

Office of New Americans Report

2024 Annual Report

As required by Minn. Stat. § 116J.4231 Subd. 3

02/21/2025

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<https://mn.gov/deed/about/what-guides-us/equity/ira/>

Total cost of salaries in developing/preparing this report is \$420.24, reported as required by Minn. Stat. 3.197.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording.

Mission and Structure of Office of New Americans

The Office of New Americans (ONA) was established in Minn. Stat. § [116J.4231](#) in 2023. ONA's mission is to implement strategic programs, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and advocate for policies that promote belonging and participation of New Americans for the benefit of all Minnesotans.

ONA coordinates state efforts around creating welcoming communities and engaging Minnesotans, including immigrants and refugees, employers, local governments, and nonprofits. ONA's work supports the Department of Employment and Economic Development's (DEED) mission: To empower the growth of the Minnesota economy, for everyone.

ONA is located within DEED and is advised by an Interdepartmental Coordinating Council on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, as described under Minn. Stat. § 116J.4231, Subd. 4. The Council has been established and held its inaugural meeting on May 3, 2024, with a plan to meet as needed going forward, as determined by the Council.

ONA is a convener, bringing together leaders from across state government, county and municipal government, community-based organizations, and the business community.

Summary of Work

ONA creates and implements statewide strategy and programming to promote immigrant and refugee inclusion for the benefit of all Minnesotans. Since its establishment in July 2023, ONA has:

- Established the Interdepartmental Coordinating Council on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
- Collaborated with state agencies, offices, and ethnic councils to ensure better services and support for New Americans
- Held listening sessions throughout the state with local immigrants, refugees, and leaders in the community to hear concerns, create new partnerships, and foster collaboration and understanding
- Collaborated with businesses to foster inclusive hiring practices and skills development for immigrants by participating in locally organized education and business engagement sessions
- Worked with Minnesota Careerforce staff to host job fairs and connect employers with immigrant job seekers
- Collaborated with local chambers of commerce across Minnesota in engaging business to attract and retain immigrant workers
- Advised other state agencies on program implementation impacting new Americans
- Assisted in developing, designing, and reviewing DEED Request for Proposals (RFPs) to support sustainable workforce solutions

- Worked with Governor’s Workforce Development Board to successfully apply for grant funding from the Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership to launch a pilot program to evaluate credit for prior learning for internationally trained professionals.
- Developed the first-ever state resource guide for immigrants and refugees, a 26-page comprehensive guidebook covering resources across 17 state agencies. The guide is translated into five languages and is posted on ONA’s website.

At this time, ONA does not have suggested policies or legislative proposals for the coming biennium and has not awarded any grants. The Office will continue to collaborate with entities across state government and foster relationships among stakeholders in the community that promote belonging and participation of New Americans for the benefit of all Minnesotans.