

State by state comparisons on credentialing and relicensing initiatives, 2006 - 2016



Researcher: Ennada Lagout, OSU

Partners: Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA), Partners in Diversity (PID), Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB), Office of the Governor for Workforce and for Diversity and Community Engagement, Oregon Commission on Black Affairs (OCBA)

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Since the discontinuation of the Foreign Credential Evaluation Service in 1973, there has been no single authority governing the recognition of foreign qualifications in the United States. Instead, there are generally considered to be three major actors in credential recognition: Institutions of higher education, employers, and state boards of professional licensing. The following report is a brief overview of some of the state wide credentialing and relicensing initiatives in the last decade, for naturalized US citizens.

Michigan

- **Licensing:** Through a Partnership between the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and Upward Globally¹. LARA initially included 11 professional licensing guides but then expanded to include over 40 professions.
- **What makes this innovative?** The guides² include hypothetical scenarios to show just some of the variety of results that immigrant professionals may find when they seek a profession. The average time and cost required to successfully complete each step is also included.
- **Resource driven policy** (*The Michigan's Global Engineers in Residence Program*): State subsidized full-time internships with employers in need of additional engineering capacity through the Global Detroit non-profit center³.

New York

- **Licensing:** The New York State Board of Regents⁴ voted to allow lawfully present immigrants to apply for professional licenses from the State Education Department. Additionally, the New York State Department created a new nail salon trainee license to reduce barriers to entry and initiate a new pathway into becoming a licensed nail salon specialist.
- **Resource driven policy** (*The Cooper Union's Retraining Program for Immigrant Engineers*): The New York office of New Americans in partnership with Cooper Union⁵ are offering free professional courses and job placement assistance for immigrants seeking retraining in the STEM field.

¹ Upward Globally operates in different locations including New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

² http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-10573_68301---,00.html

³ <http://www.globaldetroit.com/partner-initiatives/upwardly-global/>

⁴ <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2016/board-regents-permanently-adopts-regulations-allow-daca-recipients-apply-teacher>

⁵ STEM field institution of higher education

Pennsylvania

- **Resource driven policy** (*The Immigrant Professionals Program*⁶): Created by The Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians, the program offers credential assessment and consultation, career mapping and guidance. The center also offers network and business skills workshops as well as entrepreneurship training.

Massachusetts

- **Resource driven policy** (*Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)*⁷): Offers the “Back to the Office” online tool which provides information, training materials, and links to organizations that can help skilled immigrants better understand and navigate options for professional recertification and alternative career pathways.

Minnesota

- **Task Force Establishment:** (*Task Force on Immigrant International Medical Graduates*)⁸: The Minnesota Legislature authorized the formation of a "Foreign-Trained Physician Task Force", the first program in the country to integrate immigrant international medical graduates into the state's health care delivery system based on demographic research and recommendations provided by the Foreign-Trained Physician Task Force.

Maryland

- **In the process of Task Force Establishment:** Partnering with its Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations, the State of Maryland is seeking to create a multi-sector Skilled Immigrants Workforce Development Taskforce to implement strategies promoting economic integration and collect relevant data.
- **Resource driven policy:** *New American Workforce Program's* webpage⁹, an online tool designed to empower New American job seekers and English Language Learners as they navigate the state workforce system while being informed of their rights as job seekers and employees.

⁶ <http://www.welcomingcenter.org/immigrants/immigrant-professionals>

⁷ <https://www.miracoalition.org/workforce-development-110457>

⁸ <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/iimg/>

⁹ <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/newamerwrkforce.shtml>

Kentucky

- **Resource driven policy:** *KentuckianaWorks*¹⁰, a government office in Louisville seeks to increase immigrant participation in the advanced manufacturing¹¹, healthcare¹². *KentuckianaWorks* has been working with the local chapter of *Prospanica*¹³ and local Hispanic media to target information and training available at the Kentucky Health Career Center to Hispanic residents.

Georgia

- **Resource driven policy:** The Office of Immigrant Affairs has launched a series of economic integration initiatives, including programming on financial literacy, digital literacy, and vocational and civic leadership, and is actively pursuing grant funding and partnerships for additional endeavors.

Ohio

- **Resource driven policy:** The New Americans Initiative¹⁴ and Franklin County Workforce Welcoming Consortium was established to engage members of the local business community; STEM field associations and licensing institutions to provide unilateral services to skilled immigrants and develop an online navigation tool to strengthen their career pathways.

Colorado

- **Resource driven policy** (*The Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning*) supports underemployed immigrants in the healthcare sector. “The goal is for participants to be job ready in over 40 healthcare careers through a series of services including career planning, training workshops, employment support, and identification of interim opportunities”.¹⁵ Colorado’s matching rate is higher than the national average for International Medical Graduates (IMGs).

Washington

- **Resource driven policy** (*The King County Adult Literacy Program*) through funding from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, offers free training to adults so they gain the skills they need to earn livable wages.¹⁶

¹⁰ <http://www.kentuckianaworks.org/>

¹¹ <http://kcc.kentuckianaworks.org/JobSeekers/KMCC.aspx>

¹²<http://kcc.kentuckianaworks.org/JobSeekers/KentuckyCareerCenterLocations/KentuckyHealthCareerCenter.aspx>

¹³<https://www.nshmba.org/>

¹⁴ <http://www.weglobalnetwork.org/columbus-new-american-initiative/>

¹⁵ <http://www.springinstitute.org/colorado-welcome-back/>

¹⁶ <http://kingcountyadulthoodliteracy.org/>

Idaho

- **Resource driven policy:** (*Global Talent Idaho*)¹⁷,s mission is to help skilled immigrants find roles related to their former careers, experience and education. The center provides job seekers with career counseling, training, cultural orientation, and opportunities for mentoring, networking and internships that provide direct connections with employers through funding from the Department of Labor.

¹⁷ <http://globaltalentidaho.org/about/>