United States as it has done to Haitians and Hondurans.

What does this mean for Salvadorans with TPS?

Salvadorans in the United States with valid grants of TPS **continue to have their TPS protections and work authorization for the time being.** This means that Salvadorans with TPS cannot lawfully be detained or deported from the United States for now, and continue to be eligible to work lawfully with a valid employment authorization document.

How long will Salvadorans keep TPS?

We do not know. DHS has not said how long the agency will take to issue a formal decision about TPS for El Salvador. Under U.S. law, DHS is required to make a "timely" formal public announcement about whether it plans to extend a TPS designation. The two-sentence alert that the government posted on its U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and E-Verify websites does not count as a formal public announcement. Formal public announcements are made through the Federal Register. Once DHS makes its formal announcement on whether it intends to extend TPS for El Salvador, the law requires DHS to wait at least 60 days to enforce that decision. During this at least 60-day period, TPS holders would continue to hold lawful status and work authorization, even if DHS decides to terminate TPS for El Salvador.

Will DHS eventually extend TPS for El Salvador?

We do not know whether DHS plans to extend or cancel TPS for El Salvador.

What should Salvadorans with TPS who work or wish to drive do?

Salvadorans with current TPS can still work and seek or renew their driver's license. **Employers must continue to accept Salvadoran TPS holders' work authorization documents for now.** Still, employers and state departments of motor vehicles (DMV) may ask Salvadoran TPS holders for proof that their TPS has not expired. The National TPS Alliance has shared a letter for TPS holders from El Salvador to show their employer explaining that DHS has not yet made an announcement on whether TPS will be extended or ended. TPS holders may benefit from showing their employer this letter if asked about their work authorization. TPS holders may also benefit from showing their DMV the letter and the alert on the USCIS website if their driver's license has to be renewed. If an employer fires a TPS holder before their work authorization ends, the worker can talk to an attorney, union representative, or worker center, or call the Immigrant and Employee Rights hotline of the U.S. Department of Justice at 1-800-255- 7688.

How can Salvadorans with TPS prepare to fight back?

Now is the time to stay informed, make legal and family defense plans and continue to organize as a community. Salvadorans with TPS should take this time to discuss, with a good lawyer if possible, what other kinds of immigration status they may qualify for. Many Salvadorans with TPS have been in the United States for a long time and may qualify for permanent residence or protection from deportation in immigration court.