

HOUSE BILL 124

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026

INTRODUCED BY

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AN ACT

RELATING TO WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS; CREATING THE NEW AMERICANS DIVISION IN THE WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DEPARTMENT; PROVIDING DIVISION DUTIES; REQUIRING REPORTS; REQUIRING A STUDY AND REPORT ON THE WORK, ECONOMIC IMPACT AND STRUCTURE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN NEW MEXICO.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 9-26-3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2007, Chapter 200, Section 3) is amended to read:

"9-26-3. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Workforce Solutions Department Act:

A. "department" means the workforce solutions department;

B. "new Americans" means people residing in the

underscored material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 were not citizens of the United States at birth; and

2 [B-] C. "secretary" means the secretary of
3 workforce solutions."

4 SECTION 2. Section 9-26-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2007,
5 Chapter 200, Section 4) is amended to read:

6 "9-26-4. WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DEPARTMENT CREATED.--The
7 "workforce solutions department" is created in the executive
8 branch pursuant to the Executive Reorganization Act. The
9 department is a cabinet department that includes:

- 10 A. the office of the secretary;
- 11 B. the administrative services division;
- 12 C. the [business services] unemployment insurance
13 division;
- 14 D. the labor relations division;
- 15 E. the workforce technology division; [and]
- 16 F. the workforce transition services division; and
- 17 G. the new Americans division."

18 SECTION 3. A new section of the Workforce Solutions
19 Department Act is enacted to read:

20 "[NEW MATERIAL] NEW AMERICANS DIVISION--PURPOSE--DUTIES--

21 A. The purpose of the new Americans division of the
22 department is to support new Americans residing in New Mexico
23 in achieving their maximum economic potential in New Mexico's
24 workforce and as entrepreneurs. In furtherance of this
25 purpose, the division shall:

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(1) support and expand educational, workforce training and other initiatives that improve the integration of new Americans into the state's economy;

(2) identify strategies for improving licensure pathways for new Americans who have been professionally trained or licensed in another country;

(3) assist businesses that employ new Americans by identifying, attracting and retaining top global talent required to remain competitive in a global economy;

(4) identify and support pathways for new Americans to advance priority sectors identified in the state's workforce development and economic development plans; and

(5) serve as an information center by providing resources and engagement opportunities to businesses, community-based organizations, workers, community members, state agencies and local governments on policies and legislation affecting new Americans, including supporting eligible lawful permanent residents in becoming naturalized United States citizens.

B. The new Americans division shall, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the department, work with other divisions within the department, the economic development department, the higher education department, the public education department, the department of health, the health care authority, the homeland security and emergency management

1 department, the department of public safety or the regulation
2 and licensing department to fulfill the duties of the new
3 Americans division.

4 C. By August 1, 2027, and by July 1 of each year
5 thereafter, the new Americans division shall provide a report
6 to an interim committee that studies economic and rural
7 development and policy, the secretary, the governor and members
8 of the legislature on the activities of the division in the
9 preceding twelve months, including an analysis of the economic
10 impact, status, population and workforce numbers of new
11 Americans in the state."

12 **SECTION 4. TEMPORARY PROVISION--STATE REFUGEE
13 RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM--STUDY--REPORT.--**

14 A. The new Americans division of the workforce
15 solutions department shall study, evaluate and prepare a report
16 on the work, economic impact and structure of refugee
17 resettlement in New Mexico. As deemed necessary and
18 appropriate, the division director shall consult with
19 stakeholders, including representatives of the health care
20 authority, the economic development department and community-
21 based organizations.

22 B. The division shall report its findings to the
23 interim committee that studies economic and rural development
24 and policy by December 1, 2026.