A Guide to Community-Based Organizations for Immigrants

Capital Region
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A Guide to Community-Based Organizations for Immigrants is intended to be a public resource. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) does not control or guarantee the quality of service of any of the listed organizations, nor does any reference to an organization constitute or imply an endorsement by NYSED of the organization and its services

* The organization offers services to all, irrespective of religious affiliation.

A Message from The New York State Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

An informed, empowered community of parents, guardians and other persons in parental relation is critical to ensuring that Multilingual Learners/ English Language Learners (MLLs/ELLs) are well supported and thrive. The New York State Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) has created ***A Guide to Community-Based Organizations for Immigrants*** which provides a list of organizations throughout New York State. Each organization offers a variety of services. Some of these services include, advocacy & community engagement, health care & insurance, housing, labor & employment, legal services & lawful status, public assistance, safety, and youth & education, that may be useful to parents and communities.

OBEWL is committed to supporting MLLs/ELLs and their families across New York State. Parents of MLLs/ELLs and former MLLs/ELLs are encouraged to contact these organizations when they need assistance. When families' needs are supported, children have a base to build upon in order to achieve academic success and become college and career ready.

OBEWL has also produced many resources for parents of MLLs/ELLs that you might find useful:

- ***Multilingual Learner/English Language Learner Parent Resources***- In here, you will find information about how children are identified as MLLs, the kinds of programs available for MLLs/ELLs, when students can exit MLL/ELL programs and services, and how can parents obtain additional information, materials, and resources from local schools.
  http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/english-language-learnermultilingual-learner-parent-resources
- ***A Guide for Parents of Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners in New York State-*** This is a ten-page booklet that includes Bilingual Education and English as a New Language program descriptions, Frequently Asked Questions about MLLs/ELLs, Facts about Bilingualism and Bilingual Education, links to MLL/ELL parent resources, and tips on "Participating in Your Child's Education." This booklet has been translated twenty-five languages, including the top ten MLL/ELL home languages in NYS.
  http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/guide-parents-english-language-learnersmultilingual-learners-new-york-state
- ***The Parent Bill of Rights-*** This document summarizes critical rights concerning educational access and programming for MLLs/ELLs and their parents. These key rights are summarized in an easy to reference one-page format and have been translated into twenty-seven languages.
  http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parents-bill-rights-new-york-states-english-language-learnersmultilingual-learners-ell
- ***Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners Parent Hotline-*** This Hotline was created to provide parents, guardians and other persons in parental relation of MLLs/ELLs with information about their rights and services for their children pursuant to Commissioner's Regulation 154. It also provides a mechanism to respond to specific inquiries about the delivery of these services. **Phone number:** (800) 469-8224
  https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ellparenthotline

- ***NYSITELL and NYSESLAT Parent Guides***- These guides provide an explanation of two of the assessments that assess the English language level/proficiency of students whose home or primary language is other than English. The guides have been translated into twenty-two languages. http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/nysitell-and-nyseslat-parent-guides
- **Parent Orientation Video: *Multilingual Learner/English Language Learner Programs in New York State, available in 10 languages-*** This whiteboard animation video, describes the MLL/ELL identification and assessment process and outlines in detail various available program options. It also describes the differences between English as a New Language and the various Bilingual Education program models. http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parent-orientation-video-english-language-learner-ell-programs-new-york-state.
  The text of the Video Narration, is also available in 9 additional languages http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/parent-orientation-video-english-language-learner-ell-programs-new-york-state
- ***Roadmap to College for Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners-*** A College Access Guide for Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners in New York State. http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/roadmap-college
- In addition, each office in the New York State Education Department has created multiple resources to support parents. To access a list with all the Department's offices, please visit: http://www.nysed.gov/about/program-offices

Guidance on Recent Immigration-Related Actions

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) is committed to ensuring that our schools remain safe havens where all students can learn. NYSED, along with the New York State Office of the Attorney General, has put forward the following guidance protecting immigrant students.

Information regarding immigration status:

- New York State Education Law states that all children over five and under twenty-one years of age who have not received a high school diploma are entitled to attend the public schools in the school district in which they reside without paying tuition regardless of citizenship or immigration status.
- In Plyler v. Doe, the Supreme Court held that school districts may not deny students a free public education on the basis of their undocumented or non-citizen status, or that of their parents or guardians.
- At the time of registration, schools should not ask questions that may reveal a child's immigration status, such as requesting a Social Security number.
- With regards to inquiries from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including requests to meet with or interview students, or to obtain access to student records, school district employees should immediately consult with their superintendents and school attorneys to determine whether honoring such a request could cause the school district to violate a law of general applicability, including the New York Family Court Act (NYFCA) and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Information regarding discrimination, harassment, and bullying in schools:

- New York's Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) was signed into law in 2012 to provide students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function and was amended in 2013 to include cyberbullying.
- NYSED provides support to districts, parents, and guardians who have questions regarding DASA. The department can be contacted at:
  - The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages at (718) 722-2445 or obewl@nysed.gov.
  - The Office of Student Support Services at (518) 486-6090 or studentsupportservices@nysed.gov.
  - For language assistance, contact the Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) Parent Hotline at (800) 469-8224 or nysparenthotline@nyu.edu.
- For an official copy of these communications and translations, please see: http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed/information-regarding-recent-immigration-related-actions.

Guidance from the New York Governor's office:

- Per Executive Order 170 signed by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, New York State agencies and officers are prohibited from inquiring about or disclosing and individual's immigration status unless required by law or necessary to determine eligibility for a benefit or service. This includes law enforcement officers unless investigating criminal activity. Access the executive order here: https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-signs-executive-order-prohibiting-state-agencies-inquiring-about-immigration.
- The New York State Governor's Office has reaffirmed its support for immigrants and has announced initiatives, such as designating a new State Police Hate Crimes Unit to investigate potential hate crimes, expanding New York's Human Rights Law to protect all students statewide, and establishing the Office of New Americans and Immigrant Legal Defense Fund to ensure all immigrants have access to information and representation. Access the Governor's communications here: https://www.ny.gov/programs/we-are-all-immigrants.

How to Use this Guide

The New York State Education Department strongly believes that the education of the child does not happen only in the classroom, but also in their homes and communities. This directory provides a list of community-based organizations in the Capital District that offer a variety of services that may be of use to immigrant New Yorkers.

- The directory lists the name of the organization, location, contact information, a brief description of the services offered, and the languages in which these services are provided.
- Organizations are arranged alphabetically.
- Most of the listed services are free. However, some are not. You should always confirm the cost with the organization prior to using their services.
- To ensure availability of programs, it is recommended that you call the organization in advance.

The symbols highlighted next to each organization represent the services it provides.

Advocacy & Community Engagement

Health Care & Insurance

Housing

Labor & Employment

Legal Services & Lawful Status

Public Assistance

Safety

Youth & Education

Organization Directory

1. **Albany Law School Immigration Law Clinic (Albany, NY)**
   Languages: English
   Phone: (518) 445-2328
   http://www.albanylaw.edu/centers/clinic-and-justice-center/clinics/immigration-law-clinic/Pages/Immigration-Law-Clinic.aspx
   Law students are trained to provide direct representation to both detained and non-detained immigrants, including immigrant victims of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and sexual assault.

2. **Capital District Beginnings (East Greenbush, NY)**
   Languages: English
   673 Columbia Turnpike, East Greenbush, NY 12601
   Phone: (518) 233-0544
   http://www.cdbegin.com/
   An approved Evaluator and Provider of Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Services that provides a range of special education and therapy services at no cost to children in their homes or child care centers.

3. **Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany (Albany, NY)**
   Languages: English
   40 North Main Ave., Albany, NY 12203
   Phone: (518) 453-6650
   http://www.ccrcda.org/
   A social service agency that provides services to the fourteen counties of the Albany Diocese. Services include food, clothing, shelter, mental health counseling, prison support services, casework, summer programs, and referrals.

4. **Commission on Economic Opportunity (Troy, NY)**
   Languages: English, Spanish
   2331 Fifth Ave., Troy, NY 12180
   Phone: (518) 272-6012
   http://www.ceoempowers.org/
   An organization that seeks to empower people and build financial stability through family and education support, early childhood education, employment and financial education, healthy homes, and health and wellness.

5. **Empire Justice Center (Albany, NY)**
   Languages: English, Spanish; technology that translates for other languages
   119 Washington Ave, Albany, NY 12210
   Phone: (518) 462-6831
   https://empirejustice.org/
   Involved in litigation, policy, and training to strengthen the legal rights of New Yorkers who are poor, disabled, or disenfranchised, in a variety of areas. Immigration services, with a focus on immigrant victims of crime, include government benefit assistance and representation and technical assistance.

6. **Healthy Capital District Initiative (Albany, NY)**
   Languages: English; interpretation services for other languages
   175 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12206
   Phone: (518) 462-7040
   http://www.hcdiny.org/
   Addresses public health problems through its member organization services, such as health planning, facilitated enrollment for insurance, elementary school-based preventive oral services, and reducing minority health disparities.

7. **The Legal Project (Albany, NY)**
   Languages: Arabic, English, French, Spanish, Turkish; interpretation services for other languages
   24 Aviation Rd. Suite 101, Albany, NY 12205
   Phone: (518) 435-1770
   http://www.legalproject.org/
   Provides accessible and pro bono representation, legal advice, and consultations in a variety of areas. Includes divorce, wills, bankruptcy and credit, domestic violence, affordable housing, and immigration.

8. **Legal Services of Central New York (Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Otsego, and Oswego, NY)**
   Languages: English; interpretation services for other languages
   Phone: (877) 777-6152
   https://www.lscny.org/
   Provides free legal help in civil cases in eviction defense, home conditions, public benefits, economic security, consumer rights, education advocacy, workers' rights, language access, immigration, healthcare access, HIV/AIDS, cancer, mental health and homelessness, jails, and economic development.

9. **Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (Ballston Spa, NY)**
   Languages: English, Spanish
   39 Bath St. P.O. Box 169, Ballston Spa, NY 12020
   Phone: (518) 288-3206
   http://saratogaeoc.org/
   Provide services for women, infants, and children, a Head Start program, emergency food pantry and community lunch program, crisis and family development services, advocacy, and referral, and a Latino Community Advocacy Program with English as a Second Language classes and advocacy.

10. **U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (Albany, NY)**
    Languages: Arabic, Burmese, Dari/Farsi, English, Karen, Pashto, Spanish, Urdu
    991 Broadway Suite 223, Albany, NY 12204
    Phone: (518) 459-1790
    http://refugees.org/field-office/albany/
    Provides immigration legal services, refugee resettlement, case management, employment services, links to health care, trainings and workshops.

Statewide Resources

New York State Immigrant Resource Guide
https://www.ny.gov/we-are-all-immigrants/new-york-state-immigrant-resource-guide
The New York State Immigrant Resource Guide offers a comprehensive list of state government agencies that can provide services in language access, crime & discrimination, legal services, consumer protection, health services, financial assistance, and community involvement.

2-1-1 New York
https://211nys.org/
Dial 211 on your phone for a free, non-emergency information service that connects you to health and human services. Operators are available in many languages. Their database of services is also accessible online.

Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) of New York State
https://www.boces.org/
BOCES provide shared educational programs and services to nearly all school districts except the "Big Five" (New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, and Syracuse). Some of their services include career and technical programs for high school students, services for students with disabilities, summer school, and literacy and employment training programs for adults. Find your local BOCES at the website listed above.

New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR)
https://dhr.ny.gov/
The DHR enforces New York's Human Rights law, which prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, credit, places of public accommodations, and non-sectarian educational institutions, based on age, race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, military status, and other specified classes. You can report complaints of discriminatory practices for DHR's investigation on their website or at (888) 392-3644.

New York State Office for New Americans (ONA)
https://www.newamericans.ny.gov/
ONA operates 27 neighborhood-based **Opportunity Centers** that provide a variety of free services including legal assistance, English-for-Speakers-of-other-Languages (ESOL) classes, naturalization support, entrepreneurial trainings and workshops on accessing state services. The multi-lingual **New York State New Americans Hotline** (1-800-566-7636) provides free and confidential immigration information and referrals to trusted help in more than 200 languages.

Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL)
http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed
New York State Education Department's OBEWL provides guidance and resources for English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLLs). Their website offers the most up-to-date regulations and memoranda as well as parent resources and a hotline for families of ELL/MLL students in New York schools.

Statewide Community-Based Organizations

American Immigration Lawyers Association – New York Chapter
http://www.ailany.org/
The American Immigration Lawyers Association is an association of attorneys who practice and teach immigration law. They represent tens of thousands of U.S. businesses and industries, foreign students, entertainers, athletes, and asylum seekers, often on a *pro bono* basis.

Asian American Federation
http://www.aafny.org/
The Asian American Federation represents a network of pan-Asian community service agencies in the Northeast. They work in research, policy advocacy, public awareness, and organizational development in the areas of health & human services, education, economic development, civic participation, and social justice.

Empire Justice Center
https://empirejustice.org/
The Empire Justice Center is a statewide organization that seeks to strengthen the legal rights of people in New York who are poor and disenfranchised. They provide training, support, and technical assistance to legal services, offer direct civil legal assistance to individuals, and engage in policy analysis, research, and advocacy.

Hispanic Federation
https://hispanicfederation.org/
The Hispanic Federation is a national Latino nonprofit membership organization that works in the areas of education, health, immigration, civic engagement, economic empowerment, and the environment. They provide services to their member groups as well as advocate for the interests of Latinos and run community assistance programs with direct social services.

Immigrant Defense Project
https://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/
The Immigrant Defense Project works to secure fairness and justice for immigrants in the United States through training and advice, impact litigation, advocacy, community engagement and education, and communications and messaging. They provide resources for communities and attorneys and a hotline for free legal advice.

International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
https://refugeerights.org/
The International Refugee Assistance Project provides *pro bono* direct legal aid, litigation, and advocacy for refugees and displaced persons, as well as information and resources for these populations.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
https://www.nysnaacp.org/
The NAACP advocates for the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens and a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race. They work in the areas of civic engagement, criminal justice, education, health, and economic sustainability.

New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU)
https://www.nyclu.org/
The New York Civil Liberties Union fights for the civil liberties and civil rights through a multi-layered program of litigation, advocacy, public education, and community organizing. NYCLU has eight offices across New York State and provides legal services, information, and resources in response to civil rights violations.

New York Immigrant Coalition (NYIC)
https://www.nyic.org/
The New York Immigrant Coalition is an umbrella policy and advocacy organization that represents over 200 immigrant and refugee rights groups throughout New York. They engage in voter outreach and mobilization, offer multilingual informational materials on issues pertaining to immigrants, advocate for laws and policies, and conduct annual workshops and presentations on immigration law and other issues that affect immigrants.

Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP)
http://www.parent-child.org/
The Parent-Child Home Program's network of program sites provides low-income families with the necessary skills and tools to ensure their children achieve their greatest potential in school and in life. They offer 29 sites across New York that engage in home visits, educational resource distributions, and academic preparation.

Protecting Immigrant New Yorkers (PINY)
https://protectingimmigrants.org/
Protecting Immigrant New Yorkers is a task force under the New York Immigrant Coalition that coordinates between government agencies and community-based organizations to combat immigration services fraud. They promote best practices, encourage dialogue, coordinate enforcement action against scammers, produce materials such as public awareness ad campaigns, know-your-rights flyers, and consumer scam advisories.

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Advocates for Children

❖

Education Trust NY

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Hispanic Federation

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New York Immigration Coalition

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Regional Bilingual Resource Networks (RBERNs)

OFFICE OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND WORLD LANGUAGES

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/bilinged/ OBEWL@NYSED.GOV