

REACHING IMMIGRANTS FOR CAREERS IN OLDER ADULT SERVICES

INTRO

Americans are living longer. Over the next several decades, the number of us who are over 65 will nearly double to 88 million – and many of us will need help. Right now, we have a workforce crisis: there aren't enough people to provide high-quality help to older adults.

We need to encourage more people to join our field – including immigrants.

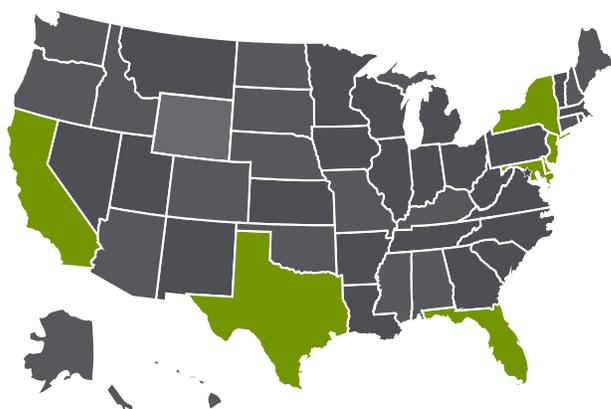
BACKGROUND

Foreign-born individuals represent a significant segment of the long-term services and supports (LTSS) workforce and are likely essential to meet current and future demand for LTSS. Employing immigrant workers, defined as people who are working in a country they came to settle in, helps build a culturally competent system of care to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse consumer population. The U.S. has few dedicated avenues for legal admission for nurses, and none that target direct care workers in LTSS.

Employees enter the U.S. workforce through legal, permanent admissions, or temporary, legal admission (with a visa supporting work). The major avenue for the recruitment of foreign nurses and other highly skilled professional staff is through managed migration schemes. [Read more detailed information on the different VISAs.](#) Direct care workers primarily enter the U.S. through family reunification, refugees, green-card lottery, and diversity categories. (Note: Employers only can ask potential employees if they are authorized to work in the in the U.S.)

For information about immigrants and the direct care workforce, please see [PHI's immigrant direct care workforce fact sheet.](#)

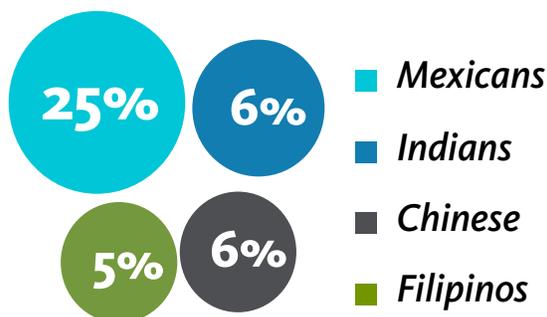
44.5 MILLION IMMIGRANT RESIDENTS



■ *Top 5 States: California, Texas, New York, Florida, and New Jersey*



WHO MAKES UP THIS GROUP



WHERE TO REACH IMMIGRANTS

- Inform employees, including immigrant workers, when you have open job positions. Immigrants are hired through informal social networks that link migrants in the U.S. with job-seekers who are still living in their communities of origin or newly arrived immigrants.
- Partner with community organizations serving and representing immigrant populations.
- Advertise through traditional means such as local newspapers, job postings, and other recruitment methods.
- Work with international recruitment and employment agencies to hire nurses, though this can be expensive and time-consuming.

TIPS FOR RECRUITING IMMIGRANTS

- Establish an orientation program to acclimate foreign-born workers. Pair immigrant workers with colleagues who share their language or culture to help them better understand the expectations of current practice and of supervisors, cultural differences, and socialization of the worker.
- Provide cultural competency and English-language training and other workplace supports. This can help immigrant workers integrate into the organization and the U.S. and help those with limited English proficiency.
- Encourage an environment that welcomes the difference and highlights the diversity and richness these individuals bring in to the workplace.
- Training programs and printed/online instructions should be in the common languages spoken within the organization. Encourage a strong Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) program.
- Organizational policies should reflect culturally competent practices and include and support diverse perspectives.
- Job-enhancing relationships through small work groups can help with the adjustment process. This is more natural for immigrant workers who typically work closely with one another.
- Take cultural differences into account when conducting performance evaluations.
- Form partnerships with organizations established in immigrant communities that can offer supportive services and access to community resources such as legal and housing assistance and childcare and family-based support.

OTHER RESOURCES

U.S. Department of Labor: <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/hiring/foreign>

(Sources – Migration Policy Institute, the Global Ageing Network, and LeadingAge LTSS Center @ UMass Boston, Georgetown University, Generations, OECD)