

IMMIGRATION POLICY AND UNDOCUMENTED PERSONS

Position Statement

NASW affirms the nation's need for just immigration policy that provides an expeditious route to citizenship, addresses the unique human needs of immigrant and refugee families, balances workforce needs with worker rights, affirms the importance of educational advancement and cultural diversity for the state, and addresses legitimate border security issues. The NASW position is based on the ethical principles of human rights, cultural diversity, and social and economic justice for all.

Recommendations

In the context of these complicated and pressing issues, NASW recommends that state policy makers:

- Ensure that unaccompanied minors are placed in safe and supportive environments with a sponsor, have access to legal counsel, and are treated in a manner that reflects the “best interest of the child”.
- Allow undocumented persons to obtain state-issued driver licenses; these would not serve as legal immigration documents, but would bestow legal driving privileges and would require undocumented person easier access to employment and improved public safety.
- Expand state funding of English-language and adult literacy programs, delivered through public schools and community colleges, to assist the integration of new immigrants into Iowa communities.
- Support the federal Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act) to assist qualified high school graduates in gaining access to higher education.
- Enact a tuition-equity law allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at Iowa's colleges and universities.

The full version of this statement with references can be found at <https://nasw-heartland.site-ym.com/?183>