



SUPPORTING IMMIGRANTS WITHIN MOSAIC CONFERENCE



Mennonite Central Committee



MOSAIC mennonite conference

These suggestions come out of a resourcing meeting for Mosaic Conference congregations with MCC staff on Dec. 4, 2024.

TO SUPPORT IMMIGRANTS WITHIN YOUR CONGREGATION:

Know Your Rights - MCC offers trainings on this topic, as well as handouts and bulletin inserts in English and Spanish, to understand one's rights if approached by ICE.



mcc.org/es/events/conozca-sus-derechos-know-your-rights

Create a Family Preparedness Plan - to proactively prepare for immigration emergencies, including a childcare plan, naming a Power of Attorney, gathering documents, and more.



ilrc.org/resources/step-step-family-preparedness-plan from the Immigrant Legal Resources Center

Legal Consults - Identify trusted experts to help determine immigration benefits one may qualify for.

- Those with a temporary status (e.g. TPS or DACA) that will expire within six months can apply NOW to renew it
- Those who have a criminal record should contact an attorney as soon as possible, because they are the most at-risk. All should take care to follow all laws, including traffic laws and maintaining car functions and lights to avoid greater risk.
- Be aware of “notarios” who are offering scams. Immigration paperwork takes time.
- Being honest in consultations is very important. Some people pay a lot for legal aid but don't actually have a good case because they did not disclose information to the attorney.
- MCC legal offices can offer some basic information in an initial phone call, to give a person a sense of their options and next steps (see contact info below)
- To identify nonprofit attorneys in your area: immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/
- MCC may be able to help identify law schools that can offer legal clinics at your congregation (e.g. Villanova Law School has come to Mosaic congregations to help people complete TPS paperwork)

Documentation - Create a file of important documents now

- Those who can get a driver's license or another form of ID should do so immediately
- Those who can qualify to take the citizenship exam should do so
- Any documentation that demonstrates how long one has been in the country is valuable (e.g. bills in your name, baptism or church membership certificate, receipts for remittance payments, any record of taxes you have paid). Keep a folder with this information.

Building Resilience - MCC can offer training on building resilience in the face of trauma, to help people face the stress of immigration uncertainties.



MCC offers a 50% discount on the cost of pursuing a certificate in Trauma and Spirituality (online from Palm Beach Atlantic University)

OTHER ACTIONS YOUR CONGREGATION CAN TAKE:

- Fundraise for legal support for immigrants who need it. Mosaic Conference's [Shalom Fund](#) is accepting donations to support immigrants' needs.
- MCC offers training for non-attorneys to practice immigration law at a nonprofit immigration organization through becoming DOJ accredited representatives.
 - See mcc.org/events/immigration-law-training to learn more
 - The next training is April 28–May 2. Registration opens in January. Scholarships are available.
 - MCC can also support congregations to become a DOJ recognized organization to offer legal services
- Offer English classes or citizenship exam preparation classes for your community, or support local organizations that are doing so.
- Declaring your church as sanctuary can be a signal to the local government of community support for protecting immigrants. Actually offering sanctuary can be very complex. Talk to MCC staff (contact info below) for more information.
- Advocate for Just Policies. Presidential administrations can do only as much as their resources (funding and staff) allow. Congress approves the budget for these programs.
- MCC can set up zoom or in-person meetings for your congregation to meet with the staff of the members of Congress to help shape the narrative that these policies are harmful, and we don't support them because of theological beliefs. (See mcc.org/get-involved/advocacy/us)
- It is possible that the new administration may call upon the National Guard and local law to implement their immigration goals. If so, there will be the need for local/state advocacy. Even now, congregations may wish to reach out to local government officials and law enforcement to establish relationships and to learn their perspectives on their role in enforcing immigration policies.

CONTACT INFORMATION

MCC East Coast's South Florida Legal Office 📞 305-249-3477 ✉️ FloridaOffice@mcc.org

Immigration services provided at minimal fees to members of Anabaptist churches. Can assist with: naturalization, family petitions, adjustment of status, and the replacement or renewal of green cards and work permits.

MCC West Coast's (Fresno/Reedley, CA) Office 📞 559-638-6911 ✉️ westcoast@mcc.org

Low-cost immigration services from the Reedley and Upland, CA offices include: Family petitions, Adjustments of status (Permanent Residence), Green Card Renewals, Removal of Conditional Residence, Citizenship/Naturalization applications, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA Renewals), Consular Process, Victims of Violent Crimes (U-Visa), Victims of Domestic Violence (VAWA), Employment Authorization.

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