



**Department
of State**



**Office for
New Americans**

May 18, 2018



Office for
New Americans

What is ONA?

- **Our Start**
- **Who We Serve**
- **What is An Opportunity Center?**
- **Services Offered**
- **Where Are We Located?**



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ONA'S Beginnings

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo established the Office for New Americans (ONA) in 2013 to assist newcomers to New York State who are eager to contribute to our economy and become part of the family of New York State.



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Who We Serve

- Immigrants and refugees (5 million in NY State)
- ¼ of New York State residents
- More than 1 million New Yorkers are Limited English Proficiency
- New Americans = Entrepreneurs

Who We Serve

\$12.2 Billion

Net business income contributions by
New American business owners

31.2%

Percent of New York State
business owners that are
New Americans

4.2 Million

Number of immigrants that live in
New York State



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What is an Opportunity Center?

- The New York State Office for New Americans helps New Americans fully participate in New York State civic and economic life.
- We are committed to strengthening New York State's welcoming environment for New Americans and facilitating their success by partnering with local community-based organizations to provide free direct services.



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Services Offered at Opportunity Centers

English-for-Speakers-of-other-Languages (ESOL) Classes

Every person who wants to learn English should be given the opportunity to do so

- Structured program of instruction
- Recruit and enable community volunteers
- Innovative use of technology



Services Offered at Opportunity Centers

Naturalization Support

Every person who wants to become a U.S. citizen should be given the opportunity to do so

- Train immigrant service providers
- Provide legal assistance
- Use specialized software to make applying easier and faster (CitizenshipWorks)
- Multi-lingual toll-free hotline
1-800-566-7636



Services Offered at Opportunity Centers

ONA Legal Counsels

Every person who needs legal services should be able to access to them

- Legal technical assistance
- Immigration law consultations
- Citizenship drives
- Multi-lingual toll-free hotline



Services Offered at Opportunity Centers

Entrepreneurial Training

Harnessing the Entrepreneurial Spirit of New Americans

- Collaborate with Empire State Development – Entrepreneurial Assistance Program and Small Business Development Corporations
- Provide free ‘How to Start a Business’ and ‘How to Grow a Business’ seminars



Services Offered at Opportunity Centers

Workshops

Opportunity Centers provide accurate and reliable information

- Each Opportunity Center provides workshops throughout the year on topics relevant to their community
- Some previous topics have included: domestic violence, affordable housing, workers' rights, how to apply for a passport



Special Projects

New Americans Hotline (1-800-566-7636)

- A toll-free, multi-lingual information and referrals hotline with live assistance in more than 200 languages
- Operates from 9AM to 8PM, Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays)
- Anyone can call the hotline regardless of documented status
- Calls to the hotline are **confidential and anonymous**
- Through the hotline, you can:
 - Obtain referrals to immigrant-service providers across the State
 - Ask general immigration and naturalization questions
 - Related public and private programs
 - Find out information about the ONA Opportunity Centers and LDP
 - Report immigration assistance fraud and schemes against immigrants



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Special Projects

Cell-Ed



- First in the nation program providing immigrants free English-language training via “standard” mobile phones
- Training combines voice tutorials and messaging services that allows for two-way interactivity and instant feedback
- The program is confidential, free to the learner (excluding minutes and texts billed at the rate of the users cell phone plan) and available at any time of the day



Special Projects



- In 2016 Governor Cuomo Launched "Naturalize NY" – First Public-Private Partnership of its kind to Promote U.S. Citizenship
- In Partnership with SUNY Albany, Stanford University, and George Mason University, Robin Hood Foundation, NY Community Trust, 'NaturalizeNY' waives the naturalization fee for eligible low-income working immigrants through a lottery program
- www.naturalizeny.org



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Special Projects

Navigator

- Low-income New American communities in New York State often lack reliable information regarding workforce development opportunities and other opportunities open to all New Yorkers to fully participate in our State's civic and economic life.
- New York State's New American population is ignored for career pathways, vulnerable to financial frauds and at an access deficit for possible ladders of opportunities.
- To address this gap, the New York State Office for New Americans (ONA) has established a network of local leadership to coordinate and conduct outreach to low-income immigrant communities, and to create a grassroots community navigators program to help low-income New Americans access services.



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Liberty Defense Project

The Liberty Defense Project is an initiative of Governor Cuomo to provide free legal assistance and representation to any immigrant in New York State through a network of nonprofit service providers, pro bono attorneys, law students and other legal professionals

- Free legal consultations and screenings for immigrants throughout New York State
- Direct representation to immigrants in deportation proceedings as well as other cases
- Help with filing immigration applications for naturalization, employment authorization, permanent residency, etc.
- Know Your Rights trainings for immigrants and community at large

More info at: <https://www.ny.gov/programs/liberty-defense-project>



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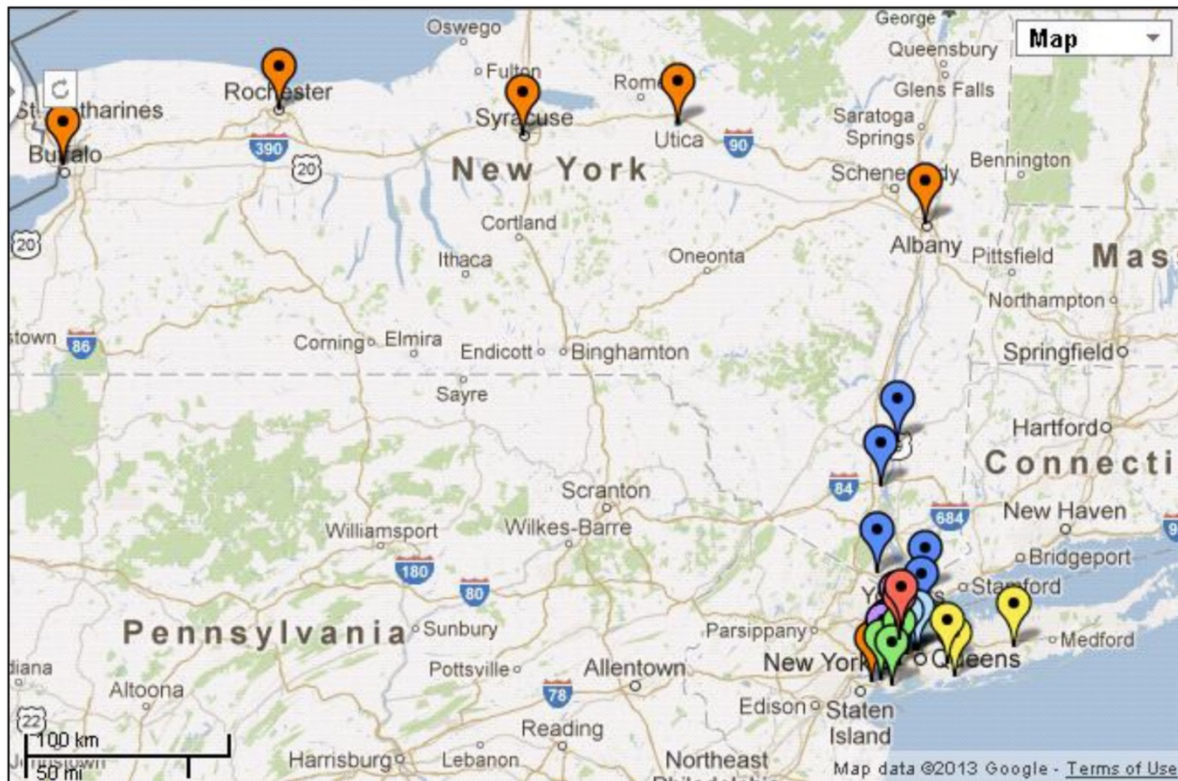
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Our Locations

**Western NY,
Central NY,
Capital Region,
Hudson Valley**



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