



Governor Phil Murphy

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Newark, N.J.

On Independence Day, Governor Murphy Announces New Measures to Advance Immigrant and Refugee Integration

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CAMDEN – Governor Phil Murphy today announced two new measures to continue the Administration's unwavering commitment to build an inclusive state for every New Jersey resident.

This morning, the Governor signed Executive Order No. 74, which directs the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development to advance immigrant and refugee integration initiatives, including the design of an Office of New Americans. The Executive Order also establishes an Interagency Workgroup on New American Integration to create opportunities for coordination and implementation of strategies and actions to advance immigrant and refugee integration.

The Governor also announced that the Administration has submitted its intent to the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement to regain the state's role in the oversight of the state's refugee resettlement program. The program provides assistance such as short-term cash assistance, medical coordination, case management, and employment services among other social services for refugees. In 2016, the Christie Administration relinquished the state's role in the refugee resettlement program to the federal government. Since then, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has been running all aspects of the program. The New Jersey Department of Human Services has been working collaboratively with the federal government and the IRC to return the primary functions of the refugee resettlement program to the State for Federal Fiscal Year 2020.

"While the federal government takes action that prevents immigrants from seeking the American Dream, New Jersey will fight for our brothers and sisters and stand against the hatred and bigotry coming from Washington," **said Governor Murphy**. "Immigrants are an integral part of our state, and enrich our communities socially, culturally, and economically. Through these new measures, we will continue to sustain our progress to build a fair and inclusive state for all."

By December 4, 2019, the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development will submit plans to further immigrant and refugee integration, including the development of an Office of New Americans. This will be the first statewide office to focus on immigrant and refugee integration and will focus on ensuring access to social services and inclusion in New Jersey's economy. Additionally, the Interagency Workgroup on New American Integration established today will be co-chaired by representatives from the New Jersey Department of Human Services and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The Workgroup also includes representatives from 10 other departments to develop, coordinate, and

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implement best practices for immigrant and refugee integration and inclusion across the Administration and its programs.

The new measures were announced at the USS New Jersey Naturalization Ceremony on the Battleship in Camden where 40 candidates from 23 countries such as the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Guatemala, Iran, India, and Mexico, among other countries, became U.S. citizens.

"On a day when families across our state come together to celebrate our country's independence, I'm honored to have the opportunity to celebrate this 4th of July with those joining our American family as new citizens," **said Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson**. "New Jersey is and always will be a welcoming state – no matter the rhetoric or attempts to divide us coming from Washington. The Murphy Administration is committed to welcoming new Americans as our neighbors, colleagues and friends, and New Jersey Human Services stands ready to help all new New Jerseyans make our state a more vibrant and prosperous place to live."

"The Murphy administration is committed to building a stronger and inclusive state where all New Jerseyans, including immigrants and refugees, have the opportunity to reach their greatest potential, thrive in their community, and fully participate in everything New Jersey has to offer," **said Human Services Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira**. "Today, we have the honor to celebrate these new Americans and join them as they take the oath to become citizens on our country's independence day"

"Our department is tasked with looking out for all of New Jersey's workers, and that includes those not born here, but who want to work here, contribute to our workforce and economy, and call New Jersey home," **said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo**. "All workers in the Garden State, no matter their birthplace, are afforded the same rights and protections in the workplace."

"We welcome Governor Murphy's continued prioritization of the safety and wellbeing of immigrants and refugees in the state of New Jersey," **said Evan R. Bernstein, Regional Director of ADL New York/New Jersey Office**. "At a time when immigrants and refugees are under constant attack, it is reassuring to know that our Governor is committed to taking positive steps to provide much-needed support for those who seek refuge in our state."

"I applaud Gov Murphy's initiatives to resettle refugees in New Jersey," **said Kevin Brown, 32BJ SEIU Vice President and New Jersey State Director**. "As an extremely diverse union that represents thousands of immigrants, we know that new Americans make New Jersey stronger. Bigoted decisions driven by the Christie administration were designed to keep refugees out. Instead, those failed and brought shame to this state. Hate has no place in New Jersey, where refugees have settled for hundreds of years, and will continue to do so. We support the initiation of support services such as the Interagency Workgroup on Immigration Integration and development of the Office of New Americans at the DHS and DOL that will make NJ a welcoming state on this Independence Day."

"New Jersey immigrant advocates commend the Governor's initiatives to welcome immigrants that would help New Jersey's immigrant communities feel welcome and flourish," **said Johanna Calle, Director of New Jersey Alliance of Immigrant Justice**. "As one of the most diverse states in the nation with the third highest percentage of immigrant residents, New Jersey putting into practice welcoming all who call New Jersey home will make this state more successful."

"Thank you, Governor Murphy, for your leadership and partnering with immigrants, refugees, and asylee advocates in reclaiming the state's refugee resettlement program," **said Brian Lozano, Lead Organizer for Wind of the Spirit**. "Your establishment of an Interagency Workgroup on Immigration Integration to best provide services and support and your directive to the Dept. of Labor and DHS to collaborate to advance immigration integrations efforts are desperately needed. There are humanitarian crises not only at the border, but also in each of our New Jersey cities and towns and across the country, every day, affecting mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, unaccompanied minors, frightened women wearing dehumanizing ankle bracelets, detention in unimaginable conditions, neighbors at risk of removal for lack of legal representation. Working together, in our efforts and support of initiatives that stand for our moral obligation to treat every human being with dignity and respect, we will effect meaningful changes in our immigration system."

"New Jersey would not exist as it does today without the valuable contributions of immigrants and their families," **said Erika J. Nava, Policy Analyst for the New Jersey Policy Perspective**. "Governor Murphy's executive orders will help ensure the state lives up to its expressed values of inclusion and respect for all, regardless of birthplace. As history shows, when immigrants do better, the entire state benefits through stronger communities and a more robust economy."

"In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. We at the Islamic Center of Passaic County (ICPC) express our deepest gratitude to Governor Murphy and his administration for taking these truly courageous actions that uplift our Immigrant and Refugee communities," **said Islamic Center of Passaic County staff Omar Awad, Salaheddin Mustafa, and Dr. Mohammad Qatanani**. "These initiatives in reclaiming the state's refugee resettlement program and establishing foundational tools to help our immigrant population to succeed show the true heart of our great state. We pray that in these volatile times where the "other" is increasingly marginalized, that the voices of

inclusiveness, tolerance and love will prevail over those seeking to divide us. God willing, we pray that our nation continues on its path to achieving the "more perfect union" enshrined in our Constitution."

[Copy of Executive Order #74](#)

Governor Phil Murphy

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