COLORADO
Department of Labor and Employment

Employment Services of Weld County
A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

Immigrant & Refugee Center
OF NORTHERN COLORADO

New American TOOLKIT

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A WHY

Why a Toolkit and Who will use it?

The purpose of this toolkit is to assist front-line staff and other employees of Colorado workforce centers in serving New Americans. New Americans are Coloradans who arrived in the U.S. as immigrants and their children.

Workforce centers offer opportunities for individuals and families to secure stability for the long term and to contribute to their local economies through meaningful work. Yet, in Colorado's workforce development ecosystem, there remain challenges related to the inclusion of New Americans in programs for which they are eligible. The value that immigrants bring to our workforce comes in multiple forms including their impact to our collective wellness as essential workers and their place in the talent pipeline to meet the needs of Colorado businesses and employers. Immigrants also start businesses, become employers, and provide both jobs as well as goods and services to local communities, oftentimes reinvigorating neighborhoods and cities with new forms of commerce. We have an obligation to enhance and improve our strategies and outcomes for all our residents, including New Americans, in our roles as public servants and as members of the communities where we live and work.

The Office of New Americans (ONA), with its partners at the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC), and the Colorado Refugee Services Program (CRSP) are the entities supporting the development and publication of this toolkit, but the content included is in response to what statewide front-line staff indicated were needs, gaps, or areas where more training and support is required. This toolkit is not meant to be comprehensive of all ways to serve New Americans or to be a step-by-step guide; instead, it provides clarification of terms, contextualized information about our immigrant communities, notes on best practices, ideas for partnerships, and resources you can utilize to serve New Americans. It is our intention that this resource serves as a launch point for you and your colleagues to further join us in creating a Colorado for All.

* Footnotes in this document are provided for print users.

Why are we doing this?

VISION: To enhance the inclusion of New Americans, and the community organizations that serve them, in public workforce programs through the creation of tools, toolkits, and training. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process in which newcomers and the receiving society work together to build secure, vibrant, cohesive communities.[1] Immigrant integration benefits the whole, and an intentional, responsive process to engage and welcome transforms all community stakeholders, enriching our collective social, economic, and civic life. Workforce development has a particular role to play, in that economic security is one of the key factors that drive successful integration and inclusion.[2] Immigration policy may be federal, but immigrant integration and inclusion happen locally, driven, in large part, by meaningful participation in local economies. Successful integration and inclusion accelerate prosperity for communities as a whole.

Why is it important?

Besides the obvious positive impact that New Americans have on our economy, workforce, and local communities, this group of Coloradans has also emerged as a priority in statewide systems and legislation. In keeping with the New American Initiative launched in 2019 by Governor Polis (and as codified into statute as the Office of New Americans in CDLE through **House Bill 21-1150**[3]), state leaders, including the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA), have been working together to mitigate and eliminate barriers to full and rich economic participation by Colorado's New Americans. In fidelity with the Administration's stated goals, as an example, Colorado added "New Americans" to the listed priority populations in its Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act **state plan** (page 45).[4] This inclusion not only honors the skills and talents New Americans bring to our labor force but also establishes an expectation that workforce centers see this population as an asset that can help transform our workforce. Starting in spring 2021, workforce regional and local plans must also reflect the prioritization of New Americans in strategies and services; Connecting Colorado now can capture the engagement and successes of New Americans in our workforce system, helping highlight best practices as well as opportunities for improvement. This toolkit is meant to be a resource to support local providers in their work with New Americans so that collectively we as Colorado improve our services to all Coloradans.

Why Now?

New Funding Opportunities: We know workforce centers are well-versed in braiding funding streams, which can be especially helpful as serving priority populations may come with additional needs. As an example, **House Bill 21-1264**[5] provides additional funding for workforce development activities, much of which could significantly enhance services for all of the Governor's priority populations, including New Americans. As local workforce centers consider how to increase the skills of Colorado workers, we encourage you to take the current opportunity to implement new ideas and ways of doing business that will have a long-term impact on service delivery models and opportunities for those needing to reskill, upskill, and next-skill. If you want us to "show you the money" on other funding options to level up your services, click **here**[6] and **here**.[7] Blending and braiding funding can help you serve individuals and meet them where they are in terms of their needs and aspirations.

1 Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees
2 https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20110218135832/http:/rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/dpr28.pdf
3 https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb21-1150
4 https://drive.google.com/file/d/144a1vZD6VHCae-zhL78wF6Q4dis9zzU0/view
5 https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/2021a_1264_signed.pdf
6 https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/WBL-Policy-Academy_Braiding-Funding.pdf
7 https://drive.google.com/file/d/19xJzNgewpOMjd6VALpHhYQknr3wy4G7w/view

New Americans and the broader work of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): Approaching our work through a lens of equity is paramount in creating a Colorado that works for all. In all likelihood, as front-line staff, you've had the chance to attend DEI training (also called EDI), and as such, you recognize the importance of ensuring equitable access for all Coloradans to workforce opportunities. DEI is a field that has an agenda: to change the structures, policies, and cultures of companies so that individuals can realize their own professional aspirations without having their fate predicted by race or other defined attributes of identity.[8] Ensuring DEI practices in our work enhances our ability to serve our communities and build a strong foundation for a more prosperous future for all. Eager for more information on DEI? Check out the resources section of this toolkit.

A focus on New American integration can accelerate work on DEI and vice versa. As we, as a workforce system, continue to work towards equitable outcomes and opportunities, it's important to recognize the ways in which things like unconscious bias affect our ability to serve diverse communities, including New Americans. Unconscious bias may impact our service delivery (e.g., our assumptions about the kind of vocation a client is capable of based on singular factors such as language proficiency). As we work to uncover and address our unconscious biases, we might explore how that affects our ability to serve New Americans- what is reality and what is an assumption? How might our biases stand in the way of ensuring we provide the best services and outcomes to our clients and communities? Do we presuppose educational attainment based on someone's accent, for instance? How does that harm our ability to do our jobs well, for our clients, for our business partners, and for our community?

Unconscious, or implicit, biases are things we assume, take for granted, and believe are so true we don't even notice the way they might bias our perceptions and thoughts. We all have them.

They come from our personal, socialized experiences throughout our lives. Elements of our lived experience shape what we think of as good or bad, desirable or undesirable, beautiful or ugly, worthy or worthless. We believe that our perspectives are universal, normal, and correct. Unconscious bias can happen on a personal level, in company culture, or even in a whole country. **Here**[9] and **here**[10] are tools you can explore to learn more.

In addition, equitable outcomes also require diverse investments; serving New Americans, for example, might necessitate new partnerships or a different leveraging of resources, such as adult education. Not everybody needs the same things, and recognizing this as part of our DEI and New American efforts helps us foster customer-centered programs that serve all Coloradans well. Ensuring that the workforce system is responsive to individual customers' needs will benefit all job-seekers, regardless of their specific circumstances. For instance, an over-reliance on credentials like university degrees or high school diplomas as by training programs or employment opportunities to determine an applicant's skills or job readiness affects both New Americans and their U.S.-born peers. New Americans may not have had access to formal education in their home countries; U.S.-born Coloradans may have also struggled with issues related to economic security or familial wellness that disrupted their educational trajectories. Progress on both DEI and immigrant inclusion provides mutual benefit and serves us as a whole.

8 Weller, C., 2019. Diversity Without Inclusion Creates a Revolving Door of Talent. [online] NeuroLeadership Institute. Available at: <https://neuroleadership.com/yourbrain-at-work/diversity-inclusion-revolving-door-talent> [Accessed 30 June 2021].

9 https://perception.org/research/implicit-bias/

10 https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818663/peanut-butter-jelly-and-racism.html?fbclid=IwAR1H6BcE4_QSv5TEQQ5eeZutI_9JCgquaDTPFLq8olAvqaThPZRWfSowZhw

Business Needs and Worker Shortages: The growth in the immigrant population has helped to strengthen America's labor force. As baby boomers retire, younger immigrants are filling crucial gaps in the market. Nationally, immigrants are more likely to hold an advanced degree than U.S.-born. They are also more likely to have less than high school education. Uniquely, this allows them to fill critical shortages at both ends of the skill spectrum, from high-tech fields to agriculture, hospitality, and service industries. 2020 Census outcomes show us that the country is also rapidly diversifying, which means we need to change strategies to meet our clients and workers of today and tomorrow. (Check out this **article**[11] about the changes in Adams County!) By adapting our approaches now to be inclusive of all Coloradans, we are preparing ourselves for the future. New Americans represent an untapped resource in our local communities. (Please note, it's important, however, as we think about worker shortages to also remember that we do our best work as workforce system partners when we connect people to jobs that offer career pathways, pay livable wages and offer benefits, and allow community members to reach their aspirations.)

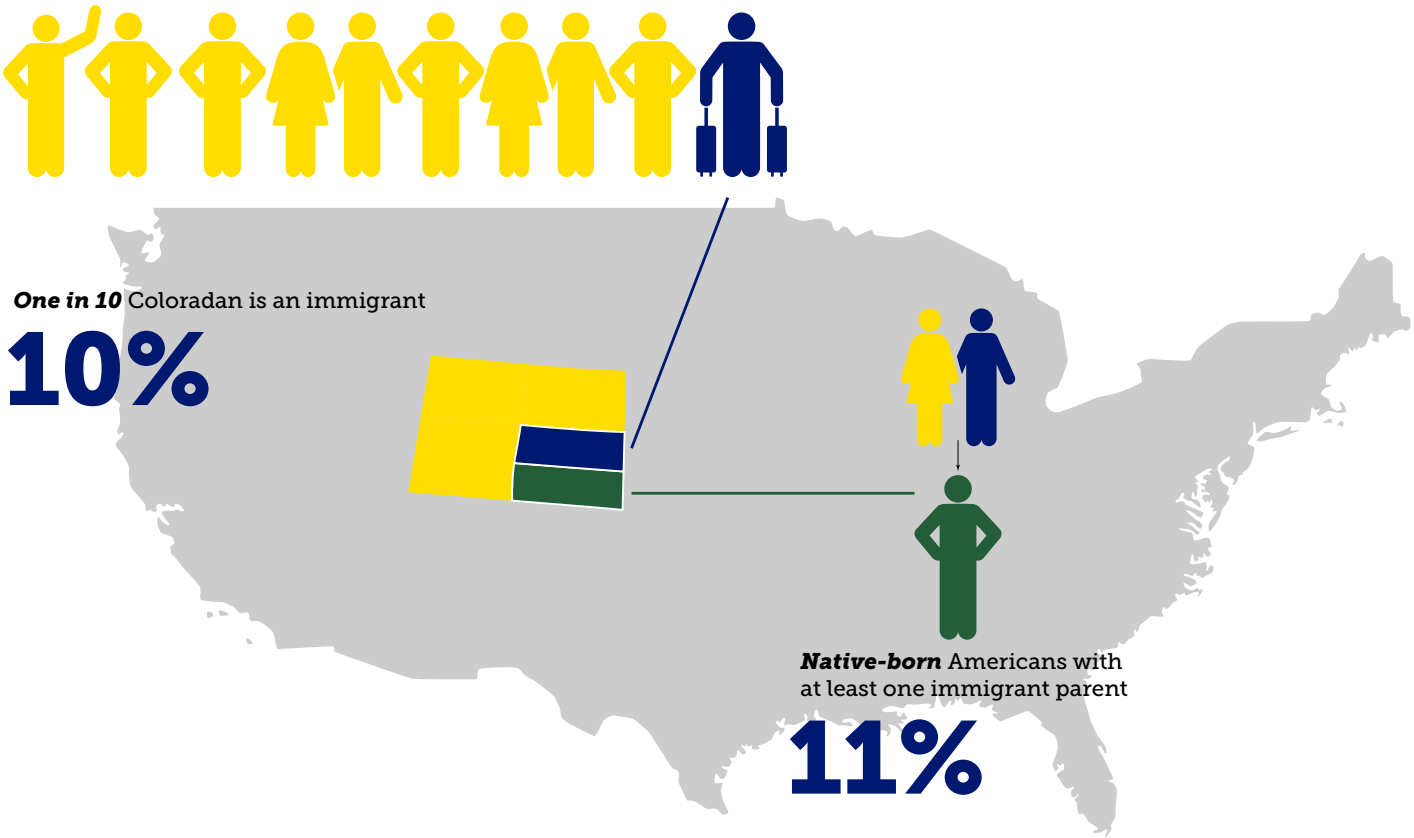
Underemployment and Lost Income: Many immigrants are underemployed and if we want Colorado to thrive, we must address this brain waste. Immigrants and refugees arrive with a whole host of skill sets, from doctors to entrepreneurs and teachers to artists. When they face barriers to using their skills in their new communities, we all suffer. According to the Colorado Refugee Services Program, Colorado lost $1.4M in labor income, $2.5M in gross state product, and $4.3M in output through the underemployment of the few hundred working-age refugees who arrived in one year (2017).[12]

11 https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/13/briefing/census-2020-diversity-united-states.html
12 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F2Wt0NvSei2nIwH-PC7nTr6MPRbqcxm9/view?usp=sharing

Who are New Americans?

As a refresher, New Americans are Coloradans who arrived in the U.S. as immigrants and their children. This population includes refugees, asylees, Special Immigrant Visa holders, victims of trafficking, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients, and all other immigrants and aspiring citizens seeking opportunity, safety, and/or reunification of the family. New Americans are children, parents, teachers, students, patients, doctors, contractors, homeowners, entrepreneurs, consumers, family members, friends, and neighbors. While New Americans represent a diverse portion of our population, there is much diversity within our "New American" community members, and their identities are a composite, just like U.S.-born citizens. Learn more in this New American **annual report**[13] from CDLE.

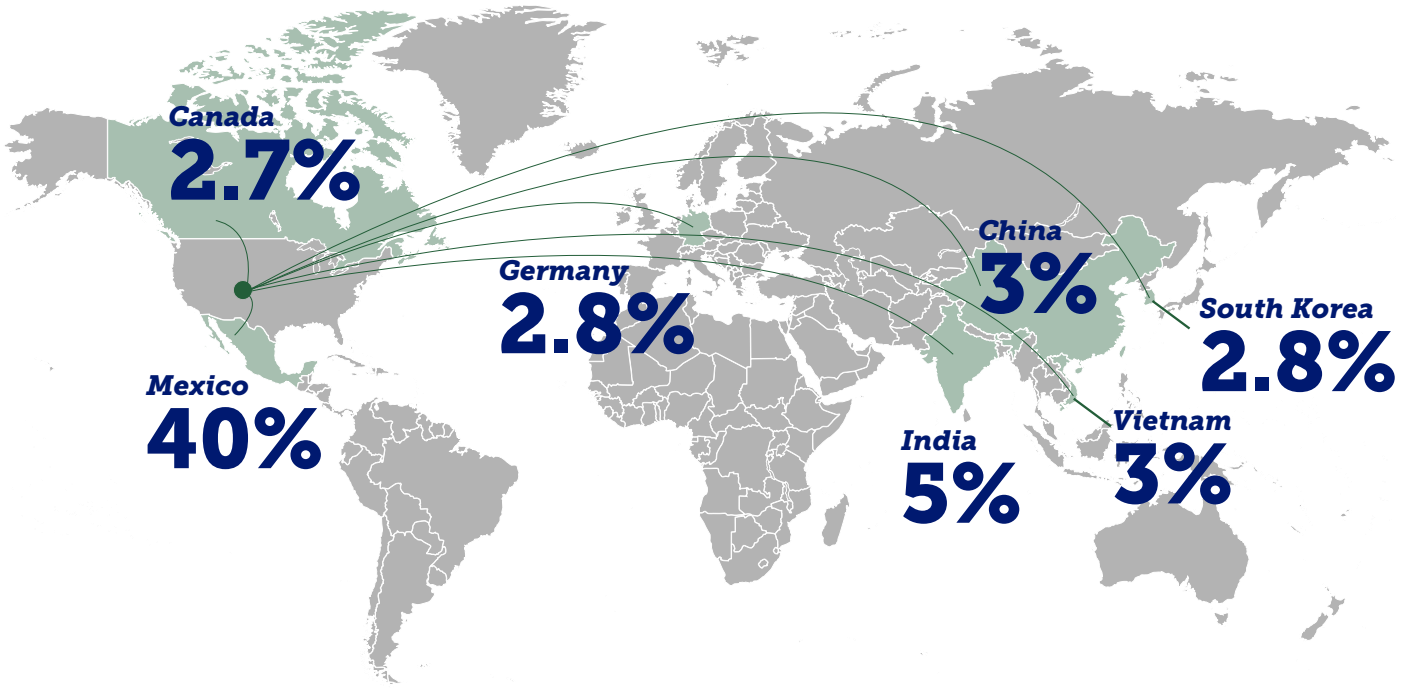
Colorado Demographic Data[14]
There are 5,531,141 residents in the state of Colorado, with immigrants and refugees making up 9.8% of the population, meaning about one in ten people are new Americans.

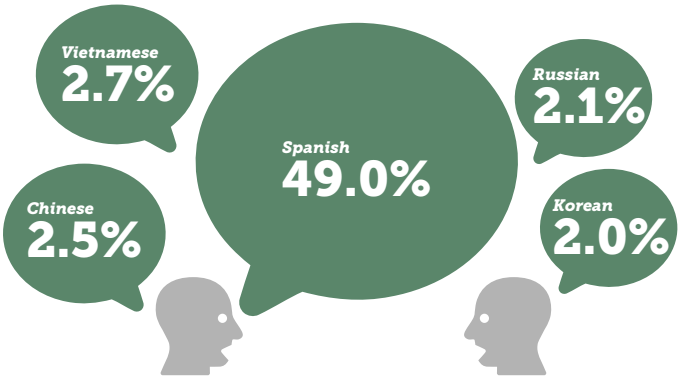


13 https://cdle.colorado.gov/sites/cdle/files/documents/New%20American%20Annual%20Report%2012-20%20final%20with%20signatures.pdf

14 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f4cqyyneeDpVePWUU6mpMvLwy2k_WnIc/view

Top Countries of Birth: The majority of new American immigrants are born in Mexico (42.3%), followed by India (3.9%), Vietnam (3.4%), China (3.4%), and Korea (2.8%). While the majority of refugees are born in Vietnam (25.3%), followed by Ethiopia (12.0%), Iraq (6.4%), Laos (5.3%), and Myanmar (Burma) (4.9%).





Top Languages Spoken at Home: At home, the top languages spoken by Coloradans, other than English, are Spanish (49.0%), Vietnamese (2.7%), Chinese (2.5%), Russian (2.1%), and Korean (2.0%).

Language Access Needs: To assist with increasing New Americans' access to benefits from programs for which they are eligible, focus on the top language needs for the languages spoken at home.

Additional languages to consider include: German (1.7%), Arabic (1.6%), Amharic, Ethiopian, etc. (1.4%), French (1.4%), Hindi (1.2%), Filipino/Tagalog (1.2%), Nepali (1.0%), Niger-Congo Regions (0.9%), Persian, Iranian, Farsi (0.7%), and Japanese (0.6%).

Educational and Career Backgrounds

According to the New American annual report[15], over 30% of Colorado immigrants have an advanced degree, and more than 2,000 of them are foreign-trained healthcare providers, including the hundreds who have arrived through the refugee program in the past several years. Twenty-nine percent of immigrants have less than a high school diploma and yet have ample skills in industries like construction, farming, entrepreneurship, or cosmetology.

15 https://cdle.colorado.gov/sites/cdle/files/documents/New%20American%20Annual%20Report%2012-20%20final%20with%20signatures.pdf

What about specific groups of Immigrants?

We know that immigrants are not a monolith. We must acknowledge the uniqueness of individuals and the intersectionality of their identity, but the following section may be helpful in referencing real numbers in terms of presence and impact of various groups within the broader immigrant community. Immigrants have a variety of immigration statuses, the majority of which make them eligible for services such as at workforce centers. Some of these are:

Immigrants with Work Authorization:

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA):
DACA is a temporary program enacted in 2012 that provides relief from deportation and work authorization for immigrants brought to America as children. 14,520 active DACA recipients lived in Colorado as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 18,555 people in total since 2012.

Humanitarian Parolees and asylum seekers:
Some newcomers may be lawfully present while their immigration cases for asylum are pending. Examples of these populations include some of those recently evacuated from Afghanistan or those who fled violence in Central America. They may not have a lawful status that makes them eligible for other services, like food assistance, but they may have, or be eligible for, worker authorization.

Immigrants with Lawful Status and Work Authorization:

Refugees:
A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee their home because of war, violence, or persecution, often without warning. More than 60,000 refugees, and other refugee-eligible populations, have arrived in Colorado since 1980. Refugees can become lawful permanent residents and eventually, naturalized citizens.

Refugee-eligible populations:
There are other populations that are eligible for refugee services, meaning they are eligible for many of the same programs and benefits as refugees and often have fled their home countries for similar reasons, such as Afghan **Special Immigrant Visa**[16] holders.

Recipients of Temporary Protected Status (TPS):
TPS is a temporary immigration status provided to nationals of specifically designated countries that are confronting an ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. It provides a work permit and stay of deportation to foreign nationals from those countries who are in the United States at the time the U.S. government makes the designation (**American Immigration Council**[17]). There are about 3,500 TPS holders in Colorado, and the largest population of TPS in Colorado are Salvadorans, many of whom have lived in the U.S. for decades.

Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs):
LPRs, also known as "green card" holders, are non-citizens who are lawfully authorized to live permanently within the United States. They also may apply to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain eligibility requirements (**Department of Homeland Security**[18]). These would include individuals who have arrived as part of the **Diversity Visa** process.

Naturalized Citizens:
Naturalization is the process by which U.S. citizenship is granted to a lawful permanent resident after meeting the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). Not all immigrants have pathways to citizenship.

16 https://immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-overview-of-the-special-immigrant-visa-programs/
17 https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/temporary-protected-status-overview
18 https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/lawful-permanent-residents

Immigrants without lawful presence or work authorization:
While over 80% of Colorado's immigrants have legal status, some Coloradans lack a pathway to citizenship. The vast majority of individuals who lack lawful status have lived in the country for more than five years. There are approximately 160,000 undocumented Coloradans, and while these individuals may not be eligible for many public workforce services, due to federal eligibility requirements, they do provide important workforce contributions to our local economy. The vast majority of these immigrants came to the U.S. due to economic struggle in their home countries, and they work in essential jobs that help, for instance, secure our food supply or lay the foundation for our tourist economy. Nonprofits may be working in your community to ensure these Coloradans access services they may need, including by assisting these workers in entrepreneurial skills.

Want to learn more about New Americans and their lived experiences?" Please see **here**[19] *for some testimonials of New Americans. Or request a speaker from the* **Colorado Refugee Speakers Bureau**[20] *(virtual or in-person)!*

19 https://www.newamericanscampaign.org/from-new-americans/
20 https://www.corefugeeconnect.org/speakers/

Who are New Americans in YOUR community?

Local and regional area plans submitted by each workforce region in spring 2021 contained answers to this very question! For the sake of brevity of this toolkit, local area demographics are not included. However, you can access regional and local plans with that data here.[21] Or ask your supervisor about the local area plan or your Limited English Proficient (LEP) plan submitted, which will also have population data! You can also work with your local data expert to receive labor market information or other data.

Still interested in learning more? Here are a few ways to learn:

- The **American Community Survey** (ACS)[22] is a survey completed by the United States Census Bureau. While smaller in scope than the Census, which occurs every ten years, the ACS includes many more questions. Data can be tailored to zip codes, cities or counties, and includes information such as the percentage of residents that are foreign-born or speak a language other than English at home.
- Colorado has a **State Demographer's Office**,[23] which also publishes data, often taken from the ACS.
- The Center for Migration Studies has state and local data (gathered through the 2019 ACS) at **http://data.cmsny.org/state.html**[24] and **http://data.cmsny.org/puma**,[25] respectively.
- **Colorado Refugee Services Program**[26] data
- Ask local partners! Schools serve all residents; teachers and administrators often have a good understanding of demographic changes before such changes show up in data. Likewise, nonprofits and faith-based community leaders often understand similar migration or population patterns given their on-the-ground work with many community members.

Why us? Why these authors?

This toolkit was primarily developed by a partnership between Employment Services Weld County and the Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado. Weld County is home to thousands of immigrants and hundreds of refugees; a language other than English is spoken in the homes of 19% of Weld County residents. Immigrants make a significant contribution to the local economy and are a crucial part of the local workforce. Although there is no monolith where immigrants (or any particular demographic) are concerned, there is a consistently demonstrated desire on the part of New Americans to be part of the workforce and achieve economic stability. Weld County, like many regions, counties, and cities in Colorado, also has worker shortages in key industries like production, healthcare, and hospitality.

In response to these realities, Employment Services Weld County (ESWC) and the Immigrant and Refugee Center (IRCNoCo) partner to develop strategies to meet the needs of both New American job-seekers and employers who need skilled workers. Two of those strategies are:

1: establishing a Community of Practice (CoP) where front-line workers from the workforce center, community-based organizations, institutions of higher education (Aims Community College, e.g.), adult education, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) have an opportunity to collaborate on streamlining referrals, creating easier pathways for co-enrollments and joint service delivery, and troubleshooting barriers that persist. This Community of Practice was established in 2018 for the purpose of increasing access for all job-seekers and providing a more holistic approach to helping Weld County residents thrive. New Americans, along with numerous other groups who are traditionally underserved, have benefited from the communication and partnership birthed out of this CoP.

21 https://cwdc.colorado.gov/wioa/regional-and-local-plans
22 https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs
23 https://demography.dola.colorado.gov/
24 http://data.cmsny.org/state.html
25 http://data.cmsny.org/puma.html
26 https://cdhs.colorado.gov/crsp

The thing I like most about these CoP meetings is that even though I've been working with the County for about 10 years and have learned a lot about the services we provide, it was through these meetings that I learned the most about what the community offers.

-- Anne Wolney Assessment and Learning Center Instructor, Employment Services of Weld County

At a May 2021 CoP meeting, Aims Community College shared that there was going to be free tuition for the college's summer session. I shared this with all of the Advanced ESL students I was teaching. One former student, who was still receiving information from me, enrolled in two college classes as a result of her hearing about the free tuition!

-- Karin Bates, ESL Instructor, IRCNoCo

2: ESWC and IRCNoCo have had staff from each agency provide on-site support for one another for the last 2 years, and that resource has been invaluable for both entities. In Fiscal Year 2022, we are taking the partnership a step further by having staff co-located at one another's agencies on a weekly basis. For example, an ESWC WIOA case manager may be at IRCNoCo once a week to help clients enroll in Connecting Colorado, explore what kind of vocational support may be available, and receive the opportunity to upskill, reskill, and next-skill at the same time they are pursuing language proficiency. Likewise, an IRCNoCo community navigator will be at ESWC to provide language and cultural competency support to clients and WIOA case managers.

From this experience, and in recognition that innovation and expertise are often locally-driven, CDLE and its New American Initiative (now the Office of New Americans) asked ESWC and IRCNoCo to develop this toolkit as a resource for our statewide efforts.

Why You?

As a Local Workforce Development Area, Department of Labor and Employment, and other key staff, you have the power to ensure that our state benefits from the talents and abilities of all job-seekers, including New Americans.

Need more why? It's good for your community's economic prosperity at large!

Economic stability is the key to successful integration, and New Americans contribute to our shared prosperity. Did you know that while one in nine Coloradans is an immigrant, one in eight Colorado workers is foreign-born? That's because immigrants are more likely to be of working age than their U.S.-born peers. Here are some of the ways Colorado is enriched by our New American population:

Entrepreneurship: It is hard to overstate the importance of entrepreneurship since new businesses are the main driver of job growth in the United States. Immigrants play a particularly important role in this— founding businesses at far higher rates than the U.S. population overall. Today, millions of American workers are employed at immigrant-founded and immigrant-owned companies. Did you know that more than 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children?

Taxes and Spending Power: Immigrant households contribute hundreds of billions of dollars in federal income, state, and local taxes nationwide and hold a tremendous amount of spending power. This gives them significant economic clout, helping support local communities as consumers and taxpayers. Like all residents in the United States regardless of where they were born, immigrants make use of public services like education, healthcare, and public safety. Even with these costs, however, immigrants' economic contributions far outweigh the extra cost of additional public services they incur.

- Number of Immigrants: 537,334
- Immigrant Share of Population: 9.3%
- Immigrant Taxes Paid: $5.8B
- Immigrant Spending Power: $15.6B
- Number of Immigrant Entrepreneurs: 43,684
- Number of Eligible Immigrant Voters: 248,164

Want to know more about the impact of New Americans in your community? New American Economy (NAE)[27] has data about specific populations, like DACA, or specific regions, like Weld County. Here's a sample of the data you can get from NAE.

Weld County, Colorado

- Number of Immigrants: 29,733
- Immigrant Share of Population: 10.2%
- Immigrant Taxes Paid: $187.1M
- Immigrant Spending Power: $605.6M
- Number of Immigrant Entrepreneurs: 1,765

27 https://data.newamericaneconomy.org/map-the-impact/

B HOW

We've discussed the Why's; now let's move onto the How's.

There is more to New Americans than their country of birth and primary language spoken at home. They may experience other barriers that additionally qualify them for programs to provide wrap-around services utilizing braided funding.

Eligibility for Programs:

Before we get into program eligibility, it's important to remember our obligations under non-discrimination policies. Every federal program, including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), has its own individual eligibility requirements. But every federally funded program also has obligations under the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and related federal policy guidance to refrain from discrimination against otherwise-eligible individuals on the basis of national origin (that is, whether they were born outside the United States), or Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Local workforce boards, Colorado Workforce Centers, and all other organizations that are recipients of federal funds are obligated to meet federal nondiscrimination requirements. Failure to meet these requirements can expose providers to legal liability for violation of federal civil rights law.

New Americans are eligible, like any job-seeker, for numerous programs offered through workforce centers. Below are some examples; this list is not exhaustive and is meant only to highlight a few programs you may consider when serving New Americans.

Wagner-Peyser

Wagner-Peyser has no eligibility requirements and is open to all job-seekers and businesses. job-seekers may choose self-service options such as registering on ConnectingColorado.com and job searching. New Americans, like all Coloradans, may benefit from these services, especially, for instance, those highly skilled immigrants that simply need help tailoring their overseas curriculum vitae into a resume format that helps them get through automated job screening processes used by many employers.

The services offered to employers are outlined in the Comprehensive Approach to Business Services, **Attachment 1**.[28]

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) can access employment services through Colorado's workforce centers or through the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) operated by Rocky Mountain SER, a partner of the workforce system.

Eligible migrant farmworker means an eligible seasonal farmworker whose agricultural labor requires travel to a job site such that the farmworker is unable to return to a permanent place of residence within the same day. Eligible seasonal farmworker means a low-income individual who, for 12 consecutive months out of the 24 months prior to application for the program involved, has been primarily employed in agricultural or fish farming labor that is characterized by chronic unemployment or underemployment and faces multiple barriers to economic self-sufficiency. In both instances, a dependent of the MSFW may be eligible, as well.

Although all Colorado workforce centers serve the MSFW population, there are six significant MSFW workforce centers that offer specialized services. These are the Adams County Workforce & Business Center, Employment Services of Weld County, Lamar Workforce Center, Monte Vista Workforce Center, Delta Workforce Center, and the La Junta Workforce Center. If you believe you have an individual who is an MSFW, please assist the customer with contacting the closest workforce center for further assistance. The staff of significant centers works in partnership with neighboring centers to ensure that MSFWs receive the specialized services they need.

There are other programs that may serve New Americans. See this **spreadsheet**.[29]

28 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IDlR6T-zchCOwiHm0EpHIMND7MgxQngh

29 https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wj84n3DYfuG-85vrbc-umQO8dll1KgiE/edit#gid=1264180262

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs

WIOA programs offer a broad range of career, training, and supportive services for individuals most in need. However, the programs have limited funding, and eligibility requirements for these programs vary and are extensive.

WIOA helps ensure that job-seekers can contribute their skills to Colorado's economy, and local employers can benefit from Coloradans' talent. Results from a March 2020 survey of workforce center front-line staff and supervisors across the state of Colorado show that 55% of participating staff did not know what Adult priority of service categories that New Americans might fit into.

New Americans, like their U.S.-born peers, may fit in more than one priority area! A responsive workforce center that offers a customer-centered design will be able to uncover a job-seeker's unique circumstances. Quick note, don't forget that you can capture all the priority areas an individual might fall into, not just one. Beyond ensuring you have looked at different ways to determine eligibility and the right resources for your client, this will help your local workforce center show the diversity of clients served through its data. The chart below lists WIOA adult statutory program requirements and priority programs, and it outlines cash assistance programs that may help individuals stabilize.

WIOA Adult Program	Cash Assistant Programs
Adult Statutory requirement priority categories include: • Recipients of public assistance; • Other low-income individuals (including underemployed); and • Individuals who are basic skills deficient **Adult Governor's priority categories include:** • Displaced Homemakers; • Eligible Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers; • Ex-offenders; • Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; • Individuals with disabilities; • Individuals who face substantial cultural barriers; • Long-term unemployed individuals (27 or more consecutive weeks); • Older individuals (age 55 and older); • Single parents (including single pregnant women); and • New Americans **Local priority categories may exist and are defined in local policy.** **Link to PGL**[30]	• Social Security Insurance (SSI); • Colorado Works/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); • Old Age Pension (OAD); • Aid to the Needy Disabled (AND); and • Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)

30 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1prS2R68rrbD-UOVw4mqEt83nMvmsjX17?usp=sharing

Let's look at some examples! These are not real people, but they are reflective of the experiences of many newcomers in our Colorado communities.

Meet Mohammed!

Mohammed is a single dad from Iraq who came to the United States as a refugee. He has been here six years, mostly working low-wage jobs while his daughters were in elementary school. He has cycled on and off of TANF, mostly because he struggles to keep up with technology and he also has a slight hearing disability that has made communicating at work difficult. He was working at a bakery, but he received a letter of termination as the bakery is shutting down and is moving its operations to Texas. He would like to attend English and digital literacy classes but he is struggling with how to find time for continuing education while he works and raises his children. What programs might help Mohammed?[31] Result: Mohammed is reskilling for a different job and is attending English classes that incorporate digital literacy instruction on Saturday mornings while his children attend programming at the same place.

Meet Ruth!

Ruth is the daughter of Eritrean immigrants. Her parents brought her to this country when she was just a child; she applied for and received DACA. Unfortunately, her family struggled in the U.S., especially after her mom died. She was once in foster care, and as a young adult, struggles with housing in her home community of Denver. Ruth was an excellent student, and she struggled with connecting with a stable and meaningful career. She's 21 years old, intelligent, hard-working, and would love to find work that allows her to serve the community. What other programs might be helpful for Ruth?[32] Result: Ruth enrolls in a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program to help her on her career path. She plans to check back in with her local workforce center for additional upskilling opportunities or better-paying jobs, potentially in adult home care.

Meet Natalie!

Natalie's family is Salvadoran. She and her family have lived in the Roaring Fork Valley for a decade. She met her husband, a naturalized citizen from Guatemala, here in Colorado. Natalie finished high school in El Salvador, but she did not go to college. While she did not speak English when she arrived, she is fluent now. Natalie is interested in entrepreneurial opportunities and/or pursuing training programs that could lead to a career in the field of medicine. What programs might Natalie be eligible for and what other programs might you refer her to?[33] Result: After review, Natalie is best served through recent stimulus programs under House Bill 21-1264 rather than WIOA, as the local workforce center has made New Americans a priority for these funds. She is connected to a nonprofit partner that helps individuals learn entrepreneurship skills and a job training program that helps Coloradans explore healthcare, and she hopes to start a business that serves medically fragile older adults.

What do Mohammed, Ruth and Natalie all have in common? They all consider themselves New Americans, and they all fall into different and diverse WIOA statutory and Governor's priorities. A responsive workforce center has the opportunity to connect these New Americans with programs that will give them the opportunity to use their skill sets-not only to be economically stable but also to meet the needs of employers in various sectors.

31 (Potential Answer: Employment First, TANF, Wagner Peyser, WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker, referral to DVR, referral to an ESL program that offers classes at multiple times)

32 (Potential answer, WIOA Youth and Adult, Chafee, 21-1264 funds)

33 (Potential Answer, WIOA Adult, 21-1264 funds)

Eligibility Barriers:

It may be difficult to identify how someone is eligible for Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth, but when we take time to understand a client and be responsive to their needs, we can find ways to make the workforce system work for them. For instance, although the PGL provides three statutory priority of service categories, it is important to note that other demographics such as being homeless, a foster child, an individual with disability income, or having a child within the household that receives free lunch, are all ways to make a person eligible. Additionally, persons within two years of exhausting TANF, are identified as Governor's priority. Refugees, for example, are TANF eligible populations upon their arrival in Colorado.

On the other hand, the eligibility criteria for Dislocated Worker and Youth is a bit more extensive. Keep in mind that anyone over the age of 18 with one of the three statutory priorities can be enrolled in Adult; this is a proven method to guarantee enrollment. For youth under the age of 18, a referral to a community college or other program that assists with the GED/HSE preparation is best. Additionally, the Governor's Summer Job Hunt program does not consider economic circumstances. The program assists with job search activities and referrals.

Many perceived eligibility barriers are not specific to New Americans. Some, such as immigration status, may not be in the workforce system's scope of control to remedy, but others, like enrollment in selective service, may be. Regardless, a responsive workforce center (and its staff) will investigate multiple paths, or programs, for their New American clients, and work with partners, like nonprofits or libraries which often do not have the same eligibility requirements as workforce centers, on referral pathways. It's also important to remember that eligibility barriers that exist today might not be a barrier in the future; for instance, someone's immigration status or reason for unemployment may change. Educating potential clients on their individual barriers, and reminding them they can return in the future if that barrier changes, may be a good way to foster increased inclusion of New Americans in workforce opportunities over the long term.

Access to Programs:

Eligibility for a program does not equal access for a program. Problems with access are not unique to New Americans. However, equitable access to opportunities is vital for newcomers to feel welcome and to foster a sense of belonging. Improving access to programs like WIOA is just one example of a customer-centered design that can help all workforce system customers – whether immigrants or U.S.-born. Many kinds of job-seekers can face barriers to employment, including individuals who are returning from incarceration, veterans, people with disabilities, older adults, youth aging out of the foster-care system, and English language learners.

Access for New Americans is complicated, as many newcomers face cross-cutting barriers that affect many Coloradans, such as lack of childcare, as well as additional barriers, such as lack of digital literacy, English proficiency, or requisite paperwork, such as high school diplomas from their home countries. In this section, we will cover what some of those barriers may be as well as some ideas and suggestions of ways those challenges can be overcome.

Language Barriers:

Not all New Americans are English Language Learners (ELLs), but over 15% of Coloradans have a first language other than English. Our non-native English speakers represent an indispensable part of our workforce, and language support is critical in making sure both job-seekers and employers have an opportunity to thrive. Workforce centers are a necessary connecting point in the ntegration journey through the plethora of resources they provide, but they can also serve both employees and employers by providing and referring clients to language support services.

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Need some help working with your English language learner clients?

Be the MVP of your staff's LAP for LEP individuals: Every workforce center must have a LAP (Language Assistance Plan) to ensure meaningful access to federal programs by Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals. Need some guidance on LAPs? Here's a **PGL**.[34]

These LAPs address a lot of information that is useful. They outline what languages are spoken in local areas; how translation and interpretation may be provided at your workforce center; how clients may be communicated with so that they may access services; staff training; and what kind of outreach your local area is doing in order to alert English language learners to your services. Ask your supervisor for a copy or find them **here**![35]

While individual plans may be unique to local workforce centers, there are a few best practices to consider:

- All employees, including new hires and experienced workers, should review the LAP annually so that the workforce center creates consistency New American clients can expect;
- New American clients should know how to easily discover how to request language assistance.
- Consider all entry points to workforce services: phone, email, walk-ins, town halls, social media, outreach, and communication. Are all of these accessible to speakers of prominent languages in your area or your target population? The best practice would be to ensure that the full continuum of interaction with a workforce center has the same level of language access.

Workforce centers are a necessary connecting point in the integration journey through the plethora of resources they provide, and they can also serve both employees and employers by providing and referring clients to language support services. English proficiency is key to an individual's access to higher-paying jobs. Becoming proficient in English increases engagement with their new country and ability to perform basic life functions, as well as to find and retain jobs. For many individuals, contextualized workplace-based English language classes are helpful for becoming job-ready in a specific field. As a reminder, English Language Learners may be eligible for priority of service under WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which provides priority to "recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic-skills deficient."

34 https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vg-HEIN03XCoTIsjekHII9myG23zs61y/view

35 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1atxS2jyTTsRv3tjGyjnZUmPh3-MbWxsg

One of the intended outcomes of WIOA compliance expectations is to ensure that workforce centers and mandated partners, such as adult education programs and DVR, are collaborating on meeting the needs of job-seekers and employers. The degree to which workforce centers and adult education providers co-enroll and provide joint service to clients varies significantly by region. The benefit of co-enrollment to the client/participant seems obvious, but it is an important strategy and a win for both of the entities as well. Adult education providers can offer services, specifically language and literacy classes, to a degree and depth that workforce centers would not be able to provide. These skills are often the lone barrier between a job-seeker and meaningful employment. Through co-enrollment, workforce centers can more efficiently and effectively help individuals upskill and reskill.

Where can you find additional support for your clients who are English language learners in your communities?

External English Language Support: Co-enrollment with Adult Education and Language Resources to Explore:

- Colorado Department of Education
- **Current Colorado Grantees**[36]
- **Colorado Libraries**[37]
- Community Colleges
- Immigrant-serving nonprofits
- Churches, mosques or other gathering places for faith communities

Still unclear? Virtual English classes may also help your clients and community members! There are both free and paid services. Some examples of this are:

- **DuoLingo** (free!)[38]
- **Voxy Engen**.[39] Voxy Engen is unique in that its classes are career-specific. Local partners, including Emily Griffith Technical College in Denver, and big employers like Target and Walmart use the virtual platform as a component of job and career training.

Degree, Licensing, and Credentials Barriers

Many New Americans hold degrees, licenses, and/or credentials in other countries that they need to transfer to, or re-obtain, in the United States. Receiving credit for prior learning helps these workers quickly advance with their career paths and ensure successful economic integration. Below are links to credential evaluation companies that can help review an individual's curriculum vitae or foreign credentials for alignment. Note that many of these have costs, but there may be a potential for workforce centers to help allay those expenses for clients.

- **Colorado State University Global International Transcript Evaluation**[40]
- **National Association of Credential Evaluation Services**[41]

In addition, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) also have information for occupations they specifically oversee.

- **CDE Licensure Requirements for Foreign Applicants**[42]
- **DORA Immigrant Guide**[43]

Did you know? **Senate Bill 21-077**[44] dropped lawful presence as a requirement for individual licenses, such as occupational or business licenses. Some work-authorized individuals, such as those with DACA, do not have lawful presence. This change to state law allows New Americans (including DACA) to access these credentials, dependent on their attainment of the skills and expertise needed, just like every other Coloradan. This applies to some of our most in-demand credentialed occupations such as Certified Nurse Assistants (CNA). Note this recent change as you work with your clients on a career path! Many of these occupations may be great for entrepreneurs. Connect with your local economic development agency or Colorado's **Minority Business Office**[45] at **oedit_mbo@state.co.us**.

36 https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/grantees/current-grantees
37 https://www.coloradolibraries.org/
38 https://www.duolingo.com/
39 https://www.voxyengen.com/
40 https://csuglobal.edu/international-transcript-evaluation-application
41 https://www.naces.org/members
42 https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/licensure_outstate_faq
43 https://dpo.colorado.gov/ImmigrantLicensure
44 https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb21-077
45 https://oedit.colorado.gov/minority-business-office-of-colorado

Paperwork and Bureaucratic Barriers

Sometimes, New Americans do not have the same level of documentation as their U.S.-born counterparts. Maybe they lived in a country without good recordkeeping, maybe they fled without their high school diploma, or maybe they cannot contact their former university for fear of persecution. Whatever the reason, there may be ways in which you can be creative so that paperwork is not the thing that stands in the way of someone's success. Eligibility for a federal or state program often has prescribed documents, but jobs themselves may be more malleable. You probably know that the state and other workforce partners are working towards a future in which skills, rather than solely credentials, are used to evaluate someone's ability to be successful in a job. Using skills-based hiring, whether for apprenticeships or jobs, can help New Americans that do not have a record of their credential or experience. See the Colorado Workforce Development Council's playbook (page 34).[46]

Cultural Barriers

New Americans may need help to become familiar with United States job application processes, interviews, workplace customs, and culture to become job-ready. Fortunately, many workforce centers already have tools they can use with newcomers. For example, workforce centers may offer mock interviews to assist participants in learning the cultural nuances of questions asked in the United States, job training classes, or referrals to employment mentoring programs. This may include learning how to grow professional networks socially.

Unfortunately, it's not uncommon for cultural differences to be misconstrued as deficiencies in motivation or work ethic. Workforce center employees have the opportunity to help New Americans integrate by aiding in their understanding of workplace expectations. Through a customer-centered approach, intake staff and case managers can better understand what unique cultural factors may impact a New American job-seeker. While front-line workforce staff cannot be expected to be experts in all cultures or to understand all the rights afforded workers in the U.S, it is reasonable to expect that staff will be active listeners and learn about vocational specifics related to family structure dynamics or the need for prayer breaks, for example.

Likewise, New American job-seekers can learn from front-line staff about how to grow or enhance not only industry skills but also soft skills that all workers in the American workforce system must continually hone. Cultural orientation workshops may be a great addition to ongoing professional development for front-line staff workers while soft-skills training and workplace readiness credential attainment may be advantageous opportunities for New Americans. Want to learn more about the Workplace Readiness credential? Try **Conover Workplace Readiness®**.[47] Other recommendations for workforce centers to address the cultural divide include hiring staff from New American communities who understand cultural nuances. Looking for more? See additional links to tools in the Resources section of this toolkit.

46 https://drive.google.com/file/d/10FVVDE_nnJS5-wYBlZwR9KLdMyoKH7Id/view

47 https://www.conovercompany.com/conover-online-professional/workplace-readiness/

Digital Literacy Barriers:

New Americans may have barriers related to both access to technology and proficiency in digital skills. This barrier can potentially be addressed through workforce programs, but if not, there are external resources that can be utilized. Front-line staff can be a gateway for referrals so that New Americans (and any job-seeker) can gain the necessary digital skills to thrive in a 21st Century workplace.

Hardware:

- **PCs for People** offers its refurbished computers and low-cost internet in-stores and online **www.pcsrefurbished.com**[48]. If you live near one of their stores, we would recommend stopping by to collect your computer or internet hotspot in person. Their staff can help answer questions and provide helpful information on your new device. If you do not live within a reasonable drive of our stores, online store offers free shipping to all U.S. states.

Internet: Public Access

- Local libraries offer free wireless internet for use and some offer device loans. You can go to the **Colorado Virtual Library**[49] site to find a nearby library that offers WiFi.
- Comcast Lift Zones provides free hotspot connectivity, educational and digital skills content to help families, and site coordinators navigate online learning at community centers nationwide to help students get online, participate in distance learning, and do their homework. Find your nearest Lift Zone at this **link**.[50]

Skill Development:

- **Assessments**
  - You can take online assessments with Northstar by scrolling down to "Take an Assessment" at **www.digitalliteracyassessment.org**.[51] Once completed, you can get a digital badge emailed to you.
  - For in-person exams, to get a certificate, or for support with the assessment, Northstar Digital Literacy testing sites can be found at **www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/locations**,[52] where you can earn a certificate and digital badge to add to your resume or LinkedIn profile.
- **Online/Self Paced**
  - Northstar Digital Literacy is making some of its **Northstar Online Learning**[53] (NSOL) units available publicly for a period of time to serve those who may be unable to access services in public locations due to COVID-19 restrictions. These courses include basic computer literacy skills, email, Microsoft Word, and career search skills. These courses are only available in English.
  - **Microsoft Digital Literacy**[54] courses are available for people to learn computer fundamentals or collaboration tools. Materials are available in multiple languages for download.
  - **GCFLearnFree**[55] offers online courses in English, Spanish, and Portuguese for essential skills needed to live and work in the 21st century. From Microsoft Office and email to reading, math, and more—**GCFLearnFree.org** offers more than 200 topics, including more than 2,000 lessons, more than 1,000 videos, and more than 50 interactives and games, completely free.
- **Instructor-Led**
  - You can call 2-1-1 or use their **online database**[56] to find computer classes. Many local libraries, workforce centers, and others offer classes.

48 https://pcsrefurbished.com/sales/salesHome.aspx
49 https://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org
50 https://colorado.comcast.com/lift-zones
51 https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org
52 https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/locations
53 https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/news/2020/03/nsol-publicly-available-covid-19
54 https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/digital-literacy
55 https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/
56 https://www.211colorado.org/

Lack of Awareness

One of the biggest barriers to access is simply a lack of awareness! Newcomers may not realize the wealth of services workforce centers offer, and they may not get information from the traditional streams of communication, such as your workforce center's social media pages or the local English language paper. Some best practices would be to include Spanish language media, like Univision, or, even better, local radio stations, like KQSE 94.5 FM or as it's known on air, La Nueva Mix, in Glenwood Springs. How do you find out where New Americans get their information? Ask around! Faith leaders who serve New American communities may be a good place to start or ask your existing clients. In addition, many New American communities, like many U.S. communities nationwide, rely on word of mouth. Word of mouth can be chatting amongst friends, but it can also include videos on Facebook or a What's App text group. Engaging community leaders is a great way to help with your messaging. Community partners like nonprofits, schools, healthcare centers, or city governments also search for ways to communicate with New American communities. By connecting with them, you may just be able to find a trusted community messenger to help you advertise your services or job fairs. New America, a think tank, helped the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment think through strategies during the pandemic. Find their report **here**[57], and see if their recommended strategies apply to your needs.

Other barriers

Trauma is often understood as an invisible disability. The National Council for Behavioral Health estimates that at least 70% of Americans have experienced some form of trauma in their lives. Some immigrants, refugees, and New Americans may need referrals to additional services that are designed to address symptoms of previously experienced trauma. For example, some individuals may have endured violence and other physical hardships as a result of armed conflict in their country of origin. In other instances, they may be survivors of human trafficking, whether labor or sexual.

Access to support services via a referral process, such as trauma-informed mental health counseling, culturally appropriate support groups, medical care, or legal services may help them more successfully engage in the employment and training process. We know that while traumatic experiences may necessitate additional support, it is not uncommon for trauma survivors to have increased resiliency and adaptive coping skills, both of which are an asset in the workplace.

- **Violence Free Colorado**[58]
- Colorado's Trauma-Informed System of Care
- **(COACT Colorado)**[59]
- **Medicaid**[60]: Each Medicaid region offers care coordination to help individuals find care, including behavioral health care.
- **Find Behavioral Health Help**[61]: For clients who are uninsured or underinsured, they can find services through their Community Mental Health Center (mental health) or Managed Service Organization (substance use).
- **Colorado Crisis Services**[62]: Colorado Crisis Services offers free, confidential, 24/7 support to people who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis and their loved ones. Call 844.493.9255 to receive support; translation services are available in more than 200 languages.

57 https://www.newamerica.org/new-practice-lab/reports/communicating-with-immigrant-and-non-english-speakers-about-the-covid-19-vaccine/
58 https://www.violencefreecolorado.org/what-we-do/special-projects/tic/
59 https://coactcolorado.org/
60 https://www.healthfirstcolorado.com/health-first-colorado-regional-organizations/
61 https://cdhs.colorado.gov/behavioral-health/find-behavioral-health-help
62 https://coloradocrisisservices.org/

Additional solutions:

Blending and braiding funding[63] can be a great way to serve Coloradans, including New Americans. Here are some recent examples from ESWC:

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) office in Greeley emailed ESWC seeking assistance with a work experience opportunity for a client. Their client had six months of previous administrative assistant experience but showed anxiety and other physical health concerns with her current position. ESWC co-enrolled the client and used Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding to pay for assessments such as the Test of Adult Basic Education and Future Plans. The WIOA case manager identified another work experience opportunity that DVR chose to fund, rounding out the braiding of funds.

A single parent of one child was receiving TANF and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. He was having a hard time finding employment due to recent legal problems. The TANF participant was co-enrolled in the Adult WIOA program, where his case manager had him complete several assessments. In reviewing the results with the participant, it was determined that obtaining a CDLA (Commercial Drivers License Class A) would benefit him. After successfully completing the CDLA training, using WIOA funding, he gained employment with a local sanitation company and is now making a living wage and has started rebuilding his life.

63 https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/WBL-Policy-Academy_Braiding-Funding.pdf

Partner!

We Get By With A Little Help From Our Friends

Partners in this project can vary from student groups at local universities to national nonprofits; health providers and faith-based nonprofits, such as Catholic Charities and Lutheran Family Services, and from legal services centers to community soccer programs. Organizations that serve New Americans in Colorado provide several types of services, including, but certainly not limited to, the following: health services, including mental health, immigration rights advocacy, immigration legal assistance, ESL training, housing, early childhood education, citizenship classes, assistance in pursuit of higher education, translation services, and much more. When you think about blending and braiding services together for better client outcomes, don't forget about this very rich partner universe! Each nonprofit partner is different in their mission and focus, and the best way to learn about them is to get to know their staff and board.

In order to find and get connected to these various organizations, it is first helpful to look into already existing lists of these organizations readily available online. United Way's **211**[64] is always a good place to start, as it allows you to easily change the location of where you may be looking to provide you the most accurate information for your current location or where you may be looking to seek services. Another helpful list includes the partners listed on **Colorado Refugee Connect**,[65] where you can filter for location, program area, and more. Throughout the process of this project, members of our team have also compiled a starter **list**[66] of organizations throughout the state that serve New Americans.

Getting connected to these groups may first involve a visit to their website, in order to gather information on what services they provide and to whom they provide such services. Many sites have listed contact information, such as an email address or phone number, that allows those seeking services a means of communication to the organization. If the services one is seeking are not provided by the organization that they contacted, a great way to get connected further is to ask the organization directly which organizations they often refer others to that are seeking similar assistance. Oftentimes, these organizations are connected to one another and refer to their partner organizations, making it crucial to understand and inquire about these connections to make sure that all New Americans are being provided with the support and services they need at any given time.

We know that this has been a lot of information, and we also know it's just a starting point to help workforce centers and their staff tap into the skills and experience of their New American neighbors to meet the needs of local businesses and economies. Based on our survey, the overwhelming ask (over 90% of respondents!) was to help with additional resources. In response, we compiled some! This is not exhaustive, but as you read through them, send your favorites out to coworkers or find new ones (and please share them with us!)

64 https://www.211colorado.org/
65 https://www.corefugeeconnect.org/organizations/
66 https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/173Mc0jAXQWk8s4kYJ5LvermEvF5vfTvyfK6wujXSt58/edit#gid=457516781

CLEARN AND SHARE MORE

Resources:

A. CWDC [67] tools (Talent Equity Agenda, resources on funding, etc)

B. PGLS (broken down by topic)

- Language Assistance Plan (PGL ADM-2019-05, Change 1)[68]
- Affirmative Outreach (PGL ADM-2019-04)[69]
- EO and Non-Discrimination Sanctions (PGL ADM-2019-03)[70]
- Affidavit of Immigration Status (PGL WIOA-2014-02, Change 4)[71]
- Priority of Service for Title I Adult Programs (PGL WIOA-2015-07, Change 4)[72]
- Needs Related Payments (PGL WIOA-2017-13)[73]
- Supportive Services (PGL WIOA-2017-11, Rev. Oct. 2020)[74]
- WIOA Eligibility (PGL WIOA-2015-05, Change 4)[75]
- Employment Eligibility Verification Required for Temporary H-2A and H-2B (PGL WP-2008-02)[76]
- H-2A Foreign Labor Certification Guidelines (PGL WP-2011-01, Change 3)[77]
- MSFW Annual Outreach Plans (PGL WP-2009-01)[78]
- Guidelines for Use of MSFW Program Funding (PGL WP-2013-01)[79]

C. Digital Literacy Resources

- Office of the Future of Work, Digital Literacy and Inclusion Initiative[80]
- University of Colorado[81]
- Colorado Community College[82]
- Immigration and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado[83]
- Center for Work Education Employment[84]
- Colorado Virtual Library, Digital Literacy Resources Colorado Libraries[85]
- Colorado Libraries[86]
- KidsTek[87]
- Microsoft Digital Literacy Courses[88]
- Workforce Centers[89]
- Asian Pacific Development Center[90]
- PCs For People[91]

67 https://cwdc.colorado.gov/
68 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xR99yFGRalKMHA0HRTNleIG1ROGp3Bwr
69 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/173MngYutRM-LCveMn4XoH_8AUTNuYr3u
70 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11eAkgYNoR-LRarxzfsBhgV91tTa0MP6Q
71 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nizKnElSJ_q6q_JEc8jFkGV6NmC1AzvD
72 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1prS2R68rrbD-UOVw4mqEt83nMvmsjX17
73 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vG0O85kZHakTzE4ON_b3oTnkzW29mYmD
74 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vG0O85kZHakTzE4ON_b3oTnkzW29mYmD
75 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16m-ImdEZkZzoNUmhZw_ttah8fL0vc5IP
76 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13mw5BivvoIK6a3SKZwp-K8Ko5g0XOdKE
77 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CI1uOZvhEXq1ah_EFncOgWrTf6C0eg2R
78 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1EQt3w1Yy2FWJ6yKT4CHTzh0hEkXMSnT6
79 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lk5DGDndMMhB6QbBlqq_L7BByjp41-aa
80 https://cdle.colorado.gov/digitalinclusion
81 https://www.colorado.edu/
82 https://www.ccconline.org/
83 https://www.ircnoco.org/
84 https://cwee.org/
85 https://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/learning/digital-literacy-resources/
86 https://www.coloradolibraries.org/
87 https://kidstek.org/
88 https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/digital-literacy
89 https://cdle.colorado.gov/wfc
90 https://www.apdc.org/adult-education
91 https://www.pcsforpeople.org/

D. Inclusive Workforce Policy and Services

- Career Pathways
  - Institute of Education Sciences, **Career Pathways Programming in Adult**[92]
  - **Education Programs: What we are Learning from Three Cities**[93] – This blog post discusses a Researcher-Practitioner Partnership involving researcher sat Pennsylvania State University working in collaboration with adult education providers in Chicago, Houston, and Miami. Additional information can be found here: **WorkforceGPS**[94], **Career Pathways Programming for AdultLearners**. (2018)
  - Division of Professions and Occupations: Licensing Portability, **Immigrant Licensure Information**[95]
  - **Workforce Centers**[96]
- Inclusive Workforce Policies
  - **Colorado Inclusive Economy**[97]
  - IRC, Skill, **Career and Wage Mobility Among Refugees98: Understanding Refugees' Transitions into Higher-skill, Higher-wage Work as a Lens to Inform Effective Workforce Development Policies and Practices in the U.S.** – Section VII of this report on refugee career, skill, and wage mobility includes policy recommendations, many of which relate to workforce policy (including at the local level) (2018).
  - IRC, **California Nonprofits and the Public Workforce System: How CBOs Can Make Their Voices Heard in the WIOA Planning Process**[99] – This brief provides information to community-based organizations, especially those that serve marginalized populations, to engage with and advocate for better services from their Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) which oversee AJCs (2018).
  - Aspen Institute, **Improving Immigrant Access to Workforce Services: Partnerships, Practices, and Policies**[100] – This report focuses on partnerships between immigrant-serving organizations and workforce development organizations (2016)
  - Economic Development Journal,
    - **Building a Welcoming Economy: How Local Economic Development Can Support Immigrant Business Owners, Investors and Entrepreneurs**[101] – This recent article discusses immigrant-inclusive economic development strategies in locations including Detroit and Minneapolis/St. Paul. Approaches are designed to be replicable in cities and communities of all sizes (2021).
  - **Implementing Long-Term Inclusion Initiatives: How to Develop and Sustain Meaningful Economic Inclusion Efforts**[102] – This article shares examples of successful economic inclusion initiatives, describes how they are measured, and provides guidance to organizations seeking to implement similar strategies (2021)
  - Migration Policy Institute: The fact sheets below summarize key characteristics of foreign-born and native-born U.S. residents that are relevant to understanding needs for adult education and workforce training services. They aim to support the equitable implementation of WIOA and other policy initiatives.
    - **Immigrants and WIOA Services: Comparison of Sociodemographic Characteristics of Native- and Foreign-Born Adults in the United States (2016)**[103]
    - **Immigrants and WIOA Services: Comparison of Sociodemographic Characteristic of Native and Foreign-Born Adults in Colorado (2016)**[104]

92 https://ies.ed.gov/blogs/research/post/career-pathways-programming-in-adults-education-programs-what-we-are-learning-from-three-cities
93 https://ies.ed.gov/blogs/research/post/career-pathways-programming-in-adults-education-programs-what-we-are-learning-from-three-cities
94 https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2020/08/27/17/12/Career-Pathways-Programming-for-Adult-Learners
95 https://dpo.colorado.gov/ImmigrantLicensure
96 https://cdle.colorado.gov/wfc
97 https://inclusiveeconomy.us/
98 https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/3375/skillcareerandwagemobilityamongrefugeesircfinaldocx2.pdf
99 https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/2928/usp1806communityengagementguideweb.pdf
100 https://www.aecf.org/resources/improving-immigrant-access-to-workforce-services-partnerships-practices-and-policies-1/
101 https://welcomingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Economic-Development-Journal_Winter2021_final.pdf
102 https://welcomingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Economic-Development-Journal_Winter2021_final.pdf
103 https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigrants-and-wioa-services-comparison-sociodemographic-characteristics-native-and-foreign
104 https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/WIOAFactSheet-Colorado-FINAL.pdf

- Racial Economic Equity
  - Workforce Matters, **A Racial Equity Framework for Workforce Development Funders**[105] - This framework helps identify concrete ways for funders in the workforce development field to interrupt the systemic racism embedded within the field's practices, policies, and programs; the institution of philanthropy; our own organizations; and the labor market in communities we serve (2021).
  - Prosperity Now, **Exploring Racial Economic Equity in Workforce Development**[106] - This manual aims to educate service providers on the structural challenges driving racial economic inequality and highlight emerging promising practices to consider when developing and implementing race-conscious programs. (2020)
  - **New Americans Initiative**[107]
- Serving Immigrants and English Language Learners
  - Best Practices, Partnership Models, and Resources Available for Serving English Language Learners, Immigrants, Refugees, and New Americans, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, **Training and Employment Notice** (TEN) – This notice discusses best practices and program models for serving ELLs with WIOA funds, especially the Title I funds which support services for adults and dislocated workers at American Job Centers (AJCs) (2021).
  - California Workforce Development Board, **Serving English Language Learner (Ell) Populations Using Best Practices And Model Partnerships**[108] – This whitepaper also aims to lift up best practices for workforce systems in serving ELLs under WIOA (2017).
  - National Skills Coalition, **Making Sure WIOA Works for All: Michigan's Obligations and Opportunities in Serving Immigrant and Refugee Jobseekers**[109] – This brief discusses WIOA providers' (particularly AJCs') "obligations and opportunities" in serving ELLs, immigrants and refugees (2020).
  - **Colorado Workforce Development Council**[110]

105 https://workforce-matters.org/a-racial-equity-framework-for-workforce-development-funders/
106 https://prosperitynow.org/sites/default/files/resources/Exploring-Racial-Economic-Equity-in-Workforce%20Development.pdf
107 https://cdle.colorado.gov/offices/new-americans-initiative
108 https://cwdb.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2016/08/LEP-Policy-Brief-Final-Draft-01.26.17_ACCESSIBLE.pdf
109 https://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/WIOA-and-immigrants-eligibility-guide-for-Michigan.pdf
110 https://cwdc.colorado.gov/

E. Resources for workforce development skills training

- Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE): **https://coresourceexchange.org**[111]
  - Connects refugee resettlement staff globally to provide cultural orientation for refugees in the U.S.
- Higher Advantage: **https://www.higheradvantage.org/**[112]
  - Online learning institute that offers courses and games for developing workforce skills
- Office of Global Michigan: **https://www.michigan.gov/ogm/0,9597,7-394-93230_93231_104567---,00.html**[113]
  - ESL classes, Job search resources, learning resources
- Migration Policy Institute: **https://www.migrationpolicy.org/topics/workforce-vocational-training**[114]
  - Workforce and development training; helpful research and articles
- Upwardly Global: **https://www.upwardlyglobal.org/career-skills-program/workplace-skill-training**[115]
  - Courses on core US workplace skills
- Emily Griffith Technical College: **https://www.emilygriffith.edu/services**[116]
  - Career Coaching; Goal planning; English language assistance
- California Immigrant Policy Center: **https://caimmigrant.org/what-we-do/increasing-access-to-skills-and-training**[117]
  - Skills trainings, videos, written resources on workforce skills

F. Resources to Learn More about Immigrants and refugees

- Colorado Refugee Connect **https://www.corefugeeconnect.org**[118]

111 https://coresourceexchange.org/
112 https://www.higheradvantage.org/
113 https://www.michigan.gov/ogm/0,9597,7-394-93230_93231_104567---,00.html
114 https://www.migrationpolicy.org/topics/workforce-vocational-training
115 https://www.upwardlyglobal.org/career-skills-program/workplace-skill-training/
116 https://www.emilygriffith.edu/services/
117 https://caimmigrant.org/what-we-do/increasing-access-to-skills-and-training/
118 https://www.corefugeeconnect.org/

G. Resources for Entrepreneurs, Workers and Business from the Office of Economic Development and International Trade

- MBO programs[119]
  - Startup Colorado[120]
- Rural Development[121]
- Access to capital[122]
  - Grants[123]
  - Scholarships[124]
  - Startup capital[125]
  - Loans[126]
- Technical Assistance[127]
  - Get support from your business idea to business growth, make an appointment at your local SBDC - Small Business Development Center Network[128]

More Programs[129] and upcoming workshops[130]!

Immigrant & Refugee Center OF NORTHERN COLORADO

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119 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=supported_by_division_%3AMinority%20Business%20Office
120 https://startupcolorado.org/
121 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_interested_in_%3ASmall%20Business%20Assistance&items_per_page=All
122 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_looking_for_%3AFinancial%20Support
123 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_looking_for_%3AGrants
124 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_looking_for_%3AScholarships
125 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_looking_for_%3AStartup%20Capital
126 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_looking_for_%3ALoans
127 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=i_am_looking_for_%3AConsulting/Technical%20Assistance&items_per_page=All
128 https://www.coloradosbdc.org/who-we-are/locations/
129 https://oedit.colorado.gov/programs-and-funding?Programs%5B0%5D=supported_by_division_%3AMinority%20Business%20Office
130 https://clients.coloradosbdc.org/Events.

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