



Immigrants in South Dakota

South Dakota has a small but growing immigrant community, with many emigrating from Guatemala, the Philippines, and Mexico. While a small share of South Dakota's population was born in another country, foreign-born residents support the state's economy across sectors. Immigrants make up a critical share of the state's labor force. For example, 16 percent of all residents working in the manufacturing industry are immigrants, as are 11 percent of the state's workers in healthcare support occupations. As neighbors, business owners, taxpayers, and workers, immigrants are an integral part of South Dakota's diverse and thriving communities and make extensive contributions that benefit all.

Four percent of South Dakota residents are immigrants, while another 4 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.

- In 2018, 35,175 immigrants (foreign-born individuals) comprised 4 percent of the population.¹
- South Dakota was home to 15,647 women, 15,622 men, and 3,906 children who were immigrants.²
- The top countries of origin for immigrants were Guatemala (8 percent of immigrants), the Philippines (7 percent), Mexico (7 percent), Sudan (6 percent), and Ethiopia (5 percent).³
- In 2018, 33,628 people in South Dakota (4 percent of the state's population) were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.⁴

More than a third of all immigrants in South Dakota are naturalized U.S. citizens.

- 12,693 immigrants (36 percent) had naturalized as of 2018,⁵ and 5,256 immigrants were eligible to become [naturalized U.S. citizens](#) in 2017.⁶
- Four-fifths (81 percent) of immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well."⁷

Most immigrants in South Dakota have at least a high school education.

- One-fourth (26 percent) of adult immigrants had a college degree or more education in 2018, while under a third (30 percent) had less than a high school diploma.⁸

Education Level	Share (%) of All Immigrants	Share (%) of All Natives
College degree or more	26	29
Some college	13	33
High school diploma only	31	31
Less than a high school diploma	30	7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Thousands of U.S. citizens in South Dakota live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

- 5,000 [undocumented immigrants](#) comprised 19 percent of the immigrant population and 1 percent of the total state population in 2016.⁹
- 6,762 people in South Dakota, including 3,609 U.S. citizens, lived with at least one [undocumented family member](#) between 2010 and 2014.¹⁰
- During the same period, about 1 percent of children in the state were U.S. citizens living with at least one undocumented family member (2,485 children in total).¹¹

South Dakota is home to dozens of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

- 190 [active DACA recipients](#) lived in South Dakota as of March 2020, while DACA has been granted to 241 people in total since 2012.¹²

Immigrants are important members of the South Dakota labor force across industries.

- 21,148 immigrant workers comprised 5 percent of the labor force in 2018.¹³

- Immigrant workers were most numerous in the following industries:

Industry	Number of Immigrant Workers
Manufacturing	8,039
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,978
Accommodation and Food Services	2,575
Retail Trade	2,101
Public Administration	1,207

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following industries:¹⁴

Industry	Immigrant Share (%) (of all industry workers)
Manufacturing	16
Accommodation and Food Services	7
Information	6
Health Care and Social Assistance	5
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	5

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

Immigrants are an integral part of the South Dakota workforce in a range of occupations.

- In 2018, immigrant workers were most numerous in the following occupation groups:¹⁵

Occupation Category	Number of Immigrant Workers
Production	4,970
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	2,534
Transportation and Material Moving	2,459
Sales and Related	2,281
Food Preparation and Serving	2,028

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- The largest shares of immigrant workers were in the following occupation groups:¹⁶

Occupation Category	Immigrant Share (%) (of all workers in occupation)
Production	15
Healthcare Support	11
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	8
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	7
Architecture and Engineering	6

Source: Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.

- Undocumented immigrants comprised 1 percent of South Dakota's workforce in 2016.¹⁷

Immigrants in South Dakota have contributed over \$100 million in taxes.

- [Immigrant-led households in the state paid](#) \$88.5 million in federal taxes and \$49.2 million in state and local taxes in 2018.¹⁸
- South Dakota [DACA recipients](#) and DACA-eligible individuals paid an estimated \$510,000 in state and local taxes in 2018.¹⁹

As consumers, immigrants add nearly half a billion dollars to South Dakota's economy.

- South Dakota residents in immigrant-led households had \$495 million in [spending power](#) (after-tax income) in 2018.²⁰

Immigrant entrepreneurs in South Dakota generate millions of dollars in business revenue.

- 756 immigrant business owners accounted for 1 percent of all self-employed South Dakota residents in 2018 and generated \$6.4 million in business income.²¹

Endnotes

1. “Foreign born” does not include people born in Puerto Rico or U.S. island areas or U.S. citizens born abroad of American parent(s). U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. The American Immigration Council elected to use data from the 2018 ACS 1-Year estimates wherever possible to provide the most current information available. Since these estimates are based on a smaller sample size than the ACS 5-year, however, they are more sensitive to fluctuations and may result in greater margins of error (compared to 5-year estimates).
2. Children are defined as people age 17 or younger. Men and women do not include children. Ibid.
3. Analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2018 American Community Survey 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.
4. Analysis of data from the 2018 Current Population Survey by the American Immigration Council, using IPUMS CPS. Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles and J. Robert Warren, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 7.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V7.0>.
5. 2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates.
6. Augmented IPUMS-ACS data, as published in “State-Level Unauthorized Population and Eligible-to-Naturalize Estimates,” Center for Migration Studies data tool, accessed April 2020, data.cmsny.org/state.html.
7. Figure includes immigrants who speak only English. Data based on survey respondents age 5 and over. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-Year Estimates by the American Immigration Council.
8. Data based on survey respondents age 25 and older. Ibid.
9. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” February 5, 2019, www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-immigrants/.
10. Silva Mathema, “State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants,” University of Southern California’s Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration and the Center for American Progress, March 2017, www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/03/16/427868/state-state-estimates-family-members-unauthorized-immigrants/.
11. American Immigration Council analysis of data from the 2010-2014 ACS 5-Year, using Silva Mathema’s “State-by-State Estimates of the Family Members of Unauthorized Immigrants” and IPUMS-USA. Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek, *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0* [dataset] (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2017).
12. The number of DACA recipients reflects USCIS’ estimate of those with active DACA grants as of March 31, 2020. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), “Approximate Active DACA Recipients: As of March 31, 2020” [dataset], July 22, 2020, <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/Approximate%20Active%20DACA%20Receipts%20-%20March%2031%2C%202020.pdf>. DACA grants reflect USCIS Form I-821D initial requests approved from Aug. 15, 2012-Mar. 31, 2020, as of April 2020. USCIS, “Number of Form I-821D, Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Status, by Fiscal Year, Quarter, and Case Status: Aug. 15, 2012-Mar. 31, 2020,” July 22, 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/DACA_performance_data_fy2020_qtr2.pdf.
13. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html.
14. Ibid.
15. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council. Categories are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system, www.bls.gov/soc/major_groups.htm.
16. Ibid.
17. Pew Research Center, “U.S. unauthorized immigration population estimates, 2016,” 2019.
18. New American Economy analysis of 2018 ACS microdata using IPUMS. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power, January 31, 2020, <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/>.
19. Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants (Washington, DC: April 2018), Appendix 1, <https://itep.org/state-local-tax-contributions-of-young-undocumented-immigrants>.
20. New American Economy, “Map the Impact,” section Taxes and Spending Power.
21. “Business owners” include people who are self-employed, at least 18 years old, and work at least 15 hours per week at their businesses. Analysis of 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS data by the American Immigration Council.