



**Neighbors Link strongly supports budgets and policies that respect the dignity of each human and recognize the contributions made by immigrants. The following pages provide a brief overview of changes to federal immigration policy under the Trump Administration, budget and legislative policy priorities in New York State, and how you can get involved.**

## Overview of Executive Orders and Federal Actions

The Trump Administration moved quickly to sign a slew of Executive Orders targeting immigrant communities. For a detailed look at the Executive Orders, we recommend that people read [Immigrant ARC's analysis](#). We do expect to see the impact of these measures here in New York. Please check our [Resources](#) page for more detailed immigration information and updates.

### Changes to Interior Enforcement

The Trump Administration has implemented sweeping changes to how immigration enforcement will occur throughout the United States, far away from the southern and northern borders. The changes are designed to increase immigration enforcement and to impose penalties not just on people who are undocumented, but on jurisdictions and organizations that are deemed to facilitate the presence of undocumented people in the United States. One of the most significant changes is the expansion of expedited removal, which is a process that allows the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to quickly deport people without a hearing before a judge. Under this expansion, the government can use expedited removal against undocumented people found anywhere in the country who cannot provide proof that they have been in the United States for two years or more.

### Changes to Border Enforcement

Executive Orders from the Trump Administration significantly limit or suspend entries at the southern border for most migrants. A declaration of a national emergency was made, which allows the military at the border to use maximum use of resources to prevent unauthorized entries, detain migrants, execute removals, construct barriers and prosecute those who violate immigration law. The CBP One phone app, which allowed people seeking asylum to register for a lottery-based appointment, has been shut down, and all appointments made via the app are cancelled (note that this is currently being challenged in the courts). In addition, Migrant Protection Protocols, also known as Remain in Mexico, has been restarted. This requires people to wait in Mexico for their immigration court hearings.

### Limitations on Legal Migration

The Trump Administration has also put in place many actions to limit legal migration, from suspending refugee admissions to the United States to ending or limiting programs that offered temporary status and attempting to end birthright citizenship (this has been temporarily blocked by a federal judge pending litigation).



## New York State Advocacy

**Immigrants comprise more than 25% of New York State's workforce and more than a third of children in New York have an immigrant parent. Given the policies being enacted at the federal level, it is more important than ever that New York invest in budget allocations and legislation that recognize the dignity and value of immigrant New Yorkers.**

## Immigration Legal Services Funding

Neighbors Link Community Law Practice represents a wide array of immigrant New Yorkers on matters ranging from deportation defense to naturalization. In 2024, we served more than 3,000 unique clients in complex legal cases, limited scope cases and consultations. We know the transformative power of immigration law to protect the vulnerable, keep families together and transform lives, but this can only happen if individuals facing the immigration system have access to high quality immigration legal services. New York State has been a national leader in supporting immigration legal services. However, even with strong existing programs, as of October 2024, more than 170,000 people in New York were fighting for their lives in immigration court without a lawyer. Given the policies of the new administration, New York needs to urgently prioritize investments to provide deportation defense services for immigrants, fund recruitment and training of legal teams, build needed infrastructure, and responsibly expand rapid-response services.

### Advocacy Item

- Invest \$165 million to meet urgent and long-term legal and social service needs:
  - \$100 million for the Office for New Americans (ONA) to sustain and supplement funding for legal services providers, invest in capacity building for providers and connect immigrants with supportive programming
  - \$65 million for the Department of Education to expand immigration law clinics, support people seeking DOJ accreditation, and provide loan support for attorneys committing to pro bono immigration work

## Bolstering Unrepresented Immigrant Legal Defense (BUILD) Act



New York needs to ensure stability in our immigration legal services so that immigrant New Yorkers can keep their families together, continue working and contributing to their communities. The BUILD Act funds the infrastructure necessary for legal service providers to create, maintain, and expand robust programs to protect immigrant communities.

### Advocacy Item

- Pass the BUILD Act (S4538 / A02689) to support immigration legal services in New York.





## Access to Representation

Unlike in the criminal legal system, immigrants do not have a right to a government-paid attorney in immigration court. As a result, immigrants who cannot afford a lawyer or find a nonprofit organization to help must represent themselves in immigration proceedings. These proceedings are often complicated and difficult, even for the most well-educated layperson and this is compounded for people who may have limited English language. The consequences of losing a case are devastating, including detention in dangerous facilities, permanent family separation and people being returned to unsafe situations. Representation alone can significantly increase the chances of winning a case. Studies have shown that immigrants with representation are up to 10 times more likely to obtain relief from deportation than those without.

### Advocacy Item

Pass the Access to Representation Act (S141 / A270) to ensure the right to counsel for all immigrants facing deportation in New York. This Act would mandate that New York State appoint a lawyer for anyone who cannot afford one and who is at risk of deportation.



## New York for All

Our entire community is safer when all residents, regardless of immigration status, feel safe driving to work, taking their kids to school and reporting crimes to law enforcement. Unfortunately, many members of the immigrant community often feel unsafe interacting with state and local government agencies for fear that this will lead to a devastating interaction with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The Westchester County Immigrant Protection Act was an important local step in building trust between local residents and law enforcement by defining what information county law enforcement can share with federal officials. It is now critical that we bring this legislation to the state level.

### Advocacy Item

- Pass the New York for All Act (S2235 / A3506) to broadly prohibit state and local officers from enforcing federal immigration laws, funneling people into ICE custody, and sharing sensitive information with federal immigration authorities. The Act also prohibits ICE and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) from entering non-public areas of state and local property without a judicial warrant. It also ensures that people in custody are given notice of their rights before being interviewed by ICE, and begins the process of limiting ICE and CBP access to state information databases.



## Ready to Work Campaign

New York State has a significant labor shortage, with nearly 500,000 job openings in critical industries like health care, construction, and hospitality. This labor shortage harms New York's workers, employers and economy.

At the same time, there are hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers who could fill these jobs, but face real barriers to doing so.

The Ready to Work Campaign proposes a \$100 million investment to be used to provide the assistance workers need in order to fill these jobs. \$50 million would be allocated to increase access to services, such as occupational skills training and career advising, so that job seekers can connect with employers. The remaining \$50 million would fund supportive services that allow workers to obtain and succeed in work. These services include English classes, childcare assistance, transportation solutions, credentialing programs and support for local businesses to train, hire and retain workers.

### Advocacy Item

- Invest \$100 million to stabilize New York's workforce and economy by connecting employers with underutilized and untapped workers to fill the state's 500,000 current job openings.



## How to Get Involved

- Contact your New York State elected representatives, including your State Senator, State Assemblymember, and Governor to let them know what priorities you want to see in the budget and what legislation you passed. You can find your elected officials [here](#).
- There are a variety of policies municipalities can take to safeguard immigrants, many of which have been implemented throughout Westchester. Click [here](#) for more information on how you can work to ensure that your municipality is taking steps to safeguard the rights of immigrants.
- Contact your Senator and Representative to ask what they are doing to safeguard the rights of immigrants.
- Send an email to Katie Graves-Abe at [kgraves-abe@neighborslink.org](mailto:kgraves-abe@neighborslink.org) to be added to our list to receive advocacy alerts.
- Visit our [Resources](#) page to register for a virtual Community Education training or to find out additional information about how you can get involved.