

MIRC POLICY PRIORITIES 2024 -2026 Legislative Session Framework

Access to Resources and Services

ackground:

Resources in Maine have been trending towards being more inclusive. In the healthcare arena, pregnant **mothers and those under 21** regardless of immigration status have been granted eligibility under MaineCare. Peer Workforce Navigators have helped connect members of the community with employment opportunities in various sectors. General Assistance has provided immigrant communities with an opportunity to settle into communities. Budget proposals indicate that some of these services may see reduced funding and or no longer be funded, posing a risk for people who rely on those services.

Goal: Create a welcoming environment where immigrants and Mainers can equitably access public resources, healthcare, and social services.

Talking Point:

Most immigrants in the U.S., particularly noncitizens, face strict limitations on accessing public benefits. This includes programs like Medicaid, food stamps (SNAP), and cash assistance, from which undocumented immigrants are almost entirely barred. Even many lawful permanent residents (green card holders) must wait five years before they qualify for these benefits.

Policy Objectives:

- **Language Access Standards:** Enforce language-access policies for public agencies, ensuring immigrants receive vital information and services.
- **Healthcare Accessibility:** Advocate for expanded eligibility in state-funded health programs and improved access to culturally competent care.
- **Resource Awareness Programs:** Develop outreach campaigns to inform immigrants about available assistance programs and support systems.
- **Social Services Integration:** Promote partnerships between immigrant-serving organizations and government agencies to streamline access.

Importance:

Without access to resources people in Maine can face difficulties in:

- Living healthy lives
- Contributing to their communities
- Providing for their families

MISSION STATEMENT

To improve the legal, social, and economic conditions experienced by Maine's immigrants – enhancing their lives while strengthening Maine – through advocacy, information sharing, and collaboration both through and among our member organizations