In 2013, Mayor Eric Garcetti re-established the Office of Immigrant Affairs in order to promote and advance the economic, cultural, social, and political well-being of immigrant communities in the City of Los Angeles. Our mission is to develop programs and initiatives that support immigrant integration and to serve immigrant Angelenos through the coordination of city services, outreach, and legislative advocacy. We encourage you to share this newsletter with your family, friends, and colleagues. Thank you for your support!

DECEMBER 2021 & JANUARY 2022 IN REVIEW

U.S. Conference of Mayors 90th Winter Meeting

From January 19-21, 2022, Mayor Garcetti participated in the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) 90th Winter Meeting in Washington, DC. The gathering of almost 200 mayors from across the country included an Immigration Session hosted by Mayor Garcetti as chair of the USCM Latino Alliance, alongside Immigration Task Force Chairs Mayor Jorge Elorza of
Providence, Rhode Island, and Mayor John Giles of Mesa, Arizona. Mayor Todd Gloria from San Diego, California also participated as vice chair for Border Policy for the Criminal and Social Justice Committee of the USCM. The panel included presentations by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Chris Magnus, Mexican Ambassador to the U.S. Esteban Moctezuma Barragan, and Jen Smyers, Chief of Staff for the Office of Refugee Resettlement in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The robust conversation included questions to the panelists from mayors on various issues, including Afghan refugee resettlement and the situation with asylum seekers at the southern border. The session was broadcast by CSPAN. To view the video, click here.

American Library Association Presentation on Language Access

On January 23, 2022, Associate Director Adriana García presented at the virtual American Library Association 2022—The Library Learning Experience (LibLearnX) Conference, along with Commissioner of the Board of Public Works Jessica Caloza and Senior Librarian Madeline Peña. LibLearnX offers virtual education sessions covering key topics important to library professionals. Associate Dir. García provided an overview of the City’s work on language access, data on the immigrant and English language learner population in the City, and information about federal, state, and local laws on language access. The presentation encouraged an audience of over 60 librarians and others engaged in library services to look into their municipalities’ policies on language access and evaluate how to better serve multilingual constituencies. To view a full listing of other Education Sessions at LibLearnX, click here.

New American Economy Report Released

On December 16, 2021, the New American Economy (NAE), in partnership with the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), unveiled a report providing data on the City of Los Angeles’ immigrant population. The new report was awarded to the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and CHIRLA as part of the Gateways for
Growth Challenge, a competitive opportunity for localities to receive research support and/or technical assistance from NAE and Welcoming America to improve immigrant inclusion in their communities. The data presented comes from 1-year samples of the American Community Survey from 2014 and 2019 and figures refer to the City of LA, specifically. Report findings include that immigrants in the City of LA make up 36.3% of the city’s total population and hold $38.3 billion in spending power. We encourage you to share this report and make use of the data as you support our immigrant and refugee communities in Los Angeles. To view the press release and link to report, click here.

**Signing of ED 32 “Strengthening Language Access in the City of LA”**

On December 16, 2021, Mayor Garcetti signed Executive Directive (ED) 32 “Strengthening Language Access in the City of Los Angeles”, which seeks to improve access to City information and services for English language learners in Los Angeles. ED 32 establishes the framework for a more robust language access program for the City of LA and mandates establishing a Citywide Language Access Coordinator position, designating a Language Access Liaison by each City Department, and more. Language access services are vital for many in our city—and our continued experience with COVID-19 highlights the importance of this ED. ED 32 and corresponding press release were translated into 13 languages in order to reach our various language communities with this information. To view ED 32 click here, and to view the press release, click here. You can also watch the video of the signing here.

**IMMIGRATION POLICY NEWS**

**USCIS Updates Guidance on Expedite Requests**

On January 25, 2022, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced that, effective immediately, the agency is updating the USCIS Policy Manual guidance regarding the criteria used to determine whether a case warrants expedited treatment. The guidance clarifies the criteria and circumstances under which USCIS generally considers expedite requests from nonprofit organizations, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service; provides additional examples of when it may consider expedite requests made by federal, state, or local agencies,
including labor and employment agencies; adds examples to further illustrate how the expedite criteria relates to emergencies and urgent humanitarian reasons; and explains that some circumstances may affect or delay the agency’s ability to expedite an application or petition. To view the policy alert, click here.

National Human Trafficking Prevention Month
On December 30, 2021, President Biden declared January 2022 as “National Human Trafficking Prevention Month.” This proclamation calls on civil society organizations, businesses, and others to recognize the role we all play in combatting human trafficking and to participate in the appropriate activities and programs aimed at preventing different forms of human trafficking. To view the proclamation, click here.

ICE Announces Use of Body-Worn Cameras in New Pilot Program
On December 21, 2021, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced a body-worn camera pilot program in select cities. As part of the pilot, ICE law enforcement officers will wear cameras during pre-planned operations. The use of body-worn cameras will roll out in phases, starting with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) special agents, followed by Enforcement and Removal Operation (ERO) officers at a later date. According to ICE, this pilot program is an effort to increase transparency and accountability in enforcement operations. To view the press release, click here.

DHS to Supplement H-2B Cap with Additional Visas in First Half of Fiscal Year
On December 20, 2021, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Labor announced an upcoming joint temporary final rule that will make available an additional 20,000 H-2B temporary nonagricultural worker visas for fiscal year 2022. The H2-B visas will be available to employers seeking to hire additional workers on or before March 31, 2022. To view the press release, click here.

DHS Announces Commitment to Enhance Protections for Stateless Individuals in the U.S.
On December 15, 2021, DHS announced its commitment to adopt a definition of statelessness for immigration purposes and enhance protections for stateless individuals living in the U.S. The adoption of a standardized definition of statelessness allows DHS to recognize unique barriers encountered by stateless persons and better identify and protect such individuals. These actions are aimed at reducing barriers to accessing lawful immigration status and associated benefits. DHS also committed to establishing a process to increase the data available on stateless persons in the United States, and will examine the means through which DHS could facilitate work and travel for stateless persons. To view the press release, click here.

Updates on the Migrant Protection Protocols Program
On December 2, 2021, DHS released additional guidance regarding the re-implementation of the Migrant Protections Protocol (MPP) program to address concerns raised by the Mexican government. Under the MPP program, established under the Trump Administration, individuals who arrive at the southern border and ask for asylum (either at a port-of-entry or after crossing
the border between ports-of-entry) are given notices to appear in immigration court and sent back to Mexico to wait for their court hearing. They are instructed to return to a specific port-of-entry at a specific date and time for their next court hearing. The December 2 guidance includes the commitment to work closely with the Mexican government and the Department of State to ensure that migrants enrolled in the program have access to essential resources such as shelter in Mexico and transportation to attend their immigration court hearings in the U.S. The Mexican government also committed to ensuring MPP participants are provided temporary lawful status in Mexico.

On December 29, DHS asked the U.S. Supreme Court to allow it to end MPP since the termination of MPP cannot take effect until the current injunction from the federal court in Texas is lifted. Until then, DHS will continue to comply with the court injunction and implement MPP. A decision from the Supreme Court on DHS’s request has not been issued. To view the press releases, click here and here. To view the petition to the U.S. Supreme Court, click here.

**IN THE NEWS**

**National**

*Coronavirus Infections Inside U.S. Immigration Detention Centers Surge By 520% in 2022*

CBS News (January 14, 2022)

“The number of coronavirus infections among immigrants detained at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention centers has surged by 520% since the start of 2022, prompting calls for increased vaccination efforts and detainee releases.”

*Watershed Moment in NYC: New Law Allows Noncitizens to Vote*

ABC News (January 9, 2022)

“More than 800,000 noncitizens and ‘Dreamers’ in New York City will have access to the ballot box — and could vote in municipal elections as early as next year — after Mayor Eric Adams allowed legislation to automatically become law Sunday.”

*New Population Estimates Show COVID-19 Pandemic Significantly Disrupted Migration Across Borders*

U.S. Census Bureau (December 21, 2022)

“The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted international migration patterns both to and from the United States, resulting in the lowest levels of international migration in decades and affecting the data typically used to measure migration flows.”

**Regional**
California Will Pay College Students $10K for Completing Volunteer Work

The Hill (January 19, 2022)

“Notably, the program will also allow undocumented “Dreamers” to qualify for the financial support, as long as they qualify for in-state tuition and can volunteer in the outlined critical issue areas.”

Why A Plan to Open Medi-Cal to All 26-49 Year Olds Would Be Life-Changing For LA’s Undocumented Communities

LAist (January 11, 2022)

“Gov. Gavin Newsom’s proposed budget includes a plan to offer Medi-Cal to all low-income adults without legal status between the ages of 26 and 49. The program is already available to low-income people under 26 regardless of immigration status, and in May it will be opened up to everyone 50 and older.”

Editorial: Legalize Street Food. L.A.’s Iconic Sidewalk Vendors Are Still Being Penalized

Los Angeles Times (December 13, 2021)

“Out of an estimated 10,000 sidewalk food vendors in the city of Los Angeles, fewer than 200 have received permits, according to a report released in August. Most vendors continue to operate outside the law. In order to legally sell food, a vendor has to get a permit from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, which is responsible for interpreting and enforcing the state’s retail food code.”

EVENTS

USC Pacific Asia Museum Lunar New Year Festival 2022

Join the virtual USC Pacific Asia Museum (PAM) Lunar Year Festival celebrating the Year of the Tiger! Enjoy music, storytelling performances, and more. This free event will take place on Saturday, February 5, 2022, at 11:00am-1:00pm via Zoom. For more information and to register, click here.

How I Made It: Lessons from African-American Entrepreneurs

Join the LA Civil Rights Department as it brings together African-American entrepreneurs, social equity leaders, and business trailblazers for “How I Made It”, a discussion on creating and growing a business in Los Angeles. This virtual event will take place on Thursday, February 10, 2022, at 11:00am on Channel 35, and on facebook.com/lacivilrights. For more information, click here.

Standing Up to Anti-Black Hate

Join the LA Civil Rights Department, City Councilmembers, Commission Presidents, community leaders, and others for “Standing Up to Anti-Black Hate.” This virtual event will take place on
Thursday, February 17, 2022, at 11:00am on Channel 35, and on facebook.com/lacivilrights. The discussion will focus on anti-Black hate crimes and how communities and the City can respond. For more information, click here.

Naturalization Workshop
The NALEO Educational Fund will be hosting a virtual Citizenship Workshop to assist individuals in filing out their citizenship application for free. This workshop will take place on Saturday, March 19, 2022, at 9:00am-2:00pm and will be offered in English and Spanish. To register, call (888) 839-8682. To view the flyer in English click here, and in Spanish click here.

Free Tax Prep LA
Need help filing your taxes? The Free Tax Prep LA program is being offered at FamilySource Centers and other locations across the city. This program provides experts and volunteers that offer free tax help to individuals and households who make less than $57,000 a year and qualify for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit. Additionally, Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) filers will be eligible for California’s Earned Income Tax Credit and the Young Child Tax Credit. ITIN filers are only eligible for the CalEITC state credit and Young Child Tax Credit, totaling up to $4,000. Drop-off services require appointments. Assistance is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Persian, Armenian, and Korean. For a list of locations and hours, visit FreeTaxPrepLA.org.

GENERAL RESOURCES

*Updated* Immigration Legal Services Fraud Prevention Flyers
The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Immigration Legal Services Fraud Prevention Campaign published outreach flyers in Dari in order to address the needs of new Afghan arrivals in search of immigration legal services providers. Additionally, our team also mailed out over 240 flyer posters in Farsi, and 600 flyers in Dari to community organizations that work with refugee communities.

As a reminder, the Campaign consists of various outreach materials including a flyer, community presentations, the Step Forward LA “Immigration Legal Services Fraud” webpage, and a PSA video featuring Mayor Garcetti and LAPD Chief Michel Moore. To view the flyer in Dari, click here. Please continue to share these materials!

Los Angeles Community College District Legal Fee Grant
In partnership with the Mayor’s Fund for Los Angeles and the Foundation for the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), LACCD students can apply and receive a one-time Legal Fee Grant to cover their DACA and Advance Parole for DACA recipients' application fees. Students can apply online. Grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis until funds are exhausted. To view the flyer, click here.

Afghan American Muslim Outreach Newcomers Orientation Book
The Afghan American Muslim Outreach organization recently published a newcomers orientation book to provide important information and resources for new Afghan refugees in the LA metro area. To view the orientation book, click [here](#).

**Church World Service Call Center**
The Church World Service call center provides free and confidential resource referrals ranging from legal, medical, education, employment, and more. The call center is available to asylum seekers, asylees, refugees, and unaccompanied children and their sponsors. Hours of operation are **Monday through Friday, 9:00am-5:00pm EST**. Language interpretation is available over the phone. For more information, click [here](#).

**CA COVID-19 Rent Relief Program**
The City of Los Angeles is participating in the California COVID-19 Rent Relief program, which provides financial assistance for rent and utilities to income-eligible California renters and their landlords who have been impacted by COVID-19. Eligible renters and landlords in the City of Los Angeles can apply for emergency assistance through the State, **regardless of immigration status**. For more information and to apply, visit [HousingIsKey.com](http://HousingIsKey.com) or call (833) 430-2122.

For Angelenos who have already applied to the City's Emergency Rental Assistance Program, the LA Housing Department will be in contact via email or phone regarding next steps. Applicants can also visit [housing.lacity.org](http://housing.lacity.org) for more information. To view outreach materials in multiple languages, click [here](#).

**LA Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs COVID-19 Information and Resources for Immigrant and Refugee Angelenos**
The Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs has compiled a comprehensive COVID-19 information and resources document for immigrant and refugee Angelenos. This document provides information about resources and programs related to public health, health care, relief funds, legal services, and more. The resources listed are available to all, regardless of immigration status, unless specified otherwise. Please note that this document is updated on a monthly basis. To view the document, click [here](#).

To stay up to date on the latest City of LA COVID-19 information and resources, visit [coronavirus.LaCity.org](http://coronavirus.LaCity.org). The City of LA’s coronavirus website also has a “City of LA Resource Guide for Immigrants during COVID-19 crisis,” an abbreviated version of the Google document above. To view the abbreviated version, click [here](#).

**Community Resource Guide for Immigrant Angelenos**
The Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs offers a comprehensive resource guide that provides immigrant Angelenos with important information about resources available to them, regardless of their immigration status. The revised guide has the most updated information on access to healthcare, business and licensing, a list of housing and tenant resources, and more. The updated guide is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The guides in [Korean](#) and [Chinese](#) are in the process of being updated but can still be accessed electronically.
Los Angeles Public Library: New Americans Centers
New Americans Centers offer free, virtual immigration services, including assistance with naturalization, Lawful Permanent Resident card renewals, fee waiver applications, DACA renewals, and questions about adjustment of status. To schedule a virtual appointment, click here.

NotifyLA
NotifyLA emergency alerts from the City of Los Angeles provide urgent notifications to Angelenos about local emergencies, including natural disasters. You may receive these notifications via text, email, or phone call. For more information and to sign up for NotifyLA, click here.

MyLA311
The MyLA311 program allows Angelenos to easily access LA City services and information. Within the greater Los Angeles area, residents can dial 3-1-1 to contact non-emergency City services from their landline and cellular phones. The information is available in 150+ languages and is accessible to the hearing and speech impaired. More information may be found here.

To sign up for our bi-monthly newsletter, click here.