



2005-10

**EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING
NEW AMERICANS IMMIGRANT POLICY COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, 12% of Illinois' population are immigrants and 20% of the state's population is either an immigrant or children of immigrants;

WHEREAS, immigrants contribute to the economic, social, and political vitality of the United States and Illinois;

WHEREAS, immigration policy is set at the federal level, but the actual benefits and challenges of immigration are felt at the state and local levels;

WHEREAS, a proactive policy for New Americans at the state level will maximize the benefits immigrants bring to the state and its municipalities, while helping immigrants overcome the challenges they face;

WHEREAS, it is beneficial for new immigrants, the host communities, the state, and the nation for immigrants to quickly adjust to life in Illinois, learn English, become citizens, buy homes, start businesses, send their children to college, and thrive economically;

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois plays a vital role in building upon the strengths of immigrants, enabling their speedy transition to self-sufficiency;

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois has historically been a national leader in creating innovative state initiatives that assist immigrants in integrating into life in the United States;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Rod Blagojevich, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, do hereby order as follows:

1. The State of Illinois shall develop a New Americans Immigrant Policy that builds upon the strengths of immigrants, their families, and their institutions, and expedites their journey towards self-sufficiency. This policy shall enable State government to more effectively assist immigrants in overcoming barriers to success, and to facilitate host communities' ability to capitalize on the assets of their immigrant populations.
2. The Governor shall appoint a 15-person **New Americans Immigrant Policy Council** comprised of the chairs of the Joint Legislative Immigrant and Refugee Policy Task Force, a representative of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, and other appropriate parties. Representatives from the Governor's office and state agencies may participate on the Council, but they may not constitute a voting majority.
3. The New Americans Immigrant Policy Council shall consult broadly with immigrant leaders and host communities; identify "best practices"; make recommendations to the Governor on policies and programs of state government to equip immigrants with the necessary tools to become full contributing state residents; and assist state agencies in developing plans to assist immigrants and their host communities. The Council shall identify key policy areas for focus and "best practices" models and make initial recommendations to the Governor by January 1, 2007.

4. The Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (DES) shall jointly lead the initiative and shall develop best practices, policies, and procedures and make recommendations for statewide policy and administrative changes. The Council shall advise DHS and DES and shall assist and guide subsequent state agencies as they develop plans.

5. State agencies shall develop New Americans plans that incorporate effective training and resources, ensure culturally and linguistically competent and appropriate services, and include administrative practices that reach out to and reflect the needs of the immigrant and Limited English Proficient population. State agencies shall consider the New Americans Immigrant Policy Council's recommendations in creating the agencies' plans. Agency plans should be submitted to the Governor for approval. All agencies' plans shall be tendered no later than September 1, 2007.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This Executive Order shall be in full force and effect upon its filing with the Secretary of State.

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Issued by Governor: November 19, 2005
Filed with Secretary of State: November 21, 2005