



## Guidelines for Welcoming Policies

Pennsylvania should pursue policies that make our state more welcoming to newcomers. We need policies that reflect our values of compassion, inclusiveness, and diversity and work to end unjust deportations, reunify and keep families together and welcome those seeking asylum and refuge. The following guidelines have been developed in partnership with PICC members and immigrant leaders in Pennsylvania with the goal of giving allies and policymakers guidance on how to support the needs and well-being of immigrant and refugee communities in Pennsylvania.

### **Ending Police/ICE Collaboration: Communities are safer when local law enforcement is separate from immigration enforcement. Effective policies must:**

- Prevent law enforcement from inquiring about a person's immigration status, citizenship, national origin, or country of birth
- Forbid sharing information or resources with ICE for the purpose of civil immigration enforcement
- Require a judicial warrant to detain or hold any person for ICE
- Mandate training for all officers on the requirements of a policy limiting collaboration with ICE and establish clear accountability measures for violation of the policy

### **Ensuring Equal Access to Higher Education: All graduates of Pennsylvania high schools should have equal opportunity to attend college, regardless of immigration status. Legislation must:**

- Extend in-state tuition to all students regardless of immigration status, including undocumented students, students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and students with Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
  - All students who graduate from a Pennsylvania high school or attend two years of high school in Pennsylvania and receive the equivalent of a diploma are eligible to receive in-state tuition rates at community colleges, members of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, and private universities that receive state funds
- Extend state-funded financial aid to all financially eligible students, regardless of immigration status

### **Access to Driver's Licenses for All: Providing access to a uniform driver's license to all Pennsylvanians will increase public safety and benefit the economy. Legislation must:**

- Allow Pennsylvania residents to use a Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to apply for a driver's license in Pennsylvania
- Prevent the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) from issuing different driver's licenses to residents based on national origin or immigration status
- Allow all residents to renew their Pennsylvania driver's license online
- Include safeguards to ensure private information is not shared with ICE without a judicial warrant or court order

### **Welcoming New Americans: A State Office for New Americans should:**

- Champion the rights of immigrants and act as an advocate for local, state, and federal policies that support immigrant communities and create a welcoming Pennsylvania
- Provide technical assistance and guidance to all State agencies to assist them in best identifying and meeting the needs of immigrant communities
- Be governed by a strong advisory committee that includes diverse representation from immigrant and community groups from across the state
- Promote fundamental pathways to immigrant integration, including English language classes, citizenship preparation, workforce development, language access, community engagement and planning, and laws ensuring fair and equal treatment for immigrants



## Immigration Policy Myth Busting

Opponents of anti-immigrant legislation often use fear and misinformation to advance their harmful agenda. Below are some talking points and facts you can use to debunk commonly cited myths and strengthen your arguments for more inclusive policies.

**MYTH: “Sanctuary” policies violate federal laws and harbor dangerous criminals.**

**TRUTH: “Sanctuary” policies do not keep ICE from enforcing immigration laws, nor do they allow local police departments to ignore judicial warrants. They simply assert a municipality’s right to allocate its limited resources towards local enforcement priorities.**

- Enacting policies that mandate local law enforcement screen and report the immigration status of anyone they have stopped or arrested will deter victims and witnesses from reporting crimes, making everyone less safe.
- Over 30 counties in Pennsylvania and multiple municipalities already prohibit detaining individuals based solely on ICE requests.
- Other states have estimated the cost of implementing anti-sanctuary legislation at \$11 to \$89 million.
- You cannot tell a person’s immigration status by looking at them. Proposals mandating local police operate as immigration enforcement would encourage racial profiling and lead to expensive lawsuits.

**MYTH: Tuition equity is a waste of taxpayer dollars and takes away financial aid resources from US citizen students.**

**TRUTH: Providing access to in-state tuition is a question of equity, immigrant students must follow the same admissions and application process as every other student.**

- Pennsylvanians already finance the education of every child in our public schools, regardless of citizenship. In-state tuition and financial aid would ensure that taxpayers see a return on our investment by incentivizing more students to pursue higher education and stay in our state, counterbalancing our aging workforce.
- Immigrants of all legal status pay state and local taxes that support public education and state schools.

**MYTH: Increased ID requirements to prove legal immigration status when applying for public benefits is necessary to prevent undocumented immigrants from using public benefits.**

**TRUTH: Undocumented immigrants are already ineligible for public benefits, and there have not been any documented cases of unauthorized immigrants fraudulently receiving benefits.**

- Increased requirements would harm vulnerable Pennsylvanians. Up to 800,000 eligible Pennsylvanians would not be able to satisfy the new ID requirements and would risk losing important benefits.
- Implementing this type of legislation could cost up to 19 million taxpayer dollars and would result in negligible savings.

**MYTH: Mandating that employers use E-Verify would benefit our economy by preventing undocumented immigrants from stealing jobs from Americans.**

**TRUTH: E-Verify places an undue burden on small business, hampering their ability to create jobs in Pennsylvania.**

- Employers who use E-Verify have found that it has a 10-15% error rate. This causes eligible workers to face losing their jobs.
- In other states where E-Verify has been implemented, employers have moved their business off the books and farmers have seen crops rot in the fields because immigrant workers have left the state.