

LFC Requester:

Carlie Malone

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO

[AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov](https://www.nmlegis.gov/AgencyAnalysis) and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov*(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)***SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION***{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}*Date Prepared 1/23/26

Check all that apply:

Bill Number: HB124Original Correction Amendment Substitute

Agency Name

and Code

Dept. of Workforce Solutions-631

Number:

Sponsor: Rep. Parajon, Sen. Nava

Person Writing

Sarita NairShort Title: New Americans Division in WSDPhone: 505-263-3187Email Evan.Sanchez@dws.nm.gov**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT****APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28		
0	250	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () indicate expenditure decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY27	FY28	FY29		

(Parenthesis () indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY27	FY28	FY29	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	0	250	250	500	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: House Bill 124 (HB124) creates the Office of New Americans as a division of the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS). It additionally mandates a one-time report on the structure and benefits of refugee resettlement in the state. The bill, lastly, updates the name of a division to reflect current usage.

Background: In New Mexico, 10.2% of residents and 12.9% of workers are immigrants. Foreign-born workers make up an even larger share of the workforce in critical industries including agriculture (21%), construction (24%), and manufacturing (18%). Those workers pay an estimated \$771.1 million in state and local taxes. NMDWS created the Office of New Americans (the Office) to better engage with and support this key sector of the state’s workforce and economy.

The State Demographer’s Office estimates that since 2020 international migration has accounted for all population growth in New Mexico, offsetting loss of residents migrating to other states, as well as an increase in the death rate. The U.S. Congressional Budget Office estimates net immigration will become an increasingly important source of population growth nationally, with a January 2026 report stating that, “without immigration, the [United States] population would begin to shrink in 2030.”

Existing work: Since late 2024, the Office has been operating at NMDWS through private grant funding. Therefore, NMDWS is not seeking an appropriation for the office in FY27. The Office has two FTE staff, both grant-funded. Since being established, the Office has trained over 400 businesses on the latest federal immigration policy changes, including dedicated training for agricultural employers. The Office also created a training program for U.S. Department of Justice accredited representatives, expanding career pathways and improving legal service capacity in the state; coordinated a partnership agreement with the Mexican Consulate in Albuquerque to improve enforcement of rights for all workers; and led research aimed at improving the departments understanding of the needs and strengths of the state’s immigrant workforce.

Additionally, the Office is part of a national network of similar offices in 23 states convened by the American Immigration Council and the World Education Service, giving NMDWS access to a national network of experts and best practices to stay on the cutting edge of state immigration policy.

Following the example of the GRO Fund, NMDWS set up the Office as a pilot program in order to explore what the needs and opportunities would be. Seeing the success of the past year, the administration determined it was the right time to formalize the Office as a “Division” of DWS.

Refugee resettlement report: The legislation also requires the Office to make a recommendation on how to improve coordination between the workforce experts at DWS and the state’s refugee resettlement system. A primary goal of the resettlement system is to help refugees secure employment that allows them to be self-sustaining, a role that NMDWS plays with a wide range of workers including unemployed and dislocated youth and adults in the state. Other states, like Utah, have seen great success from a stronger partnership between federally funded workforce

programs and the ORRS.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no appropriation requested for FY27. In subsequent fiscal years, an appropriation will be required to maintain staff at the Office at current levels, estimated at \$250,000 annually.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

None.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

None.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The bill also updates other Division names within the Department for consistency with actual practices.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

None.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

The state will be at risk of failing to attract and retain immigrant workers, which could exacerbate workforce shortage concerns for businesses in key industries in the state and reduce New Mexico's income tax base. New Mexico may fall behind competitiveness with neighboring states in attracting the only growing segment of the workforce in coming years.

AMENDMENTS