



STATE OF MAINE  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF POLICY INNOVATION AND THE FUTURE  
181 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0181

January 30, 2024

**Testimony on LD 2167: An Act to Develop Maine's Economy and Strengthen Its Workforce by Establishing an Office of New Americans**

Senator Nangle, Representative Stover, and Members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Hannah Pingree and I am the Director of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF). On behalf Governor Mills, I am here today to help present LD 2167, a Governor's bill submitted by Representative Deqa Dhalac. The Governor is grateful for Representative Dhalac's leadership, as well as the bipartisan co-sponsors of this legislation.

Last August, Governor Mills signed Executive Order number 2 which directed GOPIF to work with stakeholders across the state to plan for an Office of New Americans (ONA) – an office that would support the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in Maine. The Executive Order pointed to Maine's long-term labor market challenges fueled by our state's demographics and our current market status, with an average of two job openings for every one unemployed worker. The order also highlighted the contributions immigrants have made to the vibrancy of our communities and the strength of our economy throughout Maine's history.

Through the Governor's Executive Order, GOPIF was directed to outline the mission, structure, and scope of work of the proposed office, with the overarching goal of ensuring that Maine is effectively incorporating immigrants into its workforce and welcoming immigrants into our cities and towns to strengthen the state's economy and communities over the long-term.

Throughout the fall, GOPIF staff and state partners conducted more than 100 community engagement sessions, meeting with more than 800 individual Mainers from all 16 counties reflecting Maine's broad diversity. The team traveled from Sanford to Presque Isle, from Auburn to Cherryfield, meeting with Maine citizens and leaders who shared their ideas for the new office. Organizations and individuals who participated included representatives of Maine's immigrant communities, employers, local and state chambers of commerce members, municipalities, school administrative leaders and teaching staff, higher education institutions, community-based organizations, healthcare and service providers, and state agency leadership.

As part of the process, GOPIF also established a public email newsletter, website, and online comment form so that any interested individual or group could follow the process and provide feedback, and we held a public webinar on September 6, 2023 to describe the process.

The planning process was supported by key agency leadership across state government and higher education who provided ongoing guidance on the structure and priorities. This included the Department of Economic and Community Development; Department of Labor; Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Education; Department of Professional and Financial Regulation; Department of Administrative and Financial Services; Maine Housing; the Maine Community College System and the University of Maine System.

The state also received important background and guidance from the Office of New Americans State Network, a consortium of U.S. states with dedicated offices or staff for coordinating immigrant integration. The Network is coordinated by a partnership of two organizations, World Education Services and the American Immigration Council. Pursuant to Governor Mills' Executive Order, Maine became the 19<sup>th</sup> state to participate in the Network, following the most recently joined states including Utah, Wisconsin, and North Dakota.

On January 19<sup>th</sup> Governor Mills released the publicly available ONA plan. The plan includes a variety of recommendations and reflects the strong consensus on the need to improve how Maine welcomes, introduces and integrates New Americans into our communities and economy.

Priorities for the new office, emphasized by stakeholders, and outlined in the legislation and detailed in the plan, include:

- Strengthening English-language acquisition opportunities;
- Building workforce pathways and support for entrepreneurs;
- Improving coordination between organizations, programs, and entities that work with immigrants, including municipalities, schools, and employers;
- Tracking federal immigration policy and supporting collaboration with Maine's Congressional delegation on policies that benefit the state; and
- Improving Maine's data about its immigrant populations.

The plan recommends that the ONA initially be established within the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. GOPIF was created by Governor Janet Mills to encourage collaboration across State agencies, stakeholders, and the public to recommend innovative policy solutions for critical issues facing Maine. Like several initiatives already housed within the office such as the Cabinet on Aging, the Children's Cabinet, and the Maine Climate Council, the policy priorities outlined in the ONA plan are not housed within a single agency. The Departments of Labor, Economic and Community Development, Health and Human Services, Professional and Financial Regulation, and Education all engage on various policy issues that overlap with recommended ONA priorities. Establishing the office in GOPIF also mirrors the ONA formation process in other states.

Lastly, the plan and bill before you creates an advisory committee to the ONA to ensure regular feedback and dialog with key stakeholders – including immigrant community members, employers, municipalities, and school districts. GOPIF supports similar committees and councils, including the Early Childhood Advisory Council and multiple working groups of the Maine Climate Council, among others.

I thank the committee for its time, and I urge you to support this important effort.

# PLAN TO ESTABLISH THE MAINE OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS



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# I: INTRODUCTION

## Executive Summary

Throughout its history, the State of Maine has welcomed new residents and families from around the world. From the mighty mills along our rivers, to our working forests and family farms, to the iconic fishing and commercial ports along our coast, generations of immigrants have contributed to the economic and social foundation of Maine, by expanding and strengthening our state's economy, workforce, communities, and culture.

How Maine introduces and integrates immigrants has renewed importance today, given Maine's projected future demographic and related workforce challenges. The median age in Maine, 45.1, is the oldest in the country, and our state's prime working-age population (aged 20-64) is projected to decrease by 5.3% by 2030<sup>1</sup>. As highlighted in the 2022 publication "Making Maine Work," deaths in Maine have exceeded births for more than a decade, a trend forecasted to continue and challenge the state's economy.

Over the long-term, the state's 10-year Economic Development Strategy identified a need to add 75,000 individuals to Maine's workforce by 2030. The Strategy said addressing this need is its top priority, a challenge now often echoed as a defining economic and societal concern for Maine.

Recent reports have pointed out that Maine's strong economy, which has experienced among the healthiest growth rates in the nation, is growing faster than its workforce. This demonstrates that Maine is an attractive place to live, work and do business, but underscores why Maine must draw more workers into the state and ensure they can maximize their career and earning potential. Immigrants, in addition to current citizens, can be an important part of that strategy, especially in sectors of Maine's economy with significant workforce needs, such as health care, construction, and hospitality.

The Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI) reported that jobs in Maine reached all-time highs in the four consecutive months ending November 2023<sup>2</sup>, a condition that has resulted in roughly two open jobs for each unemployed individual in Maine<sup>3</sup>. While good for jobseekers, a lack of workers is limiting growth and straining staffing resources in key industries. As the 2023 Measures of Growth report from the Maine Economic Growth Council stated, "to grow Maine's workforce, and counter these trends, Maine must attract more working-age people from other states and countries, retain more of the young people born here, and help more Mainers participate in the workforce."

Improving how Maine introduces and integrates New Americans into its communities and economy is viewed as one key strategy to address our state's demographic challenges and contribute to broad-based efforts to strengthen Maine's workforce, which also include enhancing domestic in-migration, increasing labor force

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Maine State Economist's office: [https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/sites/maine.gov.dafs.economist/files/inline-files/Maine%20Population%20Outlook%20to%202030\\_0.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/sites/maine.gov.dafs.economist/files/inline-files/Maine%20Population%20Outlook%20to%202030_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information <https://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/news/release.html>

<sup>3</sup> Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics [https://www.bls.gov/regions/northeast/news-release/jobopeningslaborturnover\\_maine.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/northeast/news-release/jobopeningslaborturnover_maine.htm)

participation, retaining our state's youth, and expanding available workforce training and development opportunities.

This presents an opportunity for the state to consider approaches on how to streamline and centralize access to policy, language, legal, workforce, and employer supports for new arrivals and communities; to bring forward innovative practices to empower economic integration; and to make policy decisions with more complete data about, and in partnership with, immigrant communities.

On August 2, 2023, Governor Janet Mills issued an Executive Order directing the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) to deliver a plan for establishing an Office of New Americans (ONA) in state government that would be dedicated to supporting the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in Maine.

During the fall of 2023, GOPIF, in partnership with state and local organizations, conducted more than 100 outreach meetings and received input from more than 800 individuals, including stakeholders from all 16 counties. Organizations and individuals who participated in GOPIF's engagement included representatives of Maine's immigrant communities, employers, local and state chambers of commerce, community-based organizations, municipalities, school administrative units (SAUs), higher education institutions, healthcare and service providers, and state agency leadership.

In addition, GOPIF received support and guidance from the Office of New Americans State Network, a consortium of U.S. states with dedicated offices or staff for coordinating immigrant integration. The Network is coordinated by a partnership of two organizations, World Education Services and the American Immigration Council. Pursuant to Governor Mills' Executive Order, Maine became the 19<sup>th</sup> state to participate in the Network, following most recently Utah, Wisconsin, and North Dakota.

Through this process, there was strong consensus on the need to improve how Maine welcomes and supports New Americans and supporting the need for an Office of New Americans in Maine. Based on this feedback, this report outlines a plan for establishing an ONA and offers recommendations for its initial priority policy areas. These areas include:

- **Expanding and strengthening English language acquisition opportunities:** To support immigrant workers and employers, an ONA should work to help expand, improve, and create access to English language acquisition opportunities, as English skills often act as a cornerstone of career success.
- **Building workforce pathways and entrepreneurship supports for immigrants:** To unlock talents of New Americans, an ONA should support the bolstering of career pathways, especially for immigrants who arrive in Maine with significant educational and/or professional experience. Through an ONA, the state can also provide support for new arrivals lacking work authorization by disseminating timely and relevant information on federal immigration policies and available legal supports, with the goal of getting new arrivals on a more efficient pathway to employment eligibility. In addition to helping fill critically needed jobs, immigrants in Maine are statistically more likely to start new businesses, which contribute to the state's economy. An ONA should enhance coordination of

existing resources to help immigrant entrepreneurs become aware of, and have access to, existing small business supports to provide them with stronger opportunities to succeed.

- **Improving coordination of organizations and entities engaged in supporting immigrants:** A theme heard across the state was the need to improve coordination across state agencies, community-based organizations, technical assistance providers, municipalities, and school administrative units. Communities, schools, or community-based organizations may seek resources to navigate a surge in new arrivals, while others may consider opportunities to attract immigrants as one strategy to address workforce and population trends. Municipalities or business groups may be looking for strategies to foster welcoming workplaces and communities.
- **Tracking and engaging in federal immigration policies that would benefit Maine:** The ability of Maine to successfully introduce and integrate immigrants is defined, and often limited, by federal policies, practices, and procedures, as highlighted recently by the high-profile debate here, and elsewhere in the country, by workforce authorization policies governing individuals seeking asylum. With an ONA, and by working as part of the ONA State Network, Maine should more frequently engage and inform federal policy for the benefit of its communities, economy, and people.
- **Collecting better and more timely data about Maine's immigrant populations:** To assess needs and the impact of interventions and supports, the state needs better data on Maine's immigrant population. Data expertise will also help the ONA better understand the needs of immigrant communities and measure and advance impactful improvements.

The evolution of ONAs across the country indicates these offices should have ongoing cross-agency collaboration as their priorities and duties are established, as well as ongoing engagement with, and guidance from the immigrant community to elevate their voices and inform policy and program direction. To accomplish this, this plan recommends:

- That an ONA be established and placed within the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, which aligns with GOPIF's mission to serve as a key coordinator that works collaboratively with other state agencies and stakeholders to address critical long-term issues facing Maine.
- The creation of an expert council to advise the ONA, with membership from Maine's immigrant communities and representing a diverse range of organizations and sectors, including language and legal assistance, workforce development, businesses and entrepreneurship, local and higher education, and more.

Through this framework, the ONA should also be able to engage on broader needs cited by stakeholders as critical for New Americans, such as childcare, transportation, and housing. In these areas and others, this plan proposes that the ONA act as a convener and resource for state and local government agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector to increase the understanding of needs specific to immigrants in these areas and avenues to address them.

This role reflects the central mission of a new state Office of New Americans – to convene entities engaged in supporting the economic security of immigrants, and to ensure the successful coordination and facilitation of efforts to encourage their long-term economic and civic integration.

Immigrants have long contributed to the economic and social foundation of Maine, by expanding and strengthening our state's economy, workforce, communities, and culture. While we face challenging demographic headwinds as a state, immigrants stand to play an important role in helping to ensure the vitality of Maine's communities and economy for generations to come.

## Who are Maine's New Americans?

Maine is home to more than 56,000 foreign-born individuals – equivalent to about 1 of every 25 Mainers and more than the respective populations of eight Maine counties. In Greater Portland and Lewiston-Auburn, immigrants make up closer to 1 in every 10 residents.<sup>4</sup> Since 2000, the foreign-born population of Maine has grown by more than half.

Immigrants are statistically more likely to be of prime working age, at an estimated 70 percent, whereas only 60 percent of the overall population of Maine is working age.<sup>5</sup> They are also more likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher (43% compared to 36% of U.S. born residents).<sup>6</sup> The relative youth of immigrant workers has caused many U.S. states to bolster programs to attract immigrants to support state workforce needs.

Foreign-born Mainers start and run businesses at a disproportionately high rate. A 2019 study by New American Economy showed that immigrant entrepreneurs in the U.S. make up 21.7 percent of business owners in the U.S. while making up just over 13.6 percent of the population<sup>7</sup>.

There are also an additional 16,000 children in Maine who are natural born citizens with one or more foreign-born parents, roughly 6.4% of Maine's children.<sup>8</sup> In the 2022-2023<sup>9</sup> school year, 6,264 multilingual learners were enrolled in Maine public PK-12 schools, with Portuguese, Somali, Arabic, French, and Lingala as the top five languages spoken at home.<sup>10</sup>

Immigrants arrive in Maine through a range of pathways. Many recent immigrants have been drawn to the state through professional opportunities, family ties, and migrant farm work. Maine has welcomed refugees through the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) since its establishment in 1975. In recent years many new immigrant arrivals in Maine have been asylum seekers from international conflict zones.

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<sup>4</sup>Source: US Census: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lewistoncitymaine/INC110222>

<sup>5</sup> Source: Migration Policy Institute <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/ME#top>

<sup>6</sup> Source: Migration Policy Institute <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/ME#top>

<sup>7</sup> Source: New American Economy <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/entrepreneurship/>

<sup>8</sup> Source: Migration Policy Institute: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/MI>

<sup>9</sup> Source: Maine Department of Education <https://www.maine.gov/dec/Multilinguallearnerdatadashboard>

<sup>10</sup> Note that not all immigrant children are enrolled in Multi-Lingual Learner programs: English is a primary language for many, and others attain a high enough level of English that they no longer need language support.



## Maine's Foreign-Born Population<sup>11</sup>

Region of Birth	1990		2000		2021	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	35436	100.0%	36691	100.0%	56068	100.0%
Africa	239	70.0%	1067	2.9%	9636	17.2%
Asia	4864	13.7%	6949	18.9%	13950	24.9%
Europe	9953	28.1%	11000	30.0%	14181	25.3%
Latin America (South America, Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean)	1376	3.9%	2197	6.0%	6174	11.0%
Northern America (Canada, Bermuda, Greenland, and St. Pierre and Miquelon)	18813	53.1%	15237	41.5%	11499	20.5%
Oceania	191	0.5%	239	0.7%	628	1.1%

## Definitions

- **Asylum Seeker:** A person who has left their country and is in the process of seeking protection from persecution or human rights violations in another country, but who hasn't yet been granted legal asylum and is waiting to receive a decision on their asylum claim.
- **Asylee:** A person who has been granted asylum status, who will have the opportunity to live and work legally in the United States and eventually apply for lawful permanent residency and citizenship.
- **Immigrant** A person who leaves their home and moves to a foreign country with the intention of settling there.
- **Migrant:** A person who moves from one place to another, within a country or from one country to another.
- **New American:** For the purposes of this report, a New American is defined as any individual born outside of the United States who is currently residing in the U.S.
- **Non-work authorized Asylum Seeker:** An asylum seeker who has not yet been granted authorization to work in the United States
- **Non-citizens eligible to work:** An individual who is not a U.S. citizen (refugee, asylum seeker, asylee, special immigrant visa holder, etc.) and has received either temporary or permanent work authorization.
- **Refugee:** A person outside their country of nationality who is recognized as unable or unwilling to return to their country of nationality because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution, conflict, or generalized violence, as specifically defined and protected under international law.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Migration Policy Institute <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/demographics/ME>. Migration Policy Institute tabulations of the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and Decennial Census in 1990, 2000 and 2021.

## What is an Office of New Americans?

Pursuant to Governor Mills' Executive Order, Maine became the 19<sup>th</sup> state to enroll in the Office of New Americans State Network, a consortium of U.S. states that maintain dedicated offices or staff for coordinating immigrant integration. Maine was the fourth state to join the network in 2023, following Wisconsin, Utah, and North Dakota.

The Network, which convenes state policy leaders to share approaches on supporting immigrant and refugee inclusion and economic development, is coordinated by a partnership of two organizations, World Education Services and the American Immigration Council.

By participating in the Network, Maine leaders will learn from best practices on immigrant integration from other states, engage with issue experts from a variety of fields, and work with federal partners to support policy objectives. The Network hosts monthly calls, coordinates working groups on particular issue areas of interest to the states and hosts an annual conference that includes federal agency partners. There is a strong emphasis on information sharing and advancing beneficial federal policies to support state goals. A list of ONA states is below.

State	Established	Location
Massachusetts	1992	Department of Health and Human Services
New York	2012	Department of State
Michigan	2014	Department of Labor
California	2015	Governor's Office
Washington	2017	Department of Commerce
Ohio	2018	Department of Development
Nevada	2019	Governor's Office
New Jersey	2019	Department of Human Services
Minnesota	2020	Department of Employment and Economic Development
Virginia	2020	Social Services
Colorado	2021	Department of Labor and Employment
Illinois	2021	Department of Human Services
Oregon	2022	Department of Human Services
Maryland	2022	Governor's Office
North Carolina	2022	Governor's Office
Wisconsin	2022	Department of Children and Families
Utah	2023	Governor's Office
North Dakota	2023	Department of Commerce

These Offices of New Americans across the country differ in their governance structure, placement, duties, priorities, and budgets, but largely align on a similar mission: to promote the economic and civic integration of immigrants. ONAs formed in other U.S. states in recent years have tended to focus on organization, structure,

and service gap analyses, before shifting to advancing and implementing policy. Typical actions of new ONAs include developing licensing guides and statewide language access protocols, hosting naturalization ceremonies, and providing support for navigating state and federal programs such as those under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Many ONAs were established through an Executive Order and initially housed in a Governor's office. As some ONAs became established, they were integrated into other state agencies while maintaining a strong connection to their Governor's offices. ONAs elsewhere are commonly affiliated with their human/social service or labor agencies, which in some states are combined with economic development. Several ONAs also include refugee resettlement in their jurisdiction.

## ONA Planning Process

Governor Mills' Executive Order of August 2, 2023, directed the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF) to "Deliver a plan to the Governor for establishing a new state office dedicated to supporting the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in Maine, in support of goals set forth in Maine's 10-year Economic Strategy, no later than January 19, 2024. The plan must outline the mission and structure of the office, the timing of its establishment, and the scope of its work, with the overarching goal of ensuring that Maine is effectively incorporating immigrants into its workforce and communities to strengthen the economy over the long-term."

The order specified that GOPIF should engage with immigrant communities; gather input from key constituencies including business leaders, municipal leaders, educational institutions, and community-based organizations; and coordinate with state agencies in developing the plan.

To fulfill the Governor's order, GOPIF developed an engagement strategy with a goal to meet with a diverse cross-section of individuals and organizations across Maine during the late summer and fall of 2023.

The initial stages of the plan included the creation of a public email newsletter, website, and online comment form so that any interested individual or group could follow the process and provide feedback, followed by public webinar on September 6, 2023. The webinar, attended by 109 people, provided an overview of the Executive Order, the engagement plan, and background on the Office of New Americans State Network and the roles and responsibilities of ONAs in other states. A recording of the webinar was posted publicly on the ONA website, along with GOPIF's meeting materials.

Throughout the subsequent months, the GOPIF team participated in more than 100 meetings on the plan with leaders and community members from across all of Maine's 16 counties, engaging with more than 800 individuals reflecting Maine's broad geographic, gender, ethnic and racial diversity. In most cases, GOPIF presented on the Governor's executive order and the ONA planning process to local entities or organizations interested in learning more about the proposal, then received feedback and input into the new office's potential mission, structure, and scope of work.

Hosts of ONA meetings included Ethnic Community Based Organizations (ECBOs) and immigrant-focused organizations, private employers and chambers of commerce, municipal and community leaders including

legislators, education stakeholders (PK-12 schools, adult education, higher education), legal service providers, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, housing partners and developers, individual immigrant community members, and many others interested in the ONA plan.

Concurrently to this outreach, GOPIF convened an ONA working group comprised of senior staff members from the state agencies and entities identified in the Governor's Executive Order: the Department of Economic and Community Development; the Department of Labor; the Department of Health and Human Services; the Department of Education; the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation; the Department of Administrative and Financial Services; the Maine State Housing Authority (MaineHousing); the Maine Community College System; and the University of Maine System. This staff group met biweekly throughout the fall to support the planning process. Working group members each attended one or more community engagement sessions and provided guidance for the overall direction of the plan.

## II. RECOMMENDED POLICY PRIORITIES FOR MAINE'S OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS

To establish a starting point in identifying potential policy priorities for a Maine Office of New Americans, GOPIF relied on resources from the Office of New Americans State Network that synthesized the key objectives of its member states from around the country. These objectives included:

- Expanding language access
- Increasing access to legal representation
- Convening government agencies and community stakeholders
- Expanding pathways to licensure and economic participation
- Coordinating naturalization ceremonies

Based on this framework, GOPIF asked stakeholder meeting participants to identify their top priorities that they believed would lead to improvements in the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in the state. Participants were asked to address the following questions:

- What should be the primary role or roles of the Maine ONA?
- How do you envision the ONA helping to advance the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in Maine?
- How do you see your organization working with the Maine ONA?
- What do you see as top priorities for effectively incorporating immigrants into Maine's workforce and communities?

In response to these questions, several common policy priorities emerged from the engagement meetings, and responses through the online form. These included:

- Assessing, expanding, and strengthening English language acquisition opportunities;
- Developing and strengthening workforce pathways and entrepreneurship supports for immigrants;

- Tracking and engaging in federal immigration policies that would benefit Maine;
- Coordinating and disseminating technical and other available resources for municipalities, school administrative units, and employers who are welcoming New Americans;
- Supporting capacity building and best practices for service providers, employers, and municipalities to bolster supports for New Americans.

Two cross-cutting themes also underscored these policy priorities and were identified as core administrative functions of an ONA in Maine:

- Improved coordination of organizations and entities engaged in supporting immigrants;
- Collection of better and more timely data about Maine's immigrant populations.

The GOPIF team is grateful for the abundant and thoughtful input from the diverse spectrum of stakeholders and interested parties who contributed their perspective for the ONA plan.

From the many topics they identified, we recommend that the Maine Office of New Americans focus on the following key priorities in the coming year, following its establishment.

### English Language Acquisition, Workforce Pathways, Support for Experienced Professionals, and Employer Resources

English language skills can be a key tool for navigating many elements of economic and civic integration. Multilingualism is also a considerable asset in the state's workforce. Immigrant and employer stakeholders emphasized the value of expanding English acquisition opportunities and improved learning English instruction, with vocabulary relevant for chosen fields and soft language skills that translate into job readiness.

English language learners spoke of lengthy wait lists to get into classes, limited resources in rural areas, courses with insufficient intensity to achieve work readiness, and too few programs with instruction tailored to needs of specific jobs or industries.

Some existing state programs were identified as potential models for expansion, including two funded through the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, Governor Mills' plan to invest nearly \$1 billion in federal pandemic relief funds.

- The Strengthening Maine's Workforce program, an initiative through Maine Adult Education, partnered with Luke's Lobster in Portland to provide onsite contextualized English programming for multilingual learner employees.
- In Lewiston, pre-apprentices learned English along with skills needed for employment in the healthcare industry in a program funded by the Maine Department of Labor. The program allowed participants who had not yet attained work authorization to gain valuable skills and a direct pathway to employment. Thirteen participants passed certification exams and five were employed in healthcare upon program completion.

For adult newcomers who arrive having already attained a high level of education or professional experience in their home countries, English skills are just one of many hurdles to professional employment. These challenges

are especially apparent for those seeking careers in fields with professional licensing requirements such as health care and the skilled trades.

Immigrants with foreign credentials often choose not to pursue professional licensure in their prior field, opting instead for other fields with fewer barriers. Complexity in securing and translating credentials, the cost of testing and training requirements, a lack of local professional network connections, and the pressure to earn money as quickly as possible after arrival may all contribute to professionals opting for fields with fewer barriers than those for which they may have advanced education or experience.

Some progress has been made in recent years, notably including a 2021 law that allows for provisional professional licensure for individuals with relevant experience, education, and licensure from other jurisdictions including foreign countries, recent expansion of the New Mainer Resource Center at Portland Adult Education to communities across the state, and a 2023 legislative commission on foreign-trained physicians in Maine.

Finally, employers report that they are hungry for tools to attract, retain, and support immigrants into their workplaces. They face challenges in marketing job opportunities where new arrivals are likely to see them, offering flexibility in accepting foreign degrees, adapting to developing English-language skills, or cultivating workplaces where immigrants feel connected to their coworkers and encouraged to grow in their careers.

According to a 2020 report by the American Immigration Council, immigrant workers were most engaged in health care and social assistance, retail trade, and educational services<sup>12</sup>, three of the sectors in Maine facing significant worker shortages. In Maine, building and construction trades are also identified as needing a significant infusion of workers across a range of skills and abilities.

By building connections between Maine's immigrant community and economic sectors with workforce needs, competitive hiring environments, a Maine ONA presents an opportunity to support long-term economic growth, improve delivery of vital services such as health care, and contribute to the sustainability of communities and employers by supporting the growth of a stable, reliable workforce.

### **Recommendations:**

Initial priorities for Maine's Office of New Americans should include:

- Conduct an immediate assessment of English language acquisition programs in the state, to identify current program gaps and future opportunities – including geographic breakdowns, regional resources, public-private partnerships, and best practices.
- Develop and implement strategies to build out career pathways and remove barriers for newly arriving immigrants to the top career pathways critical to Maine's economy. This work should map available resources, challenges, and opportunities to streamline processes and remove unnecessary barriers.
- Develop accelerated training and certification pathways for immigrants with prior education and professional experience, in collaboration with the Maine Community College System, the University

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<sup>12</sup> Source: American Immigration Council  
[https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants\\_in\\_maine.pdf](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants_in_maine.pdf), p 3

of Maine System, Maine Adult Education, the Maine Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation, and national and state professional licensing boards.

- Develop and deploy employer toolkits and training resources for businesses looking to attract and retain immigrant employees, in partnership with regional and sector-based industry groups and Maine CareerCenters.

## Support for Immigrant Entrepreneurs

Supporting entrepreneurship among New Americans offers a compelling opportunity to accelerate Maine’s economic growth, as immigrants who start new businesses show a strong record of success. A 2019 study by New American Economy showed that immigrant entrepreneurs in the U.S. make up 21.7 percent of business owners in the U.S. while making up just over 13.6 percent of the population<sup>13</sup>, a trend that bears out in Maine, where in 2018 small businesses owned by immigrants generated \$48 million in revenue.<sup>14</sup>

However, stakeholders in the ONA process reported that even for immigrants with previous business experience, starting and growing a small business in Maine can be difficult. Challenges include navigating the “language of business” such as technical terms, jargon, and acronyms. A lack of U.S. credit history can make financing difficult to secure. Others identified securing a business license, completing English-based legal documentation, and negotiating a lease as significant challenges for those unfamiliar with the U.S. financial system and business systems and customs.

Providers of existing programming for entrepreneurs are seeking more effective outreach strategies for New American entrepreneurs and advice on adapting resources to improve access for immigrant populations. Stakeholders also identified the need for stronger local support networks for establishing and integrating immigrant-owned businesses into local economies, especially outside of areas with more established immigrant communities.

Stakeholders also identified existing programs or initiatives that could be modeled or expanded through an ONA, building on practices that have been implemented with success in Southern Maine.

### Recommendations:

To support aspiring entrepreneurs, draw more investment into immigrant communities, and attract new immigrant-owned businesses to the state, Maine’s Office of New Americans should:

- Develop a comprehensive immigrant entrepreneurship support strategy, in partnership with the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and current state programs that seek to support new businesses and entrepreneurs, with a focus on sectors critical to Maine’s long-term economic vitality.
- Ensure that existing resources for small business and entrepreneurs are accessible to immigrants and that public funding earmarked for small business owners is equitably and proportionally distributed;

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<sup>13</sup> Source: New American Economy <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/issues/entrepreneurship/>

<sup>14</sup> Source: American Immigration Council  
[https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants\\_in\\_maine.pdf](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants_in_maine.pdf)

by expanding translation of written materials and providing interpretive services as needed, networking technical assistance providers with immigrant-serving nonprofits, and supporting the streamlining of new business formation.

- Cultivate an environment of innovation by connecting aspiring entrepreneurs to successful businesses and highlighting the successes of immigrant-led businesses to amplify their accomplishments and provide models for others.

## Resources for Communities and Schools

As part of the ONA engagement process, representatives of communities and schools from across the state identified opportunities to share and learn from each other's experiences, in both attracting immigrant families into their region and managing unexpected arrivals of immigrants.

In some areas of the state, community stakeholders expressed a strong interest in drawing more immigrants into their communities to support their economy and grow their populations.

At the same time, some reported feeling unprepared for what immigrants might need and unsure on how to make their area attractive to newcomers. They cited challenges including a lack of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programming and difficulties finding culturally relevant food.

Stakeholders engaged in the ONA plan suggested that for municipalities and especially school administrative units, more assistance is needed to guide their response to unexpected influxes, such as through the creation of a "blueprint" to follow that outlines best practices and makes state resources easily navigable and accessible. School administrative units (SAUs) also advocated for improving supports for new students, especially those who arrive during the school year. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 the Maine Legislature authorized hardship adjustments for SAUs with increased multilingual learners, and Maine Department of Education distributed \$4.1 million to SAUs to support the expanded enrollment. Beyond financial resources, specific priorities included improving systems to ease transfer of students between school units, strengthening sharing of information or case management, and hiring English-language instruction specialists.

Educators also expressed a desire to recruit from within the New American community, to develop and foster a teaching staff that better reflects the student population, and to honor the unique attributes, history and experience of educators trained outside of the United States. Further, some educators reported that they are looking for the state to provide more opportunities to connect with and learn from other educators serving New American students.

## Recommendations

Initial priorities for Maine's Office of New Americans should include:

- Develop resources for municipalities and school administrative units (SAUs) that lay out best practices on how to welcome New Americans into their communities.
- Work with the Maine Department of Education to assist SAUs managing unexpected mid-year arrivals.



- Encourage the expansion of infrastructure to support New Americans throughout Maine, including ESOL and literacy instruction, resources in languages other than English and/or in plain English, and other community supports needed to thrive in Maine.

## Coordination and Data Collection

A common theme heard through the engagement process was how the ONA presented an opportunity for stronger coordination of services and supports for immigrants at the federal, state, and local level, to help enhance work being done in immigrant communities by ECBOs, state agencies, religious organizations, business groups, and others.

Many people in the listening sessions encouraged greater activity by the State government in Federal immigration policy issues. This was highlighted often with regard to Maine's population of asylum seekers, who by federal laws are unable to work until 180 days after they file their asylum application.

This delay was frequently cited as a source of frustration for immigrants, service provider organizations, and employers. The problem is also exacerbated by a shortage of immigrant legal services in Maine, which has led to individuals and families receiving incorrect or unhelpful guidance, further delaying the asylum process or in some cases rendering immigrants ineligible for some pathways to permanent status.

To assess needs and the impact of interventions and supports, the State needs better data on Maine's immigrant population. Data expertise will also help the ONA better understand the needs of immigrant communities and measure and advance impactful improvements. Studies in the U.S. demonstrate that data on immigrant populations is sparse at best, and several community members identified the need for efforts to collect and synthesize accurate data, including long-term outcomes for programs designed to successfully integrate immigrants into Maine's workforce and communities.

Insights from better data will also improve the ONA's ability to tell the story of immigrants in Maine. Many commenters specifically highlighted the opportunity for public messaging sharing the history of immigration in Maine and the longstanding contributions of immigrants to Maine communities.

### **Recommendations:**

Initial priorities for Maine's Office of New Americans should include:

- Establish an expert council to advise the ONA, with membership from Maine's immigrant community and representing a diverse range of organizations and expertise.
- In coordination with the ONA State Network, advise the Governor and Legislature on opportunities to advocate on federal policies related to New Americans in Maine.
- Advance the mission of the Office of New Americans by identifying federal funding opportunities and facilitating collaborative efforts to pursue federal funds.
- Develop new resources and expand existing initiatives to monitor and synthesize data on Maine's New Americans, including long-term outcomes for workforce and training programs.
- Work with state agencies to develop state language access protocols and policies.

- Host an annual convening of government and non-governmental organizations and institutions to identify best practices and opportunities for ongoing collaboration.
- Celebrate stories of immigrant success in Maine and the long history of immigration in Maine.

### III: RECOMMENDED GOVERNANCE OF THE MAINE OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS

A recommended structure for a Maine Office of New Americans follows below, with a proposed mission statement, initial placement and governance plan, staffing and budget outline, advisory council concept, and timeline. Draft legislation to establish the ONA is attached as Appendix B.

#### A: Mission Statement

*The Maine Office of New Americans is dedicated to making Maine a home of opportunity for all, by welcoming and supporting immigrants to strengthen Maine's workforce, enhance the vibrancy of Maine's communities, and build a strong and inclusive economy.*

#### B: Formation and Placement

The ONA should initially be established within the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, with long-term placement to be determined in consultation with the Governor and Legislature.

No single agency is responsible for all subject matter areas that an ONA is meant to address. The Departments of Labor, Economic and Community Development, Health and Human Services, and Education all engage on certain aspects of an ONA's scope, in addition to several other organizations inside and outside of state government that stand to play critical roles in developing and implementing the policies to achieve the ONA's mission.

This approach mirrors the ONA formation process in other states and reflects GOPIF's existing function as a cross-agency coordinator and convener on policy issues, such as through the Maine Climate Council, the Governor's Children's Cabinet, the Cabinet on Aging, the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan, and other initiatives. In addition, GOPIF's experience and relationships with stakeholders through its existing work on housing, equity, and workforce development align with goals of the ONA, and its expertise in data collection and analysis will support an ONA priority function.

#### C: Staffing and Budget

The ONA should be established with a full-time staff of four. The office should be led by a director who is responsible for carrying out the work of the ONA, supervising staff, determining budget needs, and reporting on the activities of the office. The director should have experience working with immigrant communities and the ability to work with leaders across state government and Maine communities. The director should have a

track record of success in collaborating with diverse people and organizations, including immigrant leaders, community-based organizations and federal agencies.

Other ONA staff should specialize in supporting education and training issues, including workforce pathways and supports, English language acquisition, business programs and entrepreneurship opportunities, statewide coordination, immigration supports, and intergovernmental affairs, working with the ONA State Network, and communications and data analysis. The office would also benefit from staff or consultant capacity with expertise in federal immigration law and legal issues facing newly arriving immigrants.

The ONA director will report to the Director of GOPIF and will consult with other state agencies as needs and issues demand.

## D: Advisory Council Structure/Membership

An advisory council should be established soon after the ONA is formed. The purpose of the advisory council should be to advise the ONA director and staff on matters related to the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in Maine. Stakeholder feedback received throughout the planning process emphasized the need for continued dialogue with and among immigrant communities; a formally recognized advisory structure will help ensure that this goal is realized.

The advisory council should consist of 19 members appointed by the Governor, Senate President and House Speaker, to include at least ten members who are immigrants, and at least one member who represents each of the following:

- an organization providing refugee resettlement services;
- a provider of legal assistance to immigrants;
- a municipality;
- a school administrative unit;
- an adult education program;
- a small business;
- a large business;
- a provider of housing assistance;
- an organization with demonstrated expertise in workforce development.

Additional qualifications for serving on the advisory council should include experience working within a multicultural and/or international environment, knowledge of the process of New American integration in Maine, an understanding of Maine's economic policies and social fabric, the capacity to build strong relationships within the immigrant community and to advocate for their wellbeing, and familiarity with national best practices.

The council will meet regularly to provide feedback from communities across Maine to the ONA Director, staff and other state agencies and leaders.

## E: Timeline of Next Steps

Maine's ONA should be established in statute during the legislative session during the 2024 with accompanying staffing proposed in the supplemental budget. If the Legislature agrees and the establishment of the office is approved, the staff and advisory council should be able to start their work in late 2024.

As this process moves forward, there may be opportunities to undertake certain initiatives – such as service gap analyses and data collection projects – as soon as funding can be identified. Such initiatives would ultimately support and inform the ONA once it is fully constituted and ready to undertake its critical work.

## IV: APPENDICES

### A: Executive Order

**WHEREAS**, Maine is a welcoming and inclusive state that recognizes the value of people of diverse backgrounds to enhance the vibrancy of Maine’s communities, the strength of our workforce, and the growth of our economy;

**WHEREAS**, Maine’s aging workforce and growing economy have resulted in an imbalanced labor market with an average of two job openings for every one unemployed job seeker, affecting nearly every geographic area, profession and skill level, and requiring more workers to meet critical labor sectors such as health care, education, and construction;

**WHEREAS**, Maine’s 10-Year Economic Strategy has set a goal of attracting 75,000 people to Maine’s talent pool by 2029 and establishing Maine as an attractive state for new arrivals to secure meaningful employment that matches their career aspirations with their skills;

**WHEREAS**, Maine’s nearly 50,000 foreign-born residents are a vital part of our state’s communities and economy, with \$1.2 billion in spending power and contributing \$441 million in taxes;

**WHEREAS**, Maine has encouraged immigrants to become engaged community members by entering Maine’s educational systems and workforce, through investments in childcare and Pre-K to 12 education systems, career and technical education, career exploration programs, English language learner programs, higher education opportunities – including free entrance to the Maine Community College Systems – as well as by expanding apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, targeted credential programs, and industry and sector training program opportunities;

**WHEREAS**, Maine is providing support for emergency, transitional, and permanent housing needs; health and human services, and legal assistance as New Mainers arrive in the State;

**WHEREAS**, federal immigration policies have unfairly burdened states and communities in providing such support;

**WHEREAS**, 18 other states have dedicated offices or staff for supporting the economic and civic inclusion of international immigrants and participate in the Office of New Americans State Network to share information and best practices;

**WHEREAS**, the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future is charged with planning and policy development to address long-term challenges facing Maine, including aging, housing, and workforce development;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, pursuant to Me. Const. Art V, Pt. 1, §§ 1 & 12, do hereby Order as follows:

#### I. **Order**

The Governor’s Office of Policy, Innovation and the Future is hereby directed to:

- A. Deliver a plan to the Governor for establishing a new state office dedicated to supporting the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in Maine, in support of goals set forth in Maine’s 10-year Economic Strategy, no later than January 19, 2024. The plan must

outline the mission and structure of the office, the timing of its establishment, and the scope of its work, with the overarching goal of ensuring that Maine is effectively incorporating immigrants into its workforce and communities to strengthen the economy over the long-term.

- B. Engage with immigrant communities for input on needs, barriers, and opportunities for New Mainers;
- C. Gather input from business leaders, municipal and regional government leaders, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and service providers on the barriers, and opportunities for welcoming New Mainers into Maine's workforce, economy, and communities;
- D. Coordinate plan development with the following state agencies and entities: Department of Economic and Community Development; Department of Labor; Department of Health and Human Services; Department of Education; Department of Professional and Financial Regulation; Department of Administrative and Financial Services; MaineHousing; the Maine Community College System; and the University of Maine System;
- E. Participate, on behalf of the State of Maine, in the Office of New Americans State Network to access information and best practices from other states on topics including the role of education and training institutions, licensing system coordination, housing and shelter models, support for municipalities and employers, and relevant state and local systems necessary to support families and workers to successfully engage in communities and the workforce.

II. **Effective Date**

This Order is effective immediately upon signature.

## B: Draft of Enabling Legislation

### An Act to Develop Maine's Economy and Strengthen Its Workforce by Establishing an Office of New Americans

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §3110 is enacted to read:

#### §3110. Office of New Americans

**1. Establishment; purpose; administration.** The Office of New Americans is established within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future for the purpose of improving the economic and civic integration of immigrants into the State's workforce and communities to strengthen the economy over the long term. The Office of Policy Innovation and the Future shall administer the Office of New Americans.

**2. Director; duties.** The director of the Office of New Americans shall serve at the pleasure of the director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. The director of the Office of New Americans shall assist the director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future in performing the following duties within the Office of New Americans:

- A. Hiring professional personnel competent by education, training and experience to carry out the work of the Office of New Americans;
- B. Supervising and administering the affairs of the Office of New Americans;
- C. Determining the necessary budget for the Office of New Americans; and
- D. Reporting on the activities of the Office of New Americans.

**3. Duties of the Office of New Americans.** Under the supervision of the director of the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and the director of the Office of New Americans, and with guidance from the Office of New Americans Advisory Council established in section 3111, the Office of New Americans shall identify and address needs, barriers and opportunities in order to support the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in the State by:

- A. Collecting and analyzing relevant data;
- B. Coordinating with all relevant local, state and federal government agencies;
- C. Serving as the State's primary liaison with all relevant external stakeholders; and
- D. Undertaking and promoting activities that improve the economic and civic integration of immigrants into the State's workforce and communities.

**4. Activities.** The Office of New Americans shall undertake and promote activities that improve the economic and civic integration of immigrants into the State's workforce and communities. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Strengthening workforce opportunities by providing guidance and promoting improved pathways for professional accreditation and licensure, supporting enhanced career pathways and engaging with businesses to increase employment, retention and advancement of immigrant employees;
- B. Expanding, improving and increasing access to English language learning programs;
- C. Supporting the expansion of access to legal services and protections;

D. Partnering with and supporting municipalities, school administrative units, educational institutions, community-based organizations and businesses providing assistance or opportunities to immigrants;

E. Participating in the nationwide Office of New Americans State Network, or its successor network, to access information and best practices from other states;

F. Collaborating with and providing guidance to agencies of State Government and the entity designated by the Federal Government to administer the State's refugee resettlement services in developing and executing policies that support the purpose of the Office of New Americans;

G. Coordinating with and advising federal agencies and the State's congressional delegation on federal policies that support the purpose of the Office of New Americans;

H. Advising the Governor and Legislature regarding any statutory, regulatory or other policies or practices that may be addressed to better support the purpose of the Office of New Americans; and

I. Promoting greater understanding of the history of immigration in the State, the contributions and influence of immigrants in the State and how communities may support immigrants' integration into local civic and economic life.

**5. Rulemaking.** The Office of New Americans may adopt rules as necessary for the proper administration of this section and section 3111 pursuant to the Maine Administrative Procedure Act. Unless otherwise specified, rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

**6. Report.** Beginning February 1, 2026, the Office of New Americans shall report biennially to the Governor and to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over relevant matters with information and recommendations relating to the work and needs of the Office of New Americans.

**Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §3111** is enacted to read:

**§3111. Office of New Americans Advisory Council**

The Office of New Americans Advisory Council, as established in section 12004-I, subsection 6-K, is created as an advisory council to the Office of New Americans established in section 3110 on matters affecting the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in the State.

**1. Duties of advisory council.** The advisory council shall advise the Office of New Americans on matters affecting the long-term economic and civic integration of immigrants in the State.

**2. Membership.** The advisory council consists of 19 members as follows:

A. At least 10 members who are immigrants, 8 appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the President of the Senate and one appointed by the Speaker of the House;

B. Three members appointed by the President of the Senate representing the following:

- (1) A school administrative unit;
- (2) An adult education program; and
- (3) A small business;

C. Three members appointed by the Speaker of the House representing the following:

- (1) An organization providing refugee resettlement services;
- (2) A provider of legal assistance to immigrants; and
- (3) A municipality; and

D. Three members appointed by the Governor representing the following:



- (1) A large business;
- (2) A provider of housing assistance; and
- (3) An organization with demonstrated expertise in workforce development.

In making appointments of members to the advisory council, the appointing authorities shall make a good faith effort to ensure that the members of the advisory council reflect geographic, gender, ethnic and racial diversity.

**3. Terms of office; removal.** Members of the advisory council serve 3-year terms and may be reappointed. A vacancy for an unexpired term must be filled in accordance with subsection 2. A member may serve until a replacement is appointed. The Governor may terminate the membership of any appointee for good cause. The reason for the termination must be communicated in writing to a member whose membership is terminated. The membership of any member of the advisory council must be terminated if the member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings without communicating good cause to a chair of the advisory council.

**4. Cochairs.** The Governor shall appoint 2 cochairs from among the members appointed and serving pursuant to subsection 2.

**5. Meetings; staffing.** The advisory council shall meet at the discretion of the cochairs. Meetings may be cancelled or postponed at the discretion of the cochairs. All meetings of the advisory council are public proceedings within the meaning of Title 1, chapter 13, subchapter 1. The Office of New Americans shall provide staffing services as necessary to the advisory council.

Sec. 3. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§6-K is enacted to read:

**6-K.**

<u>Economic</u>	<u>Office of New Americans Advisory Council</u>	<u>Not Authorized</u>	<u>5 MRSA §3111</u>
<u>Development</u>			

### SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Office of New Americans within the Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and also establishes an advisory council to the Office of New Americans.

## C: List of Participating Organizations

We wish to thank the following businesses and organizations for organizing and/or participating in stakeholder sessions during the fall of 2023 to help develop this plan.

- A AARP Maine, Action for Life, Afghan Association of Maine, AFL-CIO, Anthony's Formal Wear, Aroostook County Action Program, Aroostook Partnership, Aroostook Regional Transportation System, Association of General Contractors Maine, Auburn School Department, Augusta Adult & Community Education, Avesta Housing, Azerbaijan Society of Maine
- B Baha'i National Center, Bangor Adult & Community Education, Bangor Public Health, Bangor Savings Bank, Bangor Savings Bank Foundation, Bank of America, Beginning Farmer Resource Network, Belfast Adult Education, Bernstein Shur, Betterment Fund, Biddeford & Saco Chamber of Commerce, Black Owned Maine, Bonny Eagle Adult Education, Boothbay Region Adult & Community Education, Boys & Girls Club of Southern Maine, Brunswick General Assistance, Brunswick School Department, Burundi Community Association of Maine
- C Cambodian Community Association of Maine, Capital Area New Mainers Project, Capital Community Care, Capozza Flooring, Catholic Charities of Maine, Center for Entrepreneurs, Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce, Central Lincoln County Adult Education, Charter Communications, City of Auburn, City of Bangor, City of Biddeford, City of Lewiston, City of Portland, City of Presque Isle, City of Saco, City of South Portland, City of the Lord Church, City of Westbrook, Clowes Fund, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc., Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), CoCo Maine, Community Housing of Maine, Congolese Brazzaville Community of Maine, Courage Lives Maine/St. Andrew Home, Cross Cultural Community Services, Cumberland County Health, Curtis Memorial Library
- D Davis Foundation, Dead River Company, Deer Isle Adult Education, Developers Collaborative, Department of Health & Human Services Health Equity Advisory Council, Disciple International Church
- E Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Ellsworth Adult Education, Ethics ME
- F Fathom, Fedcap Families Forward, First Assembly of God, Five Towns Adult & Community Education, Food AND Medicine, Franklin County Adult & Community Education, Freeport Housing Trust, Furniture Friends
- G Gateway Community Services, Generation Noor, Genesis Fund, Gorham Adult Education, Gospel Kingdom Ministries, Gray/New Gloucester Adult & Community Education, Greater Houlton Chamber of Commerce, Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce, Greater Portland Council of Governments, Greater Portland Family Promise, Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center, Greenville Adult & Community Education
- H Hannaford, Harborview Properties, Hardy Pond Construction, Hispanic Ministries Community in Maine, Hope Acts, Hospitality Maine, Houlton/Hodgdon Adult & Community Education, House of Languages, Huber Engineered Woods, Human Resources of Maine
- I IBEW Local 2327, ICIMaine, Immigrant Legal Assistance Project (ILAP), Immigrant Welcome Center, In Her Presence, Institute of Family-Owned Businesses
- J Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine, John T. Gorman Foundation, Journey Magazine

**K** Khmer Maine, Kittery Adult Education

**L** Lake Region & Fryeburg Adult Education, Lawrence Adult Education, LearningWorks, Lewiston Adult Education, Lewiston Metro Area Chamber of Commerce, Lewiston Housing Authority, Lewiston Public Schools, Loring Job Corps

**M** M&T Bank, Mahoro Peace Association, Maine Adult Education Association, Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities, Maine Association for New Americans, Maine Association of Community Service Providers, Maine Association of School Business Officials, Maine Building Trades, Maine Center for Economic Policy, Maine Council of Churches, Maine Council on Aging, Maine Democracy Collaborative, Maine Equal Justice, Maine Farm Bureau, MaineHealth, Maine Housing, Maine Immigrant Access Network (MAIN), Maine Immigration Refugee Services, Maine Immigrant Rights' Coalition, Maine Initiatives, Maine Language Connect , Maine Law, Maine Libraries, Maine Loggers Association, Maine Medical Center, Maine Migrant Health Program, Maine Mobile Health, Maine Multicultural Center, Maine Municipal Association, Maine People's Alliance, Maine Philanthropy Center, Maine Potato Board, Maine Small Business Advising & Training, Maine School Management Association, Maine State Chamber of Commerce, Maine Wild Blueberry Commission, Maine Youth Network, Mano en Mano, Marshwood Adult & Community Education, Massabesic Center for Adult Learning, MEMIC, Merrymeeting Adult Education, Midcoast Hospital, Midcoast Library, Midcoast Literacy Volunteers, Midcoast New Mainers Group, Mid-Coast School of Technology Adult Education, Mid-Maine Regional Adult & Community Education, MSAD 1 Adult & Community Education, MSAD 24 Adult Education, MSAD 37 Adult Education, MSAD 40 Adult Education, MSAD 44 Adult & Community Education, MSAD 52 Adult & Community Education, MSAD 53 Adult Education, MSAD 54 Adult Education

**N** Nasson Health Care, New Balance, New England Arab American Association, New Ventures Maine, Noble Adult & Community Education, North Deering Alliance Church, Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Northern Maine Development Commission, North Sudanese Community of Maine

**O** Oak Hill Adult & Community Education, Onion Foundation, Oxford Hills/Nezinscot Adult Education

**P** Penquis, Pine Plastics, Pine Tree Legal, Piscataquis Valley Adult Education Collaborative, Portland Adult Education, Portland Emergency Homeless Service Shelter, Portland Housing Authority, Portland Office of Economic Opportunity, Portland Public Health & Human Services, Portland Public Schools, Preble Street, Precious Blood Church, Presente Maine, Prosperity ME

**Q** Quality Housing Coalition

**R** Ready Seafood, Region 9 Adult Education, Revision Energy, Riverside Adult & Community Education, Rocking Moon Foundation, RSU 13 Adult & Community Education, RSU 16, RSU 19 Adult Education, RSU 25 Adult & Community Education, RSU 3 Adult & Community Education, RSU 5, RSU 54/ MSAD 54 Adult & Community Education, RSU 67 Adult Education, RSU 89 Adult Education, RSU24 Adult Education, Rwandan Community Association

**S** Saco Falls Management, Saco Schools, Sacopee Valley Adult & Community Education, SAD 1 Adult and Community Education, Sam L. Cohen Foundation, Sanford Community Adult Education, Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council, Sanford School Department, Sanford Unitarian Universalist Church, Scarborough Adult Education, SCORE, SeniorsPlus, Sewall Foundation, Southern Maine Agency on Aging, South Sudanese Community of Maine, Somali Bantu Association of Maine, South Portland Adult Education, South Portland Human Rights Commission, South Portland Schools, Southern Aroostook Development Corp., Southern Maine Woman's Reentry Center, Southern Maine Workers' Center, Space Mountain Adult Education, Sunrise County Economic Council

- T Tedford Shelter, The Emergency Action Network, The Opportunity Alliance, Through These Doors, Town of Brunswick, Town of Cape Elizabeth, Town of Falmouth, Town of Fort Fairfield, Town of Gorham, Town of Kennebunk, Town of Sanford, Town of Scarborough, Town of Windham, Tree Street Youth
- U Unified Asian Communities, United Insurance, United Way, United Way of Mid Coast Maine, United Way of Southern Maine, University of Maine
- V Valley Unified Continuing Education, Voice from Nations, Volk Packaging, Volunteer Maine
- W Washington County Adult & Community Education, Welcoming the Stranger, Wells-Ogunquit Adult & Community Education, WES Education Services, Westbrook Adult Education, Westbrook Housing Authority, Westbrook School Department, Western Maine Development Board, Windham/Raymond Adult Education, Word of God International Christian Center
- Y Yarmouth School Department, York Adult Education

Office of New Americans Plan  
[.maine.gov/future/ona](https://www.maine.gov/future/ona)

Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future  
[maine.gov/future](https://www.maine.gov/future)