GOVERNOR
GAVIN NEWSOM

CALIFORNIA COUNCIL ON IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION & TALENT

The State of California's Council on Immigrant Integration and Talent (Council) advances immigrant integration[1] and inclusion; leverages the diverse talents and assets of immigrant communities, helping more families secure good, family-supporting jobs; and supports innovation and economic growth for the benefit of all Californians. Immigrants are central to California's communities and economy, contributing billions in state and local taxes, and making significant contributions that enhance the vibrancy and innovation of neighborhoods and cities across the state.

Governor Newsom and the California Legislature created the Council in 2022, expanding the state's framework on immigrant integration that began in 2015 with the creation of the Governor's Director of Immigrant Integration. The first-ever California Council on Immigrant Integration and Talent recognizes opportunities to improve the inclusion of immigrant families in our society and the importance of legal immigration to American workers and our economy. The Council is led by the Governor's Office and convened by the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development to further statewide coordination, evaluation, and technical assistance across the administration. Council members include state agencies leading on workforce development, labor enforcement, health and human services, education, immigration services, agriculture, and economic development. The Council also collaborates with local government immigration and equity offices, as well as other community partners across the state.

As an interagency body, the Council member agencies leverage expertise, current programs and services to collectively advance annual priorities. Members coordinate efforts, share strategies, and strengthen alignment across agencies, sectors, and levels of government.

From 2025 through December 2026, the Council prioritized support for immigrant families, workers, and businesses harmed by the volatile and aggressive federal immigration agenda. Council achievements include expanding collaboration across key state-funded trusted messenger networks and referral systems; engaging philanthropic organizations to advance partnerships and aligned funding that supplemented state efforts; developing new, consistent engagement with local government immigration offices; and strengthening community engagement through regional listening sessions to inform state understanding and efforts.

Below are some examples of member agency programs and funding.

[1] The Council utilizes the Migration Policy Institute's definition of immigrant integration: "economic mobility and social inclusion for newcomers and their children."

Governor's Representative: Gina Da Silva, Senior Advisor for Immigration, and Director of Immigrant Integration



The Senior Advisor for Immigration serves as the statewide lead for planning and coordinating immigrant services and policies. California is home to more immigrants than any other state, and many Californians can trace their heritage to other nations. Immigrants in California have diverse immigration statuses, including over half who are U.S. citizens, and many who live with native-born U.S. citizens. Generations of immigrants and their children have helped build the California we know today through their hard work, innovation, and cultural contributions, and through the lives they have made here, the families they have raised, and the communities they have strengthened. California is the world's fourth-largest economy, largely due to the contributions of generations of immigrants and their children. From the Central Valley to Silicon Valley, immigration is integral to California's identity and is crucial to our economic success and future.

Governor Newsom's record of supporting immigrant families, advancing immigrant contributions to our society and economy:

Governor Newsom has expanded access to health care, supported greater integration and belonging and transformed funding for immigration legal services to help keep families together, protect vulnerable groups, including victims of crime, and help keep Californians working lawfully in our economy. This includes special initiatives for children and farmworkers. In recent years, the state has expanded community integration infrastructure in response to growing federal attacks. This includes 11 regional Hubs, greater access to legal defense with dedicated support for people in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention, and trusted community messengers to help immigrant families navigate growing fears and complex changes in federal immigration rules. The Governor also signed legislation expanding protections and opportunities for immigrant families, workers and entrepreneurs, including measures concerning detention oversight, language access, entrepreneurship, federal work permits for farmworkers, support for victims of crime, professional licenses, privacy protections, on-campus Dream Resource Centers, support for students, state facilities, and labor protections for vulnerable workers. Strengthening parental rights and protections against reckless ICE enforcement for sensitive locations such as schools and public hospitals.

Keeping California's resources focused on California's public safety:

Governor Newsom has also drawn a distinction between appropriate public-safety cooperation, community trust and using California resources for federal immigration enforcement. In 2019, the Governor ended the federal policy of using California National Guard personnel for immigration enforcement and redirected those resources toward wildfire prevention and counter-drug operations. That approach has also shaped California's response to federal enforcement activity in Los Angeles. During the June 2025 federal immigration raids and resulting protests, the Governor challenged the federalization of California National Guard personnel. The State filed and won a federal lawsuit challenging the deployment, arguing that the federal government had exceeded its authority.

Leading strategies to support safe border communities and harness the economic benefits of immigration

Across state government and local communities, California's response has been comprehensive, working to mitigate the consequences of reckless federal immigration policies and decades of congressional inaction to modernize our immigration system, including efforts at the southern border. The state has supported economic growth, public safety, and related humanitarian services to support border communities affected by federal operations, ranging from drug interdiction at ports of entry to humanitarian sheltering and promoting lawful cross-border trade. State efforts also support the first-ever economic strategy on immigration, including immigration in economic development and funding job and entrepreneurship training, to help immigrants contribute their skills and talent to key parts of the economy. The state has also responded to the Trump administration's actions, which have significantly harmed small businesses and local economies, with stronger legal support for affected Californians, along with information and resources for businesses and workers on changing immigration rules and keeping workplaces safe during immigration enforcement.

GO-Biz Representative:
Odet Ford, Immigrant Integration Initiatives Manager



The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) serves as the state of California's leader for job growth, economic development, and business assistance. These efforts are strengthened by the vital contributions of immigrant entrepreneurs, key drivers of innovation, job creation, and economic growth.
In California, immigrants make up 40 percent of entrepreneurs and generated $28.4 billion in business income in 2023 alone.
Immigrants have also founded 28 of California's Fortune 500 companies. To support a strong economy and shared prosperity for all Californians, immigrant integration aims to ensure eligible immigrants have fair access to entrepreneurship and capital. By removing barriers and fostering inclusive business environments, immigrants can thrive and make significant economic contributions, including job creation, alongside native-born Californians.

Key Programs:

Local Government Immigrant Integration: In 2023, GO-Biz launched California's first-ever grant program to support immigrant integration efforts led by local governments. These one-time grants leveraged the essential role of cities and counties in delivering government services and advancing equitable economic outcomes informed by data and community input. The program is authorized by Government Code Section 12100.141. Through this initiative, 22 local governments and 19 nonprofits have reached more than 52,000 Californians, connecting eligible immigrants to vital resources, small business support, and local services.

Technical Assistance for Small Businesses:

GO-Biz offers technical assistance to small businesses on state incentives, site selection, and access to capital. Core programs and support services include:

- The California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA), within GO-Biz, administers the Technical Assistance Program (TAP). TAP supports small businesses by providing access to free or low-cost consulting and training through designated centers.
- GO-Biz coordinates resources and technical assistance to help California employers understand and comply with evolving federal and state immigration regulations.

CalHHS Representative: Dan Torres, Chief Equity Officer & Special Counsel to the Secretary

The California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) mission is to work with counties, cities, communities, and public, private, faith, and educational partners to make California a healthy, vibrant, inclusive place to live, play, work, and learn. Serving immigrant families is integral, as immigrants comprise over a quarter of Californians, and about half of all kids in California have at least one immigrant parent.



Key Programs:

Language Access:

In 2023, CalHHS adopted a comprehensive agency-wide Language Access Policy to ensure that language is not a barrier to accessing vital health and social services. The policy requires all CalHHS Departments and Offices to provide free oral and sign language interpretation upon request at all points of public contact. It also requires translating vital documents and essential website content into at least the top five non-English languages in California. In addition, CalHHS is leading efforts to test the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence tools as part of human-led translation workflows to increase the speed, efficiency, and consistency of translations and generate improvements in language access for Californians who speak languages other than English. CalHHS collaborates with California's Chief Equity Officer at the Government Operations Agency to support language access best practices across the administration.

CalHHS also works with its departments to support the health and well-being of Californians, including coordinating state-funded mental health services and basic needs assistance for immigrant families.

Regional Network Hubs for Immigrant Families:

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) administers 11 Regional Hubs that support immigrant families by providing trusted information, connecting them to services, and strengthening regional coordination. Through partnerships with community organizations, schools, and service providers, the Hubs help families access available resources and support a “no wrong door” approach to getting help. Services include rapid legal assistance for detained Californians and their families, referrals to immigration legal services, and connections to health and social services. Families can access services through participating Hub organizations in their region.

Community Health Workers (CHWs) & Promotores:

The California Department of Health Care Access and Information administers CHWs and Promotores programs, integrating trusted community messengers into the Hubs to expand and strengthen community outreach and support immigrant families navigating increasingly complex federal policy changes and data sharing. This integration into the Hubs exemplifies cross-program collaboration across state departments to maximize regional reach and outcomes. Early on, Hubs’ community outreach and education focused on traditional "Know Your Rights" and other information to protect community members at risk of ICE arrest. Now, various federal immigration-related restrictions and hostilities affecting health and human services programs, such as changes to immigrant eligibility, the public charge rule, and federal Medicaid data sharing with ICE, require broader outreach to help people understand their eligibility, assess individual health and safety risks and connect with health, legal, and social services.

By integrating into the Hubs’ regional networks, CHWs and Promotores receive training to expand their tools and collaborate to reach more families in the region, with Hub partnerships facilitating access to available resources.

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Refugee Programs:

CDSS oversees both federally and state-funded social service programs that serve refugees, asylees, victims of trafficking, and other eligible populations. CDSS provides state-level leadership, develops tailored programs, and coordinates among stakeholders and beneficiary populations to achieve successful economic and social integration with host communities in California.



Immigration Services Funding – Community Education, Outreach, and Legal Services:

CDSS funds qualified community-based organizations to provide free legal services and community education to immigrants in California. Legal services include access to information and application assistance for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, naturalization, and affirmative immigration remedies through U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services. CDSS also funds removal defense for people facing deportation, dedicated legal services for farmworker families, and social services for unaccompanied undocumented children.

California State University Immigration Services Project (CISP):

CISP supports immigrant students enrolled in all 23 universities in the California State University system. Through this program, CDSS funds designated legal service providers to provide affirmative legal assistance and support removal defense. Students, recent alumni, and the family members of current students are eligible.

Community College Immigration Services Project (CCIS):

CCIS supports immigrant students enrolled in 116 community colleges statewide. CDSS funds designated legal service providers to provide in-person and virtual legal consultations and services to eligible community college students.

LWDA Representatives: Sebastian Sanchez, Deputy Secretary for Agriculture and Immigration Workforce, and Abby Snay, Deputy Secretary, Workforce Strategy



LWDA's mission is to ensure safe, fair workplaces, deliver vital worker benefits, and promote quality jobs for all Californians. It advances this mission through various services and initiatives, including enforcing workplace safety standards, connecting employers with job seekers, and administering unemployment and disability insurance. Immigrants are a vital part of California's labor force, comprising one-third of workers. In manufacturing, construction, and general services, immigrants comprise over 40 percent of the workforce. They represent over 60 percent of the agricultural workforce and 40.4 percent of STEM workers. Immigrant workers also make up the vast majority of sewing machine operators, maids and domestic workers, laundry and dry cleaning workers, and healthcare aides. LWDA supports programs that help eligible immigrants fairly access training, education, and jobs necessary for upward mobility.

Key Programs:

California Workplace Outreach Project (CWOP):

CWOP provides comprehensive education on workers' rights, workplace safety, and benefits for workers who suffer work-related injuries or illnesses, equipping employees with the tools to act when their rights are violated. This strengthens statewide workplace safety by empowering community-based organizations to deliver vital information on worker protections and health measures. Given the increased risk of ICE enforcement at and near workplaces, resources now also include information on constitutional rights and on protecting workplaces and operations during enforcement, consistent with federal and state laws.

Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED):

SEED supports the entrepreneurship of U.S. citizens who speak limited English and immigrants, who face significant employment barriers. The funding supports micro-grants, entrepreneurial training, and technical assistance to help Californians start or sustain a small business that addresses a social problem or meets a community need.

California Youth Leadership Corps: Legal Justice Program:

The program supports expanding the number of well-trained paralegals, legal assistants, qualified interpreters, and community leaders who support vulnerable local communities.

Farmworkers Advancement Program (FAP):

FAP funds the research, design, and implementation of projects that focus exclusively on farmworker needs at a regional level by offering essential skills (e.g., English literacy, digital literacy, numeracy) and upskilling training to either advance in the agricultural industry and/or prepare for advancement in the agricultural sector.

Rural Strategic Engagement Program (RSEP):

RSEP establishes partnerships between multiple state labor departments and community organizations to conduct outreach and education for workers and employers, aiming to strengthen worker outreach, community engagement, and data-driven enforcement in rural areas while helping address fundamental workplace protections. This includes improving workers' access to state protections through one-stop clinics, which allow workers to file a complaint more easily without confusion about which department enforces which workplace protections. RSEP's forthcoming data strategies will also sharpen the state's awareness of hot spots for violations to pursue enforcement and reduce the burden on vulnerable workers to file claims.

The Child Labor Compliance Assistance Team (CLCAT):

This new pilot program within the RSEP framework was established to protect minors working in agriculture through education, outreach, and joint compliance visits at agricultural worksites. To further protect this vulnerable population, the Labor & Workforce Development Agency is collaborating with CDSS to connect labor teams with nonprofit attorneys and trusted messengers who serve unaccompanied minors, to help reinforce awareness of, and protections for, vulnerable minor workers.

CHHA Representative: Erica Gonzalez, Deputy Secretary of Civil Rights and Strategic Initiatives

CHHA advances California for all by defending civil rights, funding and preserving affordable housing, expanding homeownership, and working to prevent and end homelessness statewide. CHHA brings together key departments to deliver clearer policy, stronger partnerships, and more effective outcomes for communities across the state.



One of those departments is the California Civil Rights Department (CRD), whose mission is to protect all Californians, regardless of immigration status, from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, businesses, and state-funded programs, and from bias-motivated violence and human trafficking.

Key Programs:

Enforcing Civil Rights:

CRD enforces state laws that protect all Californians – regardless of immigration status – from discrimination, hate violence, and human trafficking. CRD also supports law enforcement certifications for U Visa applications.

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SBE Representatives: Brooks Allen, Executive Director, and Kirin Gill, Chief Counsel



SBE works alongside the California Department of Education (CDE) to help ensure that all California students have access to a world-class public education and the support they need to thrive, regardless of immigration status. California provides free public education to all children, and CDE supports schools in protecting student privacy, maintaining welcoming and safe learning environments, and responding appropriately to immigration-related enforcement. Through model policies, newcomer education and well-being programs, targeted funding, and family resource toolkits, California helps schools provide culturally and linguistically responsive academic and social-emotional support while connecting immigrant students and families to essential services and community resources.

Key Programs:

Migrant Education Programs and Services:

Migrant education supports programs designed to strengthen the school, community, and family experiences of children and their families. Migrant education regional offices develop programs locally in collaboration with the school districts that enroll migratory students. Other programs are administered statewide and designed to meet specific student needs, such as identifying and recruiting migrant families, supporting parent involvement, and promoting student leadership. Migrant education services are supplemented by state and federal funding. Migrant students in California are served at over 600 local educational agencies.

California's New Americans in Schools (CalNAS) Program:

Established through California's 2026–27 state budget and administered by CDE in consultation with CDSS, CalNAS helps schools support newcomer students and immigrant families by providing educational resources, family outreach, and access to immigration-related legal services. The program also offers technical assistance and training to strengthen schools' capacity to foster safe, welcoming learning environments.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)

CDFA Representative: Thea Rittenhouse, Farm Equity Advisor and Tribal Liaison



CDFA works to protect California's food system, support a resilient agricultural economy, and promote an equitable marketplace, while recognizing the essential contributions of immigrant farmworkers and growers. Immigrants make up a substantial share of California's agricultural workforce, and CDFA supports these communities through stakeholder engagement, Spanish-language outreach, labor discussions, and partnerships that help connect farmworkers and growers with critical resources. By strengthening access to information and services, supporting agricultural communities, and promoting a resilient and sustainable food system, CDFA helps ensure that California's world-leading agricultural industry can continue to thrive and that the workers and communities who sustain it are supported and included.

Key Programs:

California's Specialty Crop Workforce Development Program:

The program strengthens the specialty crop industry by connecting employers, community colleges, farmworkers, students, and small farmers with workforce training, education, career opportunities, internships, apprenticeships, and business resources. It helps employers build a skilled workforce, supports educators in developing relevant training programs, provides farmworkers and students with pathways to agricultural careers, and gives small farms and farmers access to tools, technology, and resources to grow their businesses.

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Beginning Farmer & Farmworker Training Grant Program:

The Beginning Farmer and Farmworker Training Program supports new and existing training programs for farmers and agricultural apprenticeship programs in California. The program aims to strengthen networks and develop strategies to overcome barriers, including but not limited to education, training, land access, capital, and equipment for crop production and marketing.

Farmer & Farmworker Mental Health Resources:

Supports the mental health and emotional well-being of farmers, farmworkers, ranchers, and their families with access to mental health education, counseling, support services, crisis resources, and referrals to professional care. The program recognizes the unique challenges agricultural workers face, including financial stress, long working hours, social isolation, unpredictable weather, physical demands, and limited access to healthcare. By connecting agricultural communities with accessible and culturally appropriate mental health resources, the program promotes well-being, resilience, and healthier farming communities.