

Immigrants Make Charleston Metro Stronger



*An estimated **67,000** immigrants live in Charleston, making up **8%** of the total population.*

*Immigrants live in **10%** of households in Charleston.*

Immigrants contribute to every sector of Charleston's economy.

Some 9% of Charleston's labor force are immigrants, including 15% of the construction industry, 6% of agriculture, 13% of manufacturing, 13% of business services, and 7% of leisure and hospitality.

About 4,000 immigrants in Charleston work in STEM-related jobs, of which 30% are temporary immigrants on H-1B and other temporary work visas. In all, 11% of STEM degree holders in Charleston are immigrants.

Immigrants of all backgrounds boost Charleston's communities. Some 24,000 immigrants, or about 36% of all immigrants in Charleston, are U.S. citizens. About 10,000 are lawful permanent residents, and 3,000 are temporary immigrants (including nonimmigrant visa holders and international students).

An estimated 5% of individuals in Charleston, or some 47,000, are either undocumented immigrants or live with an undocumented immigrant. Some 8,000 U.S. citizen children in Charleston live with an undocumented parent, while some 2,000 U.S. citizen spouses are married to an undocumented immigrant. Some 9,000 undocumented individuals in Charleston have lived in the U.S. for more than 10 years, with 5,000 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 3,000 and **contribute \$70 million annually to Charleston's economy.** They also contribute \$9 million in state and local taxes each year.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders—immigrants who cannot safely return to their home countries—numbered 1,000 and **contributed \$43 million to Charleston's economy** in 2024. Meanwhile, an estimated 9,000 immigrants in Charleston are waiting for a decision on their asylum claim, and contribute \$269 million to Charleston'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 4,000 workers in Charleston's labor force, and paying an estimated \$32 million annually in state and local taxes.**

\$2.5 billion

Annual spending power

\$795 million

Annual combined taxes paid

8,000

Self-employed

34%

With college or advanced degrees

89%

Speak English

88%

Earn above the minimum needed to live