



**Department
of State**

**NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR NEW
AMERICANS
2022 ANNUAL REPORT:**

*PURSUANT TO SECTION 94-b (5) (n) OF THE EXECUTIVE
LAW*

FOR SUBMISSION TO:

**TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, Andrea
Stewart-Cousins SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY, Carl E.
Heastie**

June 22, 2023

Kathy Hochul, Governor

Robert J. Rodriguez, Secretary of State

STATE OF NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ONE COMMERCE PLAZA
99 WASHINGTON AVENUE
ALBANY, NY 12231-0001
HTTPS://DOS.NY.GOV

KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR

ROBERT J. RODRIGUEZ

SECRETARY OF STATE

June 22, 2023

To the Governor, Temporary President and Speaker:

I am pleased to provide you with the 2022 Annual Report of the Department of State's Office for New Americans, as required by Executive Law § 94-b (5) (n).

This report summarizes the activities and accomplishments from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Throughout 2022, the Office for New Americans carried out its mission to assist all new Americans with accessing and navigating a variety of free services and supports through its statewide network of community-based providers.

Additional information about the Office for New Americans can be found on the agency's website at: <https://dos.ny.gov/office-new-americans>.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. Rodriguez
Secretary of State

INTRODUCTION

In compliance with section 94-b(5)(n) of the Executive Law, the Department of State (the “Department”) respectfully submits the following report on the activities of the Office for New Americans (the “ONA”). This report covers ONA’s programs and activities during the period from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022.

HISTORY OF THE OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS

ONA was established in 2012 in recognition of the important contributions that newcomers can make to the state’s civic and economic life. In 2014, the Legislature enacted, and the Governor signed into law, Chapter 206 of the Laws of 2014, which laid out the powers and duties of ONA. ONA has the proud distinction of being the first state-level immigrant office created by statute in the United States.

OVERVIEW

ONA assists all new Americans in accessing and navigating a variety of free services and supports their inclusion as an integral part of New York State’s diverse cultural fabric. ONA’s programs are delivered by its statewide network of immigration service providers, which are nested within existing community-based organizations. With a holistic and comprehensive approach, ONA assists both the individual and family in their civic and economic engagement in New York State. In addition, ONA staff engage directly in a variety of constituent, outreach, and policy initiatives that help to support New York State as a leader in welcoming new Americans and supporting their overall well-being.

In 2022, ONA provided services under the following program areas¹:

¹ In accordance with Executive Law § 94-b (5) (n), this report describes the activities of the Office for New Americans, including but not limited to, summarizing calls received through the hotline and website, information on ESOL training services provided by the office, the number of immigrants assisted through the opportunity centers (both civics and ESOL), the status of any workforce development programs, and other relevant information related to ONA’s responsibilities under Executive Law § 94-b(5).

1. New Americans Hotline and Website.
2. ESOL Training Services – Including Opportunity Centers – ESOL.
3. Assistance in Matters Relating to Immigration Status, Including: Opportunity Centers – Civics; Citizenshipworks, and Immigration-Related Legal Services.
4. Workforce Development Programs.
5. Connecting New Americans to Their Communities Through Civic Engagement.
6. Developing and Leveraging Skills to Benefit Immigrant Communities and the State.

NEW YORK STATE NEW AMERICANS HOTLINE AND WEBSITE

New Americans Hotline

The ONA network is supported by a toll-free, multi-lingual New York State New Americans Hotline, which provides live assistance in more than 200 languages and operates from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (EST), Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays).

The New Americans Hotline responded to general immigration and naturalization questions and provided multiple referrals to the callers’ to local Opportunity Centers, ONA legal service providers, as well as to other public and private immigrant-related programs. It also acted as a resource to receive and refer immigration fraud complaints to the appropriate enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over the complaint. The New Americans Hotline number is 1-800-566-7636.

Table 1: New Americans Hotline Data

Services provided (1/1/2022 – 12/31/22)	Numbers of Individual Served
Number of Calls Answered	29,700
Number of Referrals*	62,539

*A caller typically receives more than one service referral

ONA Website & Social Media

ONA utilized its website (<https://dos.ny.gov/office-new-americans>) to share important information with the new American community, as well as all New Yorkers. ONA also utilized social media posts on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/NYSNewAmericans>) and Twitter ([@NYSNewAmericans](https://twitter.com/NYSNewAmericans)) to reach community members across the state.

Table 2: Website Data in 2022

Website or Social Media Platform (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)	Number of Users
ONA Website Sessions - <i>Overall number of visitors to the landing page</i>	21,124
Facebook Page Reach - <i>The number of people who saw any content from the ONA Page or about the ONA Page, including posts, stories, ads, social information from people who interact with your Page and more</i>	12,354
Tweet Impressions – <i>The number of times users saw the ONA tweet on Twitter</i>	85,125

ESOL TRAINING SERVICES

Opportunity Centers – ESOL

ONA Opportunity Centers – English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provided ESOL classes combined with individual workforce support. Each Opportunity Center-ESOL has an experienced ESOL teacher on staff to provide English language classes to immigrants as well as to provide assistance to participants with resume building, interview techniques, and employment opportunities. The ONA Opportunity Centers – ESOL also provided workforce development workshops for the community.

Table 3: Opportunity Centers – ESOL Data

Services provided (1/1/22-12/31/22)	Number of Clients served
Clients participating in ESOL Classes	3,585
Clients receiving guidance resume building, interview techniques and employment opportunities	1,671
Clients attending workforce development workshops	2,008
Total	7,264

Cell-Ed

Cell-Ed is a first-in-the-nation public-private partnership established by New York State focusing on the delivery of mobile language learning. It is a phone-based English learning system providing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to individuals who have difficulty reaching an actual classroom. Cell-Ed has the capability of reaching and educating more new Americans than traditional classroom settings and has proven to be a successful tool for immigrants seeking to learn English and build skills for life and work. This program provides unlimited access to Cell-Ed’s complete course catalog of English Language Learning, plus literacy, numeracy, civics, job readiness, digital literacy, and more.

Table 4: Cell-Ed Data

Services provided (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)	Number of Individuals Served
Active learners on Cell-Ed	2,310

IMMIGRANTS ASSISTED IN MATTERS RELATING TO IMMIGRATION STATUS

Opportunity Centers – Civics

ONA’s statewide network of Opportunity Centers – Civics provided free and confidential services to immigrants in New York State regardless of immigration status. Housed within community-based organizations, ONA Opportunity Centers – Civics provide immigration application assistance, such as naturalization and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), host Citizenship Preparation classes, provide referrals to English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) classes, host community seminars on topics relevant to new Americans, and host legal consultations. Each Opportunity Center – Civics was supported by an ONA Legal Counsel, experienced immigration attorneys who provide free legal support to immigrants.

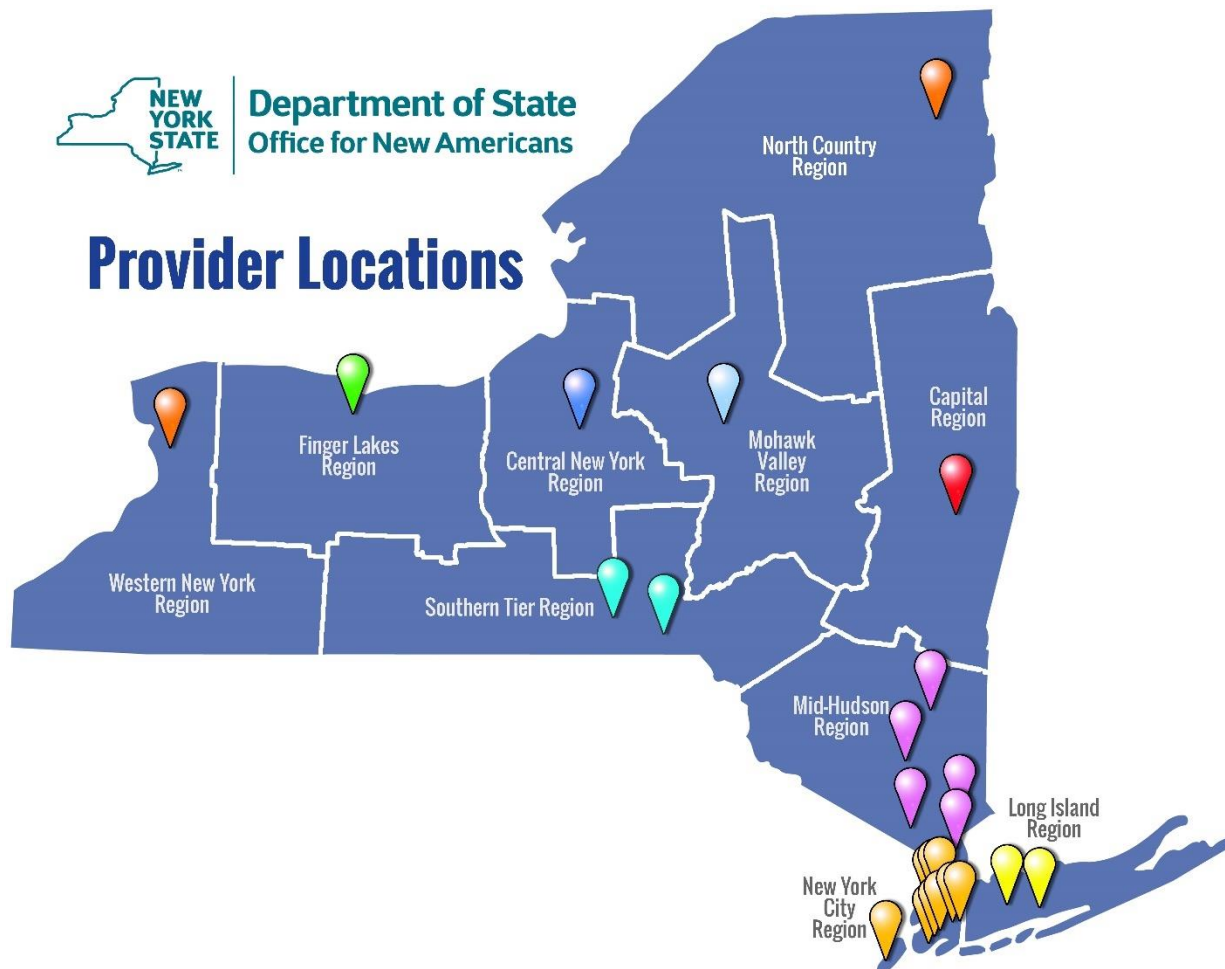


Table 5: Opportunity Centers – Civics Data

Services provided (2/1/22 – 1/31/23)	Number of Clients Served
Clients Attending Legal Consultations at Opportunity Centers	2,008
Clients Participating in Citizenship Preparation Classes	1,678
Clients Receiving Application Assistance	2,640
Clients Attending Community Workshops	8,089
Total	14,415

New Enhanced ONA Legal Counsels

In 2022, a competitive procurement process was finalized for the ONA Legal Counsel grants (described below) to merge with the Liberty Defense Project Regional Rapid Response (“LDP”) grants (described below) to create a new enhanced ONA Legal Counsel program. This merger of the two ONA-administered legal grants addressed concerns by grantees about the administrative burden of having two separate contracts for many of the same legal providers in the same regions and helped to streamline the delivery of expert immigration legal services across the state. This new program, with contracts that started 5/1/22, provided free legal services and direct representation to immigrants under a “universal representation” model, meaning any client in need of any type of immigration legal assistance can receive these free legal services. Legal Counsels also provided regular legal consultation days, law-related workshops and trainings, including Know Your Rights, at ONA Opportunity Centers as well as sites other than the Opportunity Centers.

Table 7: ONA Legal Counsel Data

Services provided (5/1/22 – 1/31/23)	Number of Clients Served
Clients provided legal intakes	3,709
Clients assisted at consultation days (At both Opportunity Centers and non-Opportunity Center sites)	2,458
Clients attending trainings and workshops	72,503 ²
Total	78,670

ONA Legal Counsels

ONA’s network of Legal Counsel immigration attorneys, with contracts that ended April 30, 2022, provided support to Opportunity Centers – Civics including review of their naturalization application process, legal consultations, and responses to inquiries. ONA Legal Counsels also provided legal clinics at sites separate from the Opportunity Centers, immigration trainings, including Know Your Rights, and intake and direct legal representation to immigrant clients.

Table 8: ONA Legal Counsel Data

Services Provided (2/1/22 - 4/30/22)	Number of Clients Served
Clients provided intake/direct representation	1,442

² Legal Counsels provide immigration legal services across New York State, responding to the needs in their service area, and addressing the various needs of the most recent migrant arrivals, such as providing Know Your Rights and/or deportation defense. In 2022 legal counsels were on hand to respond to the increase in new arrivals. More information will be included in the 2023 annual report.

Clients assisted at legal clinics (not at Opportunity Centers)	185
Clients attending trainings and workshops	1,715
Total	3,342

Liberty Defense Project Regional Rapid Response

The Regional Rapid Response network of Liberty Defense Project-funded attorneys, with contracts that ended 4/30/22, provided a variety of legal services to immigrants across the state including rapid legal response for urgent cases, direct representation, assistance in removal proceedings, support to individuals in immigration detention, Know Your Rights presentations, and law-related support to families of those facing deportation.

Table 9: LDP Regional Rapid Response Data

Services Provided (1/1/22 - 4/30/22)	Number of Individuals Served
Number of Clients provided intake/direct representation	1,028
Number of immigrants trained in KYR/related workshops	2,739
Total	3,767

Upstate Immigration Court Program

The Upstate Immigration Court / New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) provides legal services to immigrant clients who are detained and appearing before the four upstate New York immigration courts. This program also assisted immigrant clients whose cases were transferred from the upstate courts to NYC immigration courts.

Table 10: Upstate Immigration Court Data

Services provided (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)	Number of Individuals Served
Legal intakes	256

New York Legal Response

The New York Legal Response program was launched October 1, 2022, with three new grants to support the influx of new migrants to New York City. Under this program, Catholic Charities Community Services, Archdiocese of NY, Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative (I-ARC) and New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)’s NYC Rapid Response Legal Collaborative, provided immigrants arriving in New York City with free immigration-related legal services and assistance with critical application filings and required appearances. *Table 11: New York Legal Response Data*

Services provided (10/1/22 – 1/6/23)	Number of Individuals Served
Legal orientation / Know Your Rights	50
Legal consultations	78
Total	128

NYC Rapid Response Legal Collaborative

The New York City Rapid Response Legal Collaborative, co-funded by NYS and NYC, is an initiative of NYLAG, UnLocal, and Make the Road, to assist with the most complex legal cases. This program filled a critical gap in services by providing direct representation to individuals who would otherwise most likely have been deported and separated from their families. Starting October 1, 2022, the NYC Rapid Response Legal Collaborative became part of the three ONA grants that make up the New York Legal Response, to assist new arrivals to NYC.

Table 12: NYC Rapid Response Legal Collaborative Data³

Services provided (1/1/22 – 9/30/22)	Total Number of Individuals Served
NYC Rapid Response Legal Collaborative	405

Pro Bono Immigration Legal Services

The ONA Pro Bono program provided legal assistance to immigrants through a network of volunteer attorneys who were supported with additional training and mentorship from Supervising Immigration Attorneys. Starting in November 2022, the Pro Bono Program expanded to encompass both upstate and downstate New York.

Table 13: Pro Bono Services Data

Services provided (1/1/22 – 1/31/23)	Number of Individuals Served
Legal screenings & consultations	996

Afghan Legal Assistance Program

Through federal funding provided by the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance / Bureau of Refugee Services (OTDA/BRS), ONA administered new grants to its existing legal providers to build their capacity across the state to assist the large influx of recent arrivals from Afghanistan, who need assistance with seeking asylum, as well as other legal services.

Table 14: ALAP Data

Services provided (10/1/22 - 12/31/23)	Number of Individuals Served
Legal services	225

³ In 2022 legal providers were on hand to respond to the increase in new arrivals while building their capacity and outreach efforts to address an expected increase in arrivals changes in immigration policies in 2023. More information will be included in the 223 annual report.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

New Americans Can Code

The New Americans Can Code program provided access for immigrants to free virtual digital literacy training in basic computer skills, as well as more advanced software training courses. It also provided students with workforce development support through individual resume critiques and meetings with professional mentors.

Table 15: New Americans Can Code Data

Services provided (1/1/22 – 2/28/23)	Number of Individuals Served
Enrolled Students	183

Professional Pathways for High-Skilled Immigrants

The ONA Professional Pathways for High-Skilled Immigrants program provided employment coaching, skills training, and job placements for new Americans who are seeking to build on their professional experience and education they received in their home country, prior to coming to the United States.

Table 16: Professional Pathways Data

Services provided (1/1/22 - 1/31/23)	Numbers of Individual Served
Clients accepted into the program	235
Clients placed in employment	99

Immigrant Community Navigators

The ONA Immigrant Community Navigator program ensured that there was dedicated outreach and community welcoming efforts to help immigrants gain access to the same opportunities available to all others throughout New York State, with a particular focus on workforce development. The ONA Immigrant Community Navigators were responsible for coordinating and conducting outreach to immigrant communities, creating a grassroots network of support and

services. Through these efforts, ONA seeks to maximize the participation of immigrant community members in New York State’s civic and economic life.

Table 17: ONA Community Navigator Data

Services Provided (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)	Number of Clients served
Immigration stakeholder roundtable meetings held	1,001
Workforce Development Workshops	727
Community Conversations	678
Navigator Trainings	1,539
Impact Days	3,951
TOTAL	7,896

CONNECTING NEW AMERICANS TO THEIR COMMUNITIES THROUGH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

North Country Immigrant Resource Coordinator

The North Country Immigrant Resource Coordinator program, based at the Joint Council for Economic Opportunity for Clinton/Franklin Counties (JCEO) in Plattsburgh, provided assistance to immigrants in the North Country region of New York State, particularly those seeking to cross the northern border into Canada. The ONA Immigrant Resource Coordinator identified local resources and made referrals to meet the needs of the individuals and families, coordinated local partners, shared information about available services, and hosted immigration legal consultations through partnership with the ONA Legal Counsel in the North Country.

Table 18: North Country Immigrant Resource Coordinator Data

Services provided (12/1/21-11/30/22)	Number of Individuals Served
Number of individuals assisted with coordination and referrals	56
Number of individuals attending each Immigration Integration Roundtable	33
Number of Individuals attending Legal Consultation Days	18
Total	107

Ida Relief for Excluded New Yorkers

In September 2021, Governor Hochul and Mayor de Blasio launched the “Ida Relief for Excluded New Yorkers Fund,” which made \$27 million available to provide relief to immigrant survivors of the flooding caused by the remnants of Hurricane Ida. The Fund was geared toward those who were not otherwise eligible for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual Assistance Program or any other means. Administered by ONA, this funding was distributed through grants to an established network of community organizations, including current ONA grantees.

Table 19: Ida Relief Fund Data

Services provided (9/1/21-1/2/23)	Number of Households assisted
Number of Referrals Made to FEMA	612
Number of Households That Have Received State Financial Assistance for disaster related needs.	349
Total	961

Constituency Work

ONA’s constituent team assisted new American constituents, as well as other members of the community, with important legal referrals and other resources. ONA received constituent requests through the New Americans Hotline, from the Governor’s Office, through its network of providers, and from other state agencies.

Table 20: Constituent Data

Constituent Communications (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)	Number of constituents assisted
Correspondence	253

Golden Door Support Program

The ONA Golden Door program supported a network of “parent support groups” located at sites statewide and led by qualified mental health counselors, to facilitate information and resources for immigrant caregivers including mental health support. The Golden Door program also provided direct counseling with program supervisors as a crossover to individual therapy, counseling, family therapy, domestic violence shelters, case managers at site locations, and the suicide hotline. In 2022, there were 98 Golden Door support groups held with an average of 12 participants in each group.

DEVELOPING AND LEVERAGING SKILLS THAT BENEFIT IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES AND THE STATE

DOJ Trainer

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Trainer program assists not for profit immigrant service providers operating in New York State in obtaining and/or retaining DOJ recognition and training the staff at those organizations to receive and maintain DOJ accreditation.

Table 21: DOJ Data

Services provided (2/1/22 – 1/31/23)	Number of Individuals Trained
DOJ Trainings	1,317

Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative (I-ARC)

The ONA pilot partnership with Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative (I-ARC) provided additional convening, assistance, and training of the statewide network of immigrant legal service providers, to provide them with the information, tools, and technical support to respond to changes in immigration flows, including new arrivals of asylum seekers from Southern Border. In 2022, I-ARC held 22 convenings of immigration service organizations.

ONA Ramirez June Initiative

The ONA Ramirez June Initiative, funded by and in partnership with the NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC), has built the capacity of the ONA network to serve immigrants with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. The ONA Ramirez June Initiative, a first of its kind state-run program, provides targeted technical assistance, outreach trainings, and builds partnerships among immigrant service providers and developmental disability service providers in New York State. In 2022, the ONA Ramirez June Initiative surveyed participants in its trainings, and 98% of survey respondents reported satisfaction with the trainings. As a result of participation in Initiative trainings, 92% of professionals and family members reported they feel better equipped to support people with I/DD.

Table 23: Ramirez June Initiative Data

Services provided (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)	Number of Individuals
Participants in the ONA Ramirez June Initiative outreach trainings.	990

ONA Webinars

Through the monthly Webinar Series, ONA connected its grantees and the greater network of immigrant serving community-based organizations with timely information and assistance on topics relevant to the immigrant community. ONA's webinar series was also a platform to convene its grantees so that they can learn from one another. In 2022, ONA hosted 11 webinars with the 152 average participants per webinar.

CONCLUSION

Through strong, innovative programming and the dedication of its statewide network of community-based providers, ONA was able to assist new Americans across the State and serve communities through a comprehensive series of programs, including launching new and innovative programs, all while focusing on the key issue areas impacting immigrant integration as outlined in its legislation, including ESOL, legal services, workforce development, community and civic engagement, and support of the ONA network. Working vigilantly with all of its partners, ONA will continue to work to protect new Americans as they transition to full participation in New York's communities by addressing the issue of immigrant services fraud. Thus, with its partners, in 2023, ONA looks to build on the successes from the past year, and respond to the increases in immigrant arrivals resulting from the changing immigration patterns and policies, to continue to make New York State a welcoming place for all new Americans.