



COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis

Governor Polis ran on a mission of building for Colorado for all, where everyone in our state can thrive, whether they got here two weeks ago or two decades ago. The Polis administration knows that our immigrant and refugee communities make Colorado stronger, which is why the Governor has partnered with legislators to expand opportunities for all and make Colorado one of the very best places to call home. **Colorado's immigrants help drive our economy with over \$15 billion in consumer spending power and contributions of over \$5 billion in taxes to our state. Countless immigrants and refugees who have contributed to Colorado's economic, cultural, and civic life, and tens of thousands of immigrant entrepreneurs provide more than 100,000 Coloradans with jobs.**

How the Polis Administration is Supporting our New American and Immigrant Communities

- In 2019, Governor Polis hired a Senior Advisor on New American Integration through the New Americans Initiative to work across state agencies and with stakeholders to identify and break down barriers to economic opportunity for immigrants and refugees. In June of 2021, building on the momentum he created, the Colorado Office of New Americans was codified in state law and made permanent.
- In May of 2021, Governor Polis sent [a letter](#) to the Biden administration encouraging the increased use of the Special Immigrant Visa program to help Afghans who worked in support of U.S. operations resettle in the United States. The Governor wrote, "We owe them not only our gratitude but also the delivery on our promise to provide them and their families safety and security."
- On August 18, 2021, the Governor sent another [letter to the Biden administration](#), sending the message that Colorado stands ready to provide safety and opportunity to Afghan refugees and Special Immigrant Visa holders.

Legislative Accomplishments

- House Bill 21-1150, Create The Colorado Office Of New Americans. The creation of a Colorado Office of New Americans in the Department of Labor and Employment ensures immigrant-related issues can be elevated to and addressed by the state government. The bill creates a community advisory committee and envisions investment into community-based organization infrastructure to ensure equitable access for immigrants to opportunities.
- HB 21-1054, Housing Public Benefit Verification Requirement, This bill ensures that more Coloradans can access state and local housing assistance.
- SB21-077, Remove Lawful Presence Verification Credentialing, Immigration status will no longer be an eligibility requirement for state and local licenses, certificates, or registration. Examples of this include occupational licenses, like Certified Nursing

Assistants, or municipal business licenses. This change affects all Coloradans without lawful presence, including those with work authorization such as DACA recipients.

- HB21-1075, Replace The Term Illegal Alien. This bill eliminates the use of the term illegal alien in contracts for services and replaces it with “worker without authorization.”
- SB21-131, Protect Personal Identifying Information Kept By State. To ensure the data privacy of applicants to state programs and services and building off of guidance Governor Polis issued in May 2020, state agencies cannot disclose information to federal partners, including immigration, unless as required by law or a court-issued subpoena, warrant, or order.
- SB19-230 Concerning the Colorado refugee services program. This bill ensured the participation of the state in Colorado’s refugee resettlement program so that necessary infrastructure would be available to meet changing humanitarian needs. .