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# Office of New Americans



## Ensuring Economic Justice and Good Jobs

### Expansion of the Office of New Americans to Meet the Needs of Immigrant New Yorkers

The Office for New Americans (ONA) funds essential paths to citizenship services, DACA screenings, naturalization support, work authorization support, and more to assist new Americans through a statewide network of culturally competent, linguistically diverse community-based providers. In addition to affirmative non-deportation related legal assistance, ONA supports highly needed adult literacy classes, community navigation, and workforce development workshops across the state through its 24 Opportunity Centers, which provide critical access points for immigrants to attain quality services at the centers as well as referrals to other needed services. ONA also runs the New Americans Hotline, which provides tens of thousands of referrals every year.

Despite providing these essential services, ONA is still drastically underfunded. The number of ONA Opportunity Centers was reduced from 27 to 24, adult literacy services were cut and then partially restored at the extremely low rate of \$400 per student, and many of the 4.4 million immigrant New Yorkers are still unable to access the support they need to navigate both their communities and their naturalization process. New York created the first state-level immigrant assistance office of its kind, and it must now maintain its position as a leader for immigrant New Yorkers by continuing to expand the geographical reach and quality of services.

## Recommendation:

### Allocate \$20 million to the Office of New Americans

Increasing funding from the current \$8M to \$20M would allow for ONA to expand geographically and provide improved services for the 4.4 million immigrants across New York State. Additional funding would allow for the creation of new ONA Opportunity Centers in underserved areas, additional staff to support affirmative non-deportation naturalization proceedings, additional adult literacy classes closer to the actual cost of service, increased coverage for additional languages, and improved New Americans Hotline support and staffing.