

# Immigrants Make South Carolina Stronger



*An estimated **344,000** immigrants live in South Carolina, making up **6%** of the total population.*

*Immigrants live in **9%** of households in South Carolina.*

Immigrants contribute to every sector of South Carolina's economy. Some 7% of South Carolina's labor force are immigrants, including 19% of the construction industry, 38% of agriculture, 11% of manufacturing, 8% of business services, and 8% of leisure and hospitality.

About 19,000 immigrants in South Carolina work in STEM-related jobs, of which 22% are temporary immigrants on H-1B and other temporary work visas. In all, 11% of STEM degree holders in South Carolina are immigrants.

Immigrants of all backgrounds boost South Carolina's communities. Some 114,000 immigrants, or about 33% of all immigrants in South Carolina, are U.S. citizens. About 73,000 are lawful permanent residents, and 24,000 are temporary immigrants (including nonimmigrant visa holders and international students).

An estimated 241,000 of individuals in South Carolina are either undocumented immigrants or live with an undocumented immigrant. Some 50,000 U.S. citizen children in South Carolina live with an undocumented parent, while some 8,000 U.S. citizen spouses are married to an undocumented immigrant. Some 73,000 undocumented individuals in South Carolina have lived in the U.S. for more than 10 years, with 48,000 of those living in the U.S. for more than 20 years.

**Dreamers**—undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children before 2021 and are either in school or have graduated from high school—number 25,000 and **contribute \$653 million annually to South Carolina's economy**. They also contribute \$72 million in state and local taxes each year. Some 5,100 are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

**Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders**—immigrants who cannot safely return to their home countries—number 8,000 and **contribute \$157 million to South Carolina's economy each year**. Meanwhile, an estimated 25,000 immigrants in South Carolina are waiting for a decision on their asylum claim, and contribute \$459 million to South Carolina's economy annually.

**Immigrant groups currently protected from deportation**—DACA recipients, TPS holders, people seeking asylum, and those waiting for a permanent residency visa—**have access to work authorizations, making up an estimated 26,000 workers in South Carolina's labor force, and paying an estimated \$88 million annually in state and local taxes**.

**\$11.7 billion**

Annual spending power

**\$3.3 billion**

Annual combined taxes paid

**38,000**

Self-employed

**13%**

With college or advanced degrees

**91%**

Speak English

**86%**

Earn above the minimum needed to live

FWD.us is a bipartisan political organization founded by leaders in technology and business communities that believe America's families, communities, and economy thrive when more individuals are able to achieve their full potential. To learn more, go to [www.fwd.us](http://www.fwd.us).

**Data sources:** FWD.us analysis of augmented 2023 American Community Survey data with immigrant status assignment according to FWD.us methodology and adjustments for 2024 population estimates ([fwd.us/acs-methodology](http://fwd.us/acs-methodology)). Estimates may differ slightly from U.S. Census Bureau estimates because of adjustments made for undocumented immigrants and other immigrant groups, including most recent arrivals. For more information or additional data analysis, email [data@fwd.us](mailto:data@fwd.us).