



EARN Immigration policy resource list for state and local advocates

Last updated May 1st, 2025

*This is a compilation of resources and guidance relevant to state and local advocates working to advance protective state policies, defeat anti-immigrant legislation, defend rights of workers regardless of immigration status, and decouple state/local government from the deportation machine. **This document is a work in progress; if you know of additional resources that should be included, please send a note to earn@epi.org**. Please note that this list focuses on state/local policy and does not include the many valuable legal defense, rapid response, and “know your rights” resources available from other sources.*

Key EPI and EARN Immigration Resources:

[Immigration FAQ](#), Economic Policy Institute. April 2025

- Immigration is among the most important economic and political issues and a main topic of discourse and debate among policymakers and the public. But misperceptions persist about many fundamental aspects of this crucial topic. This FAQ addresses essential background and facts, as well as frequently asked questions, with short answers that include relevant data and extensive citations to key sources.

[EPI Federal Policy Watch](#), Economic Policy Institute.

- Tracks executive, Congressional, and court actions affecting working people, including daily updated analysis of Trump administration executive orders and agency memos on immigration policy.

[What You Need to Know About Immigrant Workers](#). Economic Policy Institute, March 2025

- An interactive landing page containing data on the immigrant population in the US. Topics include employment by industry and occupation, entrepreneurship and business ownership, and household incomes.
- EPI invites state partners to publish a co-branded fact sheet! Resources available include a customizable state press release [template](#), [social media toolkit](#), and Canva [template](#). Contact Daniel Perez at Dperez@epi.org to co-brand/co-publish a fact sheet for your state.

[Immigration State Fact Sheets](#). Economic Policy Institute, Immigration Research Initiative.

- Joint project of EPI and IRI, working with EARN/SPP groups to produce one-page summaries tailored to each state documenting who immigrant workers are and the roles they play in state

labor markets and economies. **If your EARN group would like to co-publish a fact sheet for your state (or update/add to one you've already released) send us a note and we can start the process.**

[Immigration Research Initiative \(IRI\)](#)

- NY-based EARN network group with deep expertise in researching economic, social, and cultural inclusion of immigrants and supporting network groups with state-level research and policy campaigns. See latest report: [The Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Mass Deportation: What's at Risk in New York](#).

[EARN group publications on immigration](#), Economic Analysis and Research Network (EARN)

- Find EARN group publications on immigration-related topics on this page (new publications added approximately every two weeks).

Policy Guidance for State & Local Governments

[Home Is Here State Policy Guide](#). Home is Here. Updated January 17, 2025.

- Outlines policy recommendations for state lawmakers to protect immigrant communities. Notable policy recommendations include expanding access to IDs, prohibiting local law enforcement collaboration with ICE, barring ICE presence from courthouses, professional and occupational licensing, expanding worker protections, and more.

[Local Policy Interventions for Protecting Immigrants](#). Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC). December 2020.

- Includes model policy language enacted by localities across the US, including multi-agency prohibitions, limiting jail-to-ice transfers, prohibitions on patrol officers working with ICE, due process protections, criminal legal reforms protecting immigrants, and rejecting or terminating contracts with ICE or CBP. For advocates working within an “anti-sanctuary” context, ILRC recommends the guide [Moving Texas Forward: Local Policies Towards Inclusive Justice](#)

[Moving Texas Forward: Local Policies Towards Inclusive Justice](#). Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC). August 2020.

- This report is especially useful for advocates operating in states with preemptive or restrictive anti-immigrant state legislation in place, and in 2025 may be useful to advocates across the country operating in increasingly hostile federal policy contexts. Includes guidance for disrupting the arrest-to-deportation pipeline while working within an anti-sanctuary context. Maps the roles of local elected officials and provides practical policy, public outreach, and communications practices that can be implemented by city and county governments, local law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges.

[Protecting Our Communities and Fighting for Democracy in a Second Trump Administration](#). Local Progress. November 2024.

- Guide for local elected officials focused on strategies to protect vulnerable communities. First section of the guide focuses on immigrant communities, with attention to local policies or practices to decouple local law enforcement from immigration enforcement, increase funding for legal defense, and create affirmative protections (e.g., local ID programs and strong local non-discrimination policies). Also includes brief recommendations for school districts.

[State and Local Law Enforcement Cannot Be Commandeered for Federal Immigration Enforcement.](#)

Joint Statement from Thirteen State Attorneys General. January 23, 2025.

- Letter from attorneys general of New York, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington, responding to a memo from a Trump political appointee at the U.S. Department of Justice addressing state and local involvement in federal immigration enforcement.

[What Just Happened: Sanctuary Policies and the DOJ Memo's Empty Threat of Criminal Liability.](#)

Ahilan Arulanantham, Just Security. January 23, 2025.

- Legal analysis of Trump administration memo threatening that if federal immigration authorities “command” or “request” that state officers participate in immigration enforcement, they could be prosecuted for refusing to comply. Memo clarifies that such threats are not legal and why law on the subject is quite clear, although the Justice Department memo fails to cite the controlling cases.

[Providing Unemployment Insurance to Immigrants and Other Excluded Workers: A State Roadmap for Inclusive Benefits.](#) David Dyssegaard Kallick, Andrew Stettner, Ashleigh-Ann Sutherland, and Samantha Wing. **The Century Foundation & Immigration Research Initiative. September 7, 2022.**

- Report lays out models for creating annual state-level funds to provide unemployment compensation to immigrants who lack work authorization and others who are excluded from the traditional unemployment insurance system.

[States Are Providing Affordable Health Coverage to People Barred from Certain Health Programs Due to Immigration Status.](#) Claire Heyison and Shelby Gonzalez, **Center on Budget and Public Policy. February 1, 2024.**

- Report on how states have created affordable health coverage options for people whose immigration status bars them from enrolling in Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace. Summarizes experiences and successes in these states to provide a roadmap for advocates and policymakers aiming to advance similar measures in other states.

[Protecting Immigrant Workers in a Shifting Federal Landscape: A Checklist for State and Local Labor Standards Enforcement Agencies.](#) Rutgers Workplace Justice Lab. **Updated December, 2024.**

- Provides guidance to state and local agencies on evaluating and adapting enforcement practices, strengthening partnerships with community organizations embedded in immigrant communities, and preparing for potential challenges and retaliation when enforcing labor standards in a hostile climate.

[Investigating Immigration-Related Retaliation: Best Practices for State and Local Labor Standards Enforcement Agencies](#). Lopez, Melanie Stratton Rutgers Workplace Justice Lab. 2024.

- This brief provides guidance to state and local enforcement agencies on combatting immigration-based retaliation. This brief details how immigration-based threats fit into the legal framework of retaliation and outlines steps state and local enforcement agencies can take to enforce anti-retaliation provisions.

[Setting the Record Straight About Sanctuary Policies: A Response to Threats Against Sanctuary Cities](#), National Immigration Project. January 22, 2025.

- A resource explaining how and why sanctuary policies are lawful and constitutionally protected, despite attacks from America First Legal and the Department of Justice.

State and local initiatives to expand legal services for people facing immigration proceedings (via [Field Guide for Deportation Defense toolkit](#), National Partnership for New Americans)

- State and local examples for [Illinois](#), [Chicago](#), [Denver](#)
- Further reading: [Rising to the Moment: Advancing the National Movement for Universal Representation](#) from the Vera Institute of Justice
 - This publication provides context on the importance of representation for people facing immigration proceedings, noting that 93% of individuals granted relief had attorneys. It also documents the Vera Institute's SAFE initiative to create a public defender system for ensuring universal representation in immigration court.

[Cities for Citizenship Network](#)

- A network of 115 cities and counties advancing initiatives to support immigrants, improve access to and encourage naturalization as an ultimate protection from deportation.
 - [Cities for Citizenship toolkit: 10 Strategies to Launch & Strengthen Citizenship Initiatives](#), Cities & Counties for Citizenship.
 - Provides strategies state and local governments can employ to promote and encourage eligible people to naturalize.
 - [What Your City or County Can Do](#) (to support naturalization efforts), Cities & Counties for Citizenship
 - Outlines specific actions local governments can take to support naturalization, including engaging staff, funding workshops, community engagement, and collaborating with state and federal partners.

Expanding access to identification via Enhanced Library Card programs, [LocalProgress](#), [American Libraries Magazine](#), [Austin Public Library](#)

- These resources detail efforts to expand immigrant communities' access to identification and reduce the risk of arrest during police interactions. Enhanced Library Cards (ELC) are issued by local libraries, include basic demographic information, and serve as a widely accessible form of ID accepted by (select) community partners. ELC initiatives emerged in response to Texas SB 4 aka the "show me your papers" law, which raised concerns about law enforcement encounters.

[Policy Guidance for Schools \(K-12 and higher ed\)](#)

[Model Campus Safe Zones Resolution Language for K-12 School Districts](#). National Immigration Law Center (NILC). 2016.

- A resource with model resolution language for K-12 school districts contemplating adopting protections for immigrant students. Includes language on limiting sharing of information with federal immigration authorities, restricting immigration agents' access to campuses, prohibiting collaboration with federal immigration authorities, and providing resources and information for immigrant students and families.

[Federal agency guidance \(Plyler letter\) to school districts](#). U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division and U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (U.S. DOJ-DOE). 2014.]. May 8, 2024.

- Plyler letter detailing school district obligations to provide equal educational opportunities regardless of student's or family's perceived immigration status.

[Plyler and Data Collection](#). National Immigration Law Center.

- One-page factsheet provides information on constitutional right to equal access to education and how schools play a vital role in safeguarding family data during the enrollment and administrative process.

[Model Campus Safe Zones Resolution Language for Colleges, Universities, and Higher Education Systems](#). National Immigration Law Center (NILC). 2016.

- Includes model resolution language for colleges/universities, or college/university systems that are contemplating adopting protections for immigrant students. Includes language on limiting sharing of information with federal immigration authorities, restricting immigration agents' access to campuses, prohibiting collaboration with federal immigration authorities, and providing resources and information for immigrant students and families.

[Guidance on Immigration Issues](#). National Education Association (NEA). January 2025

- A comprehensive guide for K-12 schools, school districts, and (to a lesser extent) higher education institutions. The topics covered include guidance regarding enrollment, guidance for educators to engage in advocacy safely, Know Your Rights guidance for immigration enforcement, and DACA program information.

Overviews/Landscape Summaries of State Immigration Legislation & Policy

[State Map of Immigration Enforcement 2024](#). Immigrant Legal Resource Center (IILRC). Updated November 8, 2024.

- An interactive map evaluating states' sanctuary-related laws across 20 parameters and ranked from Pro-Immigrant to Anti-Immigrant. The parameters for evaluation fall under five general categories: information and resource sharing with ICE, jail-to-ICE transfers, patrol officer collusion with ICE, contracts with ICE or U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and state criminalization laws.

[A New Wave of Hate: The Anti-Immigrant Legislative Boom Since 2020.](#) League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). 2024.

- A report analyzing the surge of anti-immigrant rhetoric into the state legislative process. The authors analyze websites of state legislatures, bills, and resolutions between 2020–2024 for key terms such as “immigrant,” “border,” “sanctuary,” “alien,” or “citizenship, and find that anti-immigrant legislation has surged by 357% since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notable anti-immigrant proposals are highlighted within the report.

[State Laws Providing Access to Driver’s Licenses or Cards, Regardless of Immigration Status.](#) National Immigration Law Center. Updated June 2024.

- Table lists state laws that provide for the issuance of driver’s licenses or cards to otherwise-eligible state residents without restricting access on the basis of their immigration status. The laws are listed by state, bill number, date signed, and effective date. A description of each law, including its license eligibility requirements, is provided.

[Laws & Policies Improving Access to Higher Education for Immigrants.](#) National Immigration Law Center. Updated September 2024.

- Table summarizing the major requirements and links to tuition equity and financial aid laws and policies in states that have adopted them.

[State-Funded Food Assistance Programs.](#) National Immigration Law Center. Updated June 2024.

- Table lists the state-funded programs that provide nutrition assistance to immigrants who are not eligible for coverage under the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

[National Map and Resources on 287\(g\) agreements,](#) Immigration Legal Resource Center

- 287(g) agreements allow state and local agencies to act as immigration enforcement agents. This resource maps state and local agencies 287(g)’s and provides tools for local organizers seeking to fight and terminate these agreements.

[Frontline Solidarity: A Mass Deportation Toolkit for Union Activists and Organizers](#) (AFL-CIO)

- A toolkit providing guidance on proactively preparing for workplace immigration enforcement actions. This toolkit is available upon request only.

Messaging Guidance

[Here to Stay: How to Talk About the Authoritarian Agenda on Immigration](#) (for C3 organizations), ASO Communications. February 2025.

- Contains messaging guidance for anchoring discourse on immigration in an uplifting manner that mobilizes rather than demoralizes. Tailored for C3 organizations. Available in both English and Spanish.

[Here to Stay: How to Talk About MAGA's Authoritarian Agenda on Immigration \(for C4 organizations\)](#),
ASO Communications. January 2025.

- Contains messaging guidance for anchoring discourse on immigration in an uplifting manner that mobilizes rather than demoralizes. Tailored for C4 organizations. Available in both English and Spanish.