

SOCIAL WORKERS SUPPORT IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

FOR THE CIVIL LIBERTY, HUMAN DIGNITY, AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF ALL MICHIGANDERS

“Children experience toxic stress when they are suddenly separated from their parents, which negatively impacts brain development. They are also at greater risk of developing chronic mental health conditions that include depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as physical conditions such as cancer, stroke, diabetes, and heart disease”



(American Immigration Council, 2021)

In 2025, NASW-MI supported SB 508-510, aiming to:



In most cases, prohibit immigration enforcement at places of worship or religious ceremony, some health and social service agencies, educational institutions & courthouses without judicial warrant.



Prevent government entities from sharing personal information for purpose of immigration enforcement, unless they were presented with a warrant issued by a federal or state court.



In most cases, prohibit law enforcement officers from wearing masks or otherwise concealing their identity.

According to the NASW Code of Ethics, Social Workers must:

- Obtain education about and demonstrate understanding of the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to immigration status.
- Not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of immigration status.
- Act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class on the basis of immigration status.

“For the same costs as pursuing a strategy of mass deportations of one million people a year, sustained over 10-plus years until 13.3 million people have either been deported or left on their own, the United States could:

- Build over 40,450 new elementary schools in communities around the nation.
- Construct over 2.9 million new homes in communities around the nation.
- Fund the Head Start program for nearly 79 years.
- Pay full tuition and expenses for over 4.3 million people to attend a private college for four years, or over 8.9 million people to attend an in-state public college for four years.”

(American Immigration Council, 2024)



COMPREHENSIVE REFORM IS NEEDED

NASW recommends the following reforms, among others, to support the rights of immigrants and refugees:

- Establishing comprehensive refugee resettlement programs adequate in length and substance that include supports to help with integration into communities, trauma and mental health counseling, and job readiness and placement
- Ensuring access to emergency humanitarian aid, health, and mental health care for all immigrants and refugees
- Eliminating backlogs and lengthy delays in processing of immigration status and related applications



National & State Organizations to Learn More:

- ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union)
- MIRC (Michigan Immigrant Rights Center)
- CTAN (Children Thrive Action Network)
- LCCHR (Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights)

For information on your rights and a sample script (“red card”) for interactions with immigration enforcement, visit ilrc.org/redcards

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

Jess Riley, MSW | NASW-MI Policy and Advocacy Manager
jriley.naswmi@socialworkers.org | (517) 940-4684

Duane Breijak, LMSW-Macro | NASW-MI Executive Director
dbreijak.naswmi@socialworkers.org | (517) 487-1548

De’Shondria Bedenfield | Capitol Services Multi-Client Lobbyist
dbedenfield@capitol-services.org



National Association of Social Workers – Michigan Chapter
741 N Cedar, Ste 100 Lansing, MI 48906
nasw-michigan.org