



City of Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu
Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement

CITY OF BOSTON EARNS 4-STAR CERTIFIED WELCOMING DESIGNATION

First city in Massachusetts to be Certified Welcoming.

BOSTON - Monday, August 17, 2026 - Mayor Michelle Wu, the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA), and Welcoming America announced that the City of Boston has earned a 4-star [Certified Welcoming](#) designation from [Welcoming America](#), recognizing Boston as a national leader in creating policies, programs, and practices that support immigrant inclusion and belonging.

"Boston has always been a city shaped by people who came here from around the world to build a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities," said **Mayor Michelle Wu**. "We are proud to earn this historic designation recognizing the progress and continued work across our city to make Boston a home for everyone. I'm grateful to our Office for Immigrant Advancement, community partners, and neighborhood and cultural leaders for helping us achieve this critical milestone as we continue pressing forward."

Through its Certified Welcoming process, Boston met the criteria across all seven areas of the [Welcoming Standard](#), Welcoming America's roadmap for building inclusive communities: government and community leadership, equitable access, civic engagement, connected communities, education, economic development, and safe communities.

This recognition builds on MOIA's ongoing efforts through its City of Belonging "You Belong Here" initiative, a citywide campaign that encourages every resident to feel welcome, valued, and empowered to contribute to Boston's future. The designation reflects more than symbolic commitment — Boston has built the systems, programs, and partnerships that help longtime residents and newcomers alike participate and thrive.

Through the annual [Welcoming Week](#) celebration in September, MOIA also continues its citywide outreach efforts to inform residents and share resources, so that every neighbor is inspired to support welcoming neighborhoods.

"Boston's strength comes from the people who call this city home, including our immigrant neighbors who contribute to every part of our civic, cultural, and economic life," said **Chief of Equity and Inclusion Mariangely Solis**. "This designation reflects our continued commitment to creating a city where language



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access, economic opportunity, and belonging are embedded into how we serve residents.”

As part of the certification process, MOIA led a comprehensive review of City policies, programs, and practices related to immigrant inclusion. The process highlighted Boston’s investments in language access, immigrant leadership development, legal services, workforce development, community engagement, and partnerships with organizations serving immigrant residents.

“Achieving this 4-star Certified Welcoming status is the result of a collaborative effort across City government and with immigrant communities who shared their experiences, priorities, and vision for Boston’s future,” said **Courtney White, Interim Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office for Immigrant Advancement.**

“This recognition celebrates the progress we have made while also strengthening our commitment to continue building a city where every immigrant resident can access resources, participate fully, and feel a true sense of belonging.”

Boston’s immigrant communities represent the diversity, resilience, and innovation that make the city stronger. Through programs and initiatives including immigrant leadership programs, community grants, legal service partnerships, citizenship support, and community engagement efforts, MOIA works to advance equity and expand opportunities for immigrant residents.

“Boston’s work behind this designation, across city government, community organizations, and immigrant residents who shaped it, is what welcoming looks like in practice,” said **Daniel Valdez, Deputy Director of Welcoming America.** “It’s fitting that this comes in America’s 250th year, here in the birthplace of the American Revolution. We’re proud to recognize Boston as the first Certified Welcoming community in Massachusetts and excited to see what comes next.”

The 4-star Certified Welcoming designation from Welcoming America joins a growing list of recognitions and milestones that reflect how Boston is a home for everyone. Among these accomplishments, MOIA efforts include:

- Expanding access to immigration legal services by supporting trusted community organizations that provide free and low-cost legal assistance.
- Supporting English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs that help immigrant residents build language skills, pursue educational opportunities, and strengthen economic mobility.



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- Launching and expanding Immigrants Lead Boston, a leadership program that has trained immigrant residents from across Boston's neighborhoods to become community leaders.
- Creating opportunities for immigrant youth through the Immigrant Youth Advancement program, which connects young residents with career exploration, mentorship, leadership development, and workforce opportunities.
- Strengthening community engagement through initiatives such as Community Office Hours, where MOIA brings City resources directly into neighborhoods at Boston Public Library branches.
- Advancing the City's language access efforts to help residents access government services, information, and resources regardless of the language they speak.

From September 10 to 19, Welcoming Week in Boston will include art, health, education, and economic programming, as well as virtual and in-person events to further promote City Services and the seven areas of the Welcoming Standard. To see the schedule of events, visit: www.boston.gov/welcoming.

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About the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement

The Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) strives to strengthen immigrants' ability to fully and equitably participate in Boston's economic, civic, social, and cultural life. MOIA also promotes recognition and public understanding of immigrants' contributions to the City. To learn more, visit: boston.gov/immigrants.

About Welcoming America

Welcoming America is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that leads a movement of inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by ensuring everyone belongs. We believe that all people, including immigrants, are valued contributors and vital to the success of our communities and shared future. To learn more, visit: welcomingamerica.org.

About Certified Welcoming

Certified Welcoming is a formal designation for local governments that have created policies and programs reflecting their values and commitment to immigrant inclusion. This innovative program assesses local governments on their efforts to include and welcome immigrants in all areas of civic, social, and economic life in their communities. With a Certified Welcoming designation, communities distinguish their local efforts, build a



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competitive advantage, and gain access to opportunities to share their welcoming practices on a regional, national, and global stage. To learn more, visit: certifiedwelcoming.org.