



**Stage One Regional Report #1**

# **SPANISH LANGUAGE OUTREACH PROJECT**

**2022-2023**

*Understanding the Regional Context*

*New England ADA Center - Region 1*

**ADA Knowledge Translation Center**

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# Executive Summary of National and Regional Project

## Project Goals

The Spanish Language Outreach Project (SLO) is a five-year collaborative national initiative of the ADA National Network (ADANN), 10 regional ADA centers, and the ADA Knowledge Translation Center. The overarching goals of the SLO are to: 1) develop a deeper understanding of the context of Spanish-speaking communities through research and expert consultation, 2) assess the diverse regional and national community needs of Spanish-language speakers in the U.S., 3) develop plans to reduce barriers to language access, 4) identify and develop knowledge translation interventions, products, and resources targeted to Spanish-language communities, and 5) develop connections to new outreach partners and trusted community leaders to better support dissemination, training, and technical assistance. This report addresses goal #1.

## Approach

Individuals at a national level and across 10 ADA regions reported on barriers that Spanish-speaking communities face, how they access and share information, and suggestions to improve outreach efforts. At the national level, participants were 14 leaders working directly with Spanish-speaking and/or disability communities from nine national organizations. Regional participants included 46 community members that are a part of, work with, or are involved with members of the Spanish-speaking community living with or without disabilities. Most regional participants identified as parents of someone with a disability, people with disabilities, community resource managers, or directors of programs at their organizations.

## National Findings

Participants report language to be the number one barrier for the Spanish-speaking communities they serve at a national level. This includes insufficient or ineffective translation and interpretation services, bilingual staff, and resources in plain language. Other common barriers are lack of information about rights and disability, fear and lack of trust related to immigration status, and the stigma attached to disability and mental health in the community.

## Regional Findings

Like national findings, language was the most discussed barrier for the Spanish-speaking community across ADA regions. Participants report that many people in this community do not know what resources and programs are available to them. Further, fear or lack of trust based on immigration status impacts access to services. Other common barriers are stigma, lack of education on disability, technology, discrimination, low literacy, and survival mode.

## Recommendations

Participants gave recommendations for ADANN to improve outreach to Spanish-language communities. At national and regional levels, in-person trainings and partnering with local organizations were most frequently recommended. Nationally, members suggested utilizing social media, valuing representation, and understanding the needs of the community. At regional levels, community members suggested making information culturally accessible and relevant and tailoring information based on specific state needs. These recommendations reflect the Spanish-speaking community's barriers to accessing ADA information and emphasize the need for specific training and materials related to ADA so the community can be informed and more aware of their rights.

# **SECTION ONE: NATIONAL CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

## **SECTION 1: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

This report presents the regional results from the first stage of the project for the New England ADA Center, Region 1; and includes the following main sections: 1) background and national context, 2) regional findings outlining the context and qualitative interviews conducted with community members of Spanish-speaking communities, and 3) a summary of the overall national and regional key findings and recommendations of the first stage of the project. The appendix includes a list of organizations within for outreach in the region.

This section describes the national context and background of Spanish-speaking communities in the United States (U.S.). It first considers the complexity of conducting outreach to Spanish-speaking people and then provides key demographic information about the communities.

### **Spanish-Language Speakers in the United States**

Spanish-speaking communities are extremely diverse. Hispanic, Latino, and Latina are the most common terms used to describe or count people within Spanish-speaking communities in the U.S. The Hispanic or Latino category used by the federal government includes individuals of Spanish origin. For example, the U.S. Census Bureau reports and collects data on the ethnicity of Americans and defines “Hispanic or Latino” as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. The census questionnaire allows individuals to write in answers to specify their Hispanic origin or other ethnicity related to their Spanish-speaking identity. Some surveys, including the census, separate the question about Latino, Hispanic, and Spanish origin from race. Individuals who fit into this category may identify with any one or a combination of many different races.

While the categories of Hispanic and Latino and Spanish-speaking are sometimes used synonymously, the category of Hispanic or Latino does not perfectly match the totality of the Spanish-speaking population in the U.S. Most Latino or Hispanic people speak Spanish, and Latino refers to the identity of people who are native to or have cultural ties to Latin American countries. It does not necessarily indicate one’s preferred language. Individuals from non-Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America where Portuguese, French, Creole, or other languages are more commonly spoken may also have a Latino or Latina identity. Hispanic generally refers to family origin in Spanish-speaking countries, including Spain. It is important to recognize that not all Spanish-speaking individuals embrace or use the term Latino or Hispanic to describe themselves. For example, some individuals prefer to identify by their country of origin. Others are critical of the Spanish language and its gendered noun structure, and terms that maintain a gender-neutral tone, such as Latin/x, are now in use.

To match the federal categorization and the most common terminology used in reporting efforts, Latino or Hispanic are the terms most used in this report. As the Spanish-speaking population in the U.S. is extremely diverse, it is necessary at times to switch terms in this report, such as when referring to personal accounts or data sources where other terms are used.

## **Hispanic and Latino People in the U.S.**

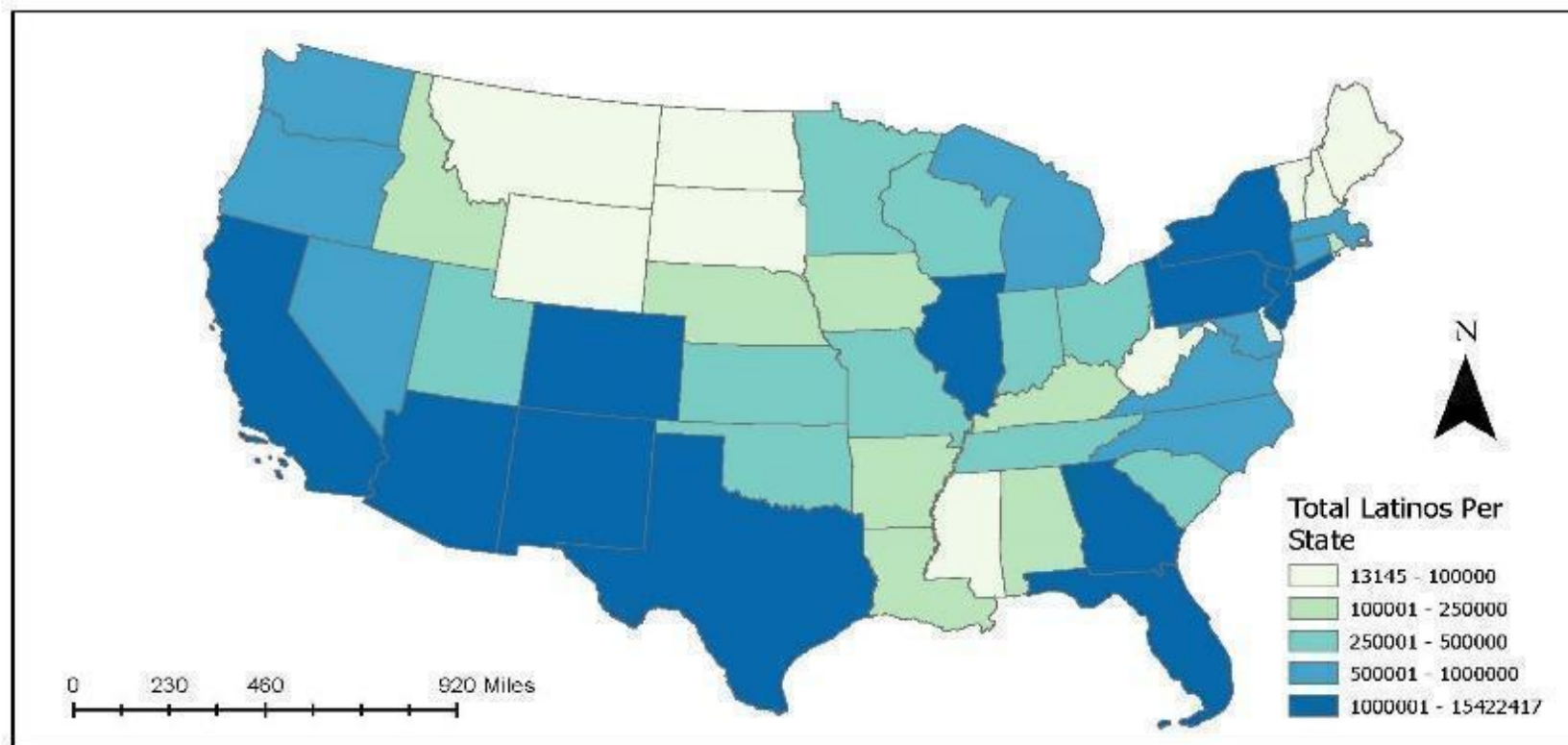
As of 2020, there were 62.1 million Hispanic, Latino, or Latina people in the United States. This population includes people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, and Spanish descent. Of all groups, Mexicans are the largest group at 61.4 percent. States with the largest Hispanic/Latino population include California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Arizona (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, 2022). Hispanics and Latinos are also one of the fastest-growing populations in the country. In the last decade, the Hispanic population increased by 23 percent (Pew Research Center, 2022). Figure 1 on page 7 shows the number of Latinos/Hispanics by state from 2017-2021 in the U.S.

## **Hispanic and Latino People with Disabilities in the U.S.**

Additionally, as the Hispanic/Latino population continues to grow in the United States, the number of people with disabilities in these communities has also increased. In 2018, there were 5.3 million Hispanic or Latinos with disabilities in the United States. Figure 2 on page 8 shows the percentage of Latinos/Hispanics with disabilities per state from 2017-2021. Despite the growth of the population across the country, Hispanics continue to face underrepresentation and access disparities in areas such as education, health care, employment, and civil rights. For Hispanics with disabilities, there are additional barriers as they simultaneously navigate cultural and health-related differences. These barriers include language barriers, lack of access to information, immigration status, discrimination, and fear, among many others. These barriers impact access to information.

Figure 1: Map of Latino population count across the U.S. from 2017 to 2021

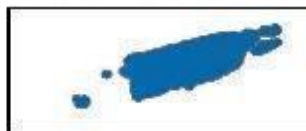
## 2017-2021 Count of Latinos in the United States



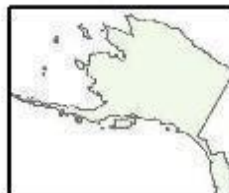
**Hawaii**



**Puerto Rico**



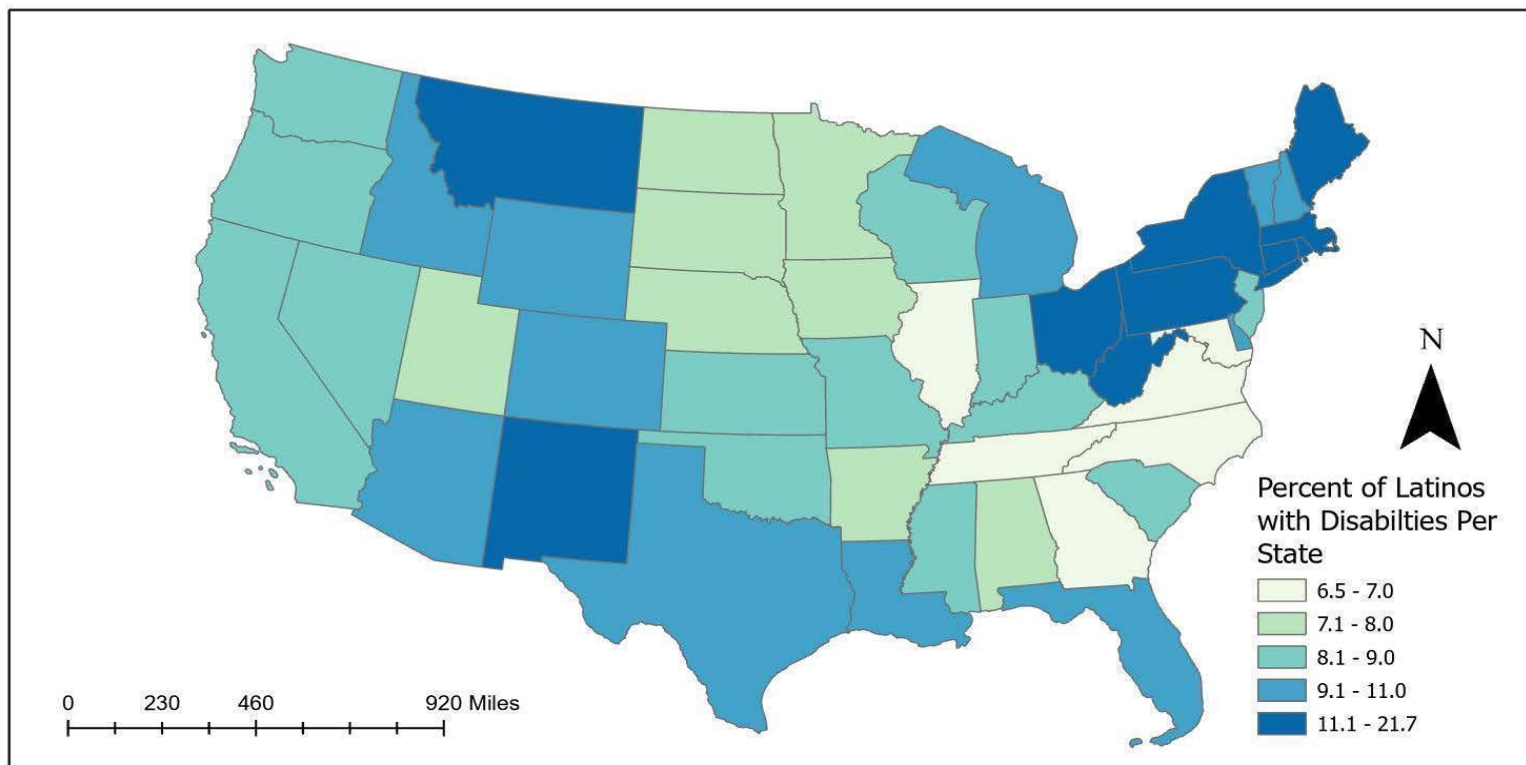
**Alaska**



PCS: NAD 1983 2011 Contiguous USA  
Albers  
Source: ACS 2021 5-year data Table  
S1810

Figure 2: Map of Latino population percentages across the U.S. from 2017 to 2021

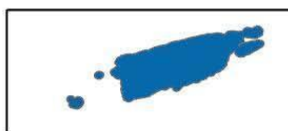
## 2017-2021 Percent of Latinos with Disabilities in the United States



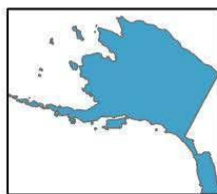
Hawaii



Puerto Rico



Alaska



PCS: NAD 1983 2011 Contiguous USA  
Albers  
Source: ACS 2021 5-year data Table  
S1810



## **Barriers to Sharing Information About Rights in Spanish-Speaking Communities**

The Hispanic and Latino population in the U.S. has rapidly grown for several decades and is one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups. Within this diverse population, many communities have historically faced substantial barriers to full inclusion in everyday life. Some of the barriers or challenges are connected to limited access to employment, education, and legal services. Outreach to educate community members about their legal rights is an essential part of removing these barriers and addressing discrimination. Hispanics and Latinos face inequalities and barriers when accessing information in various areas of life.

### **Language Barriers**

One of the main barriers to informing individuals and communities about their rights is language. While an increasing number of Hispanics and Latinos are bilingual, Spanish is often spoken in homes, communities, and with certain family groups. Many basic resources and information about rights are only provided in English and are not widely available or used by Spanish-speaking individuals (Garcia et al., 2020). Language barriers are especially troublesome when it comes to navigating legal decisions, where legal language is particularly complex. Many Spanish-speaking people have faced barriers to full and equal access to education which can impede their understanding of such information. Spanish-speaking individuals are also more likely to face barriers in accessing legal services. Language differences are an issue when it comes to accessing information and communicating with professionals and can lead to discrimination in settings such as schools, workplaces, and public places (Ell et al., 2015). This barrier goes beyond translation, as there is also a lack of culturally competent information in Spanish. Most information that is available to the Hispanic community is not translated accurately or adapted to the Spanish language, which often creates confusing and ineffective content (Khan et al., 2013).

### **Mistrust and Fear**

Hispanic and Latino populations commonly report fear or mistrust in accessing legal experiences. Even when experiences may amount to discrimination or abuse. Mistrust is commonly attributed to reports of abuse or mistreatment within the legal system, previous negative experiences, or family members' encounters with law enforcement agencies (Cedillo, 2019). Even if individuals know about their rights, they may be reluctant to exercise them. Mistrust can also be tied to xenophobia, racism, and other forms of discrimination. In a study conducted by Polek et al. (2019), participants shared they were denied interpreting services which caused them to delay seeking care until their symptoms worsened. In another study, participants had similar experiences and shared that they were discriminated against as new immigrants with limited English proficiency when physicians would hear their accents when speaking on the phone (Neary & Mahoney, 2005). Discrimination also comes up when discussing advocacy. Advocacy is important for Hispanics with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities because it gives individuals the opportunity to influence disability laws and policies (Cohen, 2013). In Cohen (2013), researchers share that discrimination is one of the barriers that put Hispanic parents at a disadvantage, leaving them with a lack of knowledge about special education and social service programs that affect their children.

## **Economic Barriers**

Financial and economic barriers pose significant challenges for the Hispanic and Latino communities. Hispanic and Latino families, especially those with disabilities, are more likely to experience poverty and unemployment compared to their counterparts (Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2020). Economic barriers can lead to low literacy, low employment rates, and the underutilization of social services. Research by Suarez-Balcazar et al. (2020) shows that without sufficient economic resources, individuals cannot obtain adaptations or accommodations to participate in their community, demonstrating the impact of socioeconomic status (SES) on everyday life. Low education and health literacy are other aspects of SES that play a role in lack of access to resources. Beccera et al. (2016) discuss the impact of these barriers, which include lower utilization of healthcare services, poor patient-physician communication, and higher rates of hospitalization. Employment and income also play a role in SES as Hispanics with disabilities are underemployed, and those that are employed are underpaid and lack benefits (Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2020).

## **Immigration Status**

Immigration status can be a major barrier for many Hispanic and Latino populations. Fear of deportation prevents Hispanics and Latinos that have migrated to the U.S. from reaching out to professionals for support (Ijalba, 2016). Immigrants often seek information from family members or individuals they trust, rather than professionals, which can lead to misinformation (Becerra et al., 2017). This fear can also be influenced by a lack of knowledge about their rights or legal resources. Suarez-Balcazar et al. (2020) note that unawareness of law protections, fear of deportation, and mixed household status all contribute to a family's ability to access legal or social services. This article also mentions that since undocumented immigrants are no longer eligible for services post-high school graduation, they may not receive support for housing or employment, which also contributes to low resource utilization (Neary & Mahoney, 2005). Immigration status also plays a role when it comes to relationships with professionals. In their article, Neary and Mahoney (2005) include the following quote: "Some Latinos won't speak up, they settle for what they're told, Latinos who aren't citizens may be afraid to speak up. They'll settle for anything authorities tell them." This emphasizes the experiences immigrants with disabilities face while advocating for their rights within healthcare settings in the U.S.

## The Americans With Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law that strives to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not discriminated against and have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. Knowledge of this law can support the ongoing effort to address the disparities that Hispanic and Latino individuals with disabilities and their families face. The ADA consists of the following five titles, which cover protection in employment and access to health care:

- **Title I** requires employers to provide accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities while prohibiting discrimination in all aspects of employment.
- **Title II** ensures that public services do not deny services to people with disabilities or discriminate against people with disabilities from participation in services available to those without disabilities.
- **Title III** requires that all new construction and modifications be accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- **Title IV** ensures that telecommunication companies offer relay phone service to individuals who use telecommunications devices for the deaf or similar devices.
- **Title V** prohibits individuals from coercing, threatening, or retaliating against individuals with disabilities or others attempting to help these individuals declare their rights.

Even though the ADA offers legal protection to address some of the barriers that Hispanics and Latinos face, many Spanish speakers remain unaware of its purpose, despite many reports of the need for services within this community. In Velcoff et al. (2010), Latinos with disabilities shared that services such as vocational rehabilitation (VR) played an immense role in their education but failed to provide the same support after graduation. Others shared that they were unaware of services to help understand the law or that they felt a mistrust of the services, due to the lack of connection with the Latino community, that negatively influenced their employment opportunities. Employment is only one domain where Hispanics and Latinos with disabilities are unaware of relevant resources. In fact, there is a need for additional resources across all the areas the ADA affects, including health (The National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities, 2020).

## **Outreach Strategies to Reach Spanish-Speaking Disability Communities**

There has been little research done to determine the best methods to reach Spanish-speaking people with disabilities and their families. Spanish language outreach to people with disabilities and their families is essential to improve knowledge about their rights and responsibilities, improve the quality and relevance of existing services, and meet the goals of the ADA for *all* Americans to participate in everyday commercial, economic, and social activities. Spanish-speaking communities face many barriers to accessing the different areas that the ADA covers such as places of employment, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, government services, public transportation, and places of public accommodation. Improved ADA outreach efforts can better equip individuals and communities to remove these barriers.

Unfortunately, much of the research about Spanish-speaking disability communities only provides surface-level insight due to the complications involved in collecting accurate information about Hispanics and Latinos related to the aforementioned barriers associated with language and cultural differences, SES status, and a lack of trust associated with research (Kao et al., 2012). Most of the evidence to date on outreach to Spanish-speaking disability communities relates to health promotion and sharing information or resources to address health disparities. These studies provide some useful context for how to conduct similar outreach efforts with ADA information. Successful outreach strategies have involved leveraging community partnerships, identifying family supports, and developing culturally tailored information.

### **Community Partnerships**

One of the most effective outreach strategies is partnering with trusted community-based organizations (CBOs). Partnering with organizations that have established relationships with community members and are trusted sources of information is vital when dealing with delicate issues such as legal rights. Successful health promotion initiatives for people with disabilities and their families often involves community partners that have close ties with family and community members. A study by Brennan et al. (2014) on effective outreach strategies to connect elderly Latinos with depression to social services discusses important aspects of conducting outreach with this community. These include in-person, in-home assessments; building rapport in a culturally appropriate manner; the involvement of family as a resource; the creation of social networks with similar experiences; and the maintenance of relationships over time. Compared to traditional outreach models, this initiative created a supportive community and increased self-esteem and self-worth in individuals with depression. An ongoing community-based project by Ravenell et al. (2015) seeks to increase stroke literacy through the distribution of resources at church. In this study, participants are either presented with an educational brochure, which represents usual care, or a short culturally tailored film. The church setting was selected due to its importance in minority communities, allowing researchers a place to reach and interact with the Hispanic population. Although the study is still underway, the hypothesis is that participants who receive the culturally adapted film will demonstrate greater stroke symptom recognition compared to the usual care participants due to the narrative approach, which has been successful when distributing cancer knowledge, HIV awareness, and substance use prevention resources to the Hispanic population in the past.

## **Family Supports**

Macias et al. (2018) conducted a comprehensive review of community outreach to people with developmental disabilities and their families. They found that efforts that directly connect individuals to resources, such as parent-to-parent support groups, are particularly effective. Leveraging existing community and family support is important for successful outreach efforts. A popular initiative to increase access to health-related information used in the Hispanic community is the *Promotora* model. Promotoras are community leaders who assist others in developing healthy lifestyles, empowerment, and community participation (Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2020). In a study done by Magana et al. (2014), Promotoras were Latinx mothers of children with disabilities that empowered other mothers of children with disabilities through their advocacy and service training. Promotoras are one of the most common resources in the Hispanic population because they incorporate community values, promote a trusting relationship, and communicate through the same language (Magana et al., 2014).

In a study conducted by Gannotti et al. (2004), health communication researchers recommend that outreach materials and educational resources for culturally diverse populations be created with consideration of values about disability rather than just translated. Although the Hispanic population is diverse, many cultures share similar values such as religion, *familismo*, and community building, which many professionals fail to consider when creating resources (Magana, 2000). *Familismo* is defined as “the belief in the commitment of family members to their family relationships. Family members feel an obligation to assist fellow family members especially when they are in need” (Steidel & Contreras, 2003). *Familismo* is used to describe the unique cultural value and approach to family life shared among many Latino families. This is demonstrated in an article written by Ijalba (2016), who found that Hispanic immigrants tend to seek autism information from family members rather than professionals for various reasons, including a sense of trust. In Cohen (2013), researchers mention that cultural models such as *familismo* need to be incorporated into resources, as they can enhance the access and effectiveness of services for Hispanics.

## **Culturally Tailored Message**

There is a growing body of research about the best methods to share information in a culturally relevant way. Studies discuss ways to make premade resources such as fact sheets, brochures, and videos more accessible. In a study conducted by Steinberg et al. (2003), Hispanic parents of deaf children shared that the most helpful resources included signed or cued instructions and parent meetings while written and video content were the least beneficial. This study emphasizes the preference for face-to-face interactions since they allow the opportunity for personal connections between parents and professionals. Additionally, Lajonchere et al. (2016) address health literacy in the Hispanic population, and participants shared that plain language, briefs between 2-4 pages, definitions for medical jargon, and figures or images to accompany written language are the best ways to inform the community about these topics. Another successful strategy is developing and sharing culturally tailored outreach materials collaboratively with community members in mind. For example, *creating* (rather than translating) Spanish-language materials with local community-specific references helps to build trust with Hispanic communities and improves the likelihood of effective outreach (Flores, 2017).

Even though there is a large body of literature that discusses the barriers Hispanics encounter about healthcare outreach, or their perceptions about and experiences with disability, to the

best of our knowledge there is no specific information related to how Latinos/Hispanics interact, share, or understand the ADA and civil rights. To fill this knowledge gap and understand how ADA information can be better delivered to the Spanish-speaking community, the following sections of this report describe the perspectives of 46 community members across 10 ADA regions and the perspectives of the leaders of nine national organizations on barriers that the Spanish-speaking community faces and how it accesses and shares information, followed by some recommendations for the ADANN to improve outreach efforts to this community.

# **SECTION TWO: REGIONAL CONTEXT, REGION 1 NEW ENGLAND ADA CENTER**

## Region 1 Background

### **What Is Unique About the Population in Region 1?**

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Region 1 includes the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

As of 2021, according to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) one-year estimates, the population of the New England ADA Center region was approximately 14.9 million people. Of this population, about 27% identify as racial or ethnic minorities, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The largest minority groups in this region are Hispanic or Latino (11.9%), Black or African American (6.3%), and Asian (5.0%).

Massachusetts has the highest percentage of Hispanic or Latino populations, and Maine and Vermont have the lowest percentages of Hispanic or Latino populations. However, it is worth noting that the Hispanic or Latino population has been growing rapidly in these states in recent years.

Massachusetts has the highest population of Black or African American populations (6.7%), followed by Connecticut (10.6%) and Rhode Island (4.9%). Maine (1.5%), New Hampshire (1.4%), and Vermont (1%) have the lowest percentages of Black or African American populations. Massachusetts has the highest percentage of Asian populations, (7.1%), followed by Connecticut (4.7%) and Rhode Island (3.1%). New Hampshire (2.6%), Vermont (1.7%), and Maine (1.2%) have the lowest percentages of Asian populations.

English is the most spoken language in the region (77.8% of the population), followed by Spanish (8.9%), Other Indo-European (4.8%), French, Haitian, or Cajun (2.2%), and Chinese (1.4%). There are more languages identified, but these are the most common languages for the region.



## Region 1 States

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**Massachusetts** has the largest group of Spanish speakers, with approximately 890,000 thousand identifying as Hispanic or Latino, making them 12.7% of the state's population and 12.8% of the state's labor force. Within the last decade, there has been a growth of over 22% percent in their population. Boston (133,332), Springfield City (73,954), and Lawrence City (72,240) are the cities in Massachusetts with the most concentrated Latino/Hispanic populations. Culturally, the Spanish-speaking population in Massachusetts is predominantly from Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador.

**Connecticut** has the second largest group of Spanish speakers, with approximately 630,000 individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino, making them 17.6% of the state's population and 15.6% of the state's labor force. Within the last decade, there has been a growth of over 30% percent in their population. Bridgeport (61,917), Hartford (55,255), and Waterbury (41,909) are the cities in Connecticut with the most concentrated Latino/Hispanic populations. Culturally, the Spanish-speaking population in Connecticut is predominantly from Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and Mexico.

**Rhode Island** has the third largest group of Spanish speakers, with approximately 186,000 individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino, making them 17% of the state's population and 14.5% of the state's labor force. Within the last decade, there has been a growth of over 21.5% percent in their population. Providence (81,002), Pawtucket (18,983), and Central Falls (15,866) are the cities in Rhode Island with the most concentrated Latino/Hispanic populations. Culturally, the Spanish-speaking population in Rhode Island is predominantly from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala.

**New Hampshire** has the fourth largest group of Spanish speakers, with approximately 59,000 individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino, making them 4.3% of the state's population and 3.1% of the state's labor force. Within the last decade, there has been a growth of over 34.8% percent in their population. Manchester (12,575), Nashua (11,970), and Concord (1,654) are the cities in New Hampshire with the most concentrated Latino/Hispanic populations. Culturally, the Spanish-speaking population in New Hampshire is predominantly from Mexico, Dominican Republic, and Guatemala.

**Maine** has approximately 25,000 individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino, making them 1.9% of the state's population and 2.3% of the state's labor force. Within the last decade, there has been a growth of over 70% percent in their population, making it a fast-growing population in the state. Portland (1,615), Bangor (921), and Lewiston (798) are the cities in Maine with the most concentrated Latino/Hispanic populations. Culturally, the Spanish-speaking population in Maine is predominantly from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.

**Vermont** has approximately 13,000 individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino, making them 2% of the state's population and 1.4% of the state's labor force. Within the last decade, there has been a growth of over 37.8% percent in their population. Burlington (1,716), South Burlington (560), and Northfield (332) are the cities in Vermont with the most concentrated Latino/Hispanic populations.

## Disability Statistics Per State in the Region 1 Latino/Hispanic Community

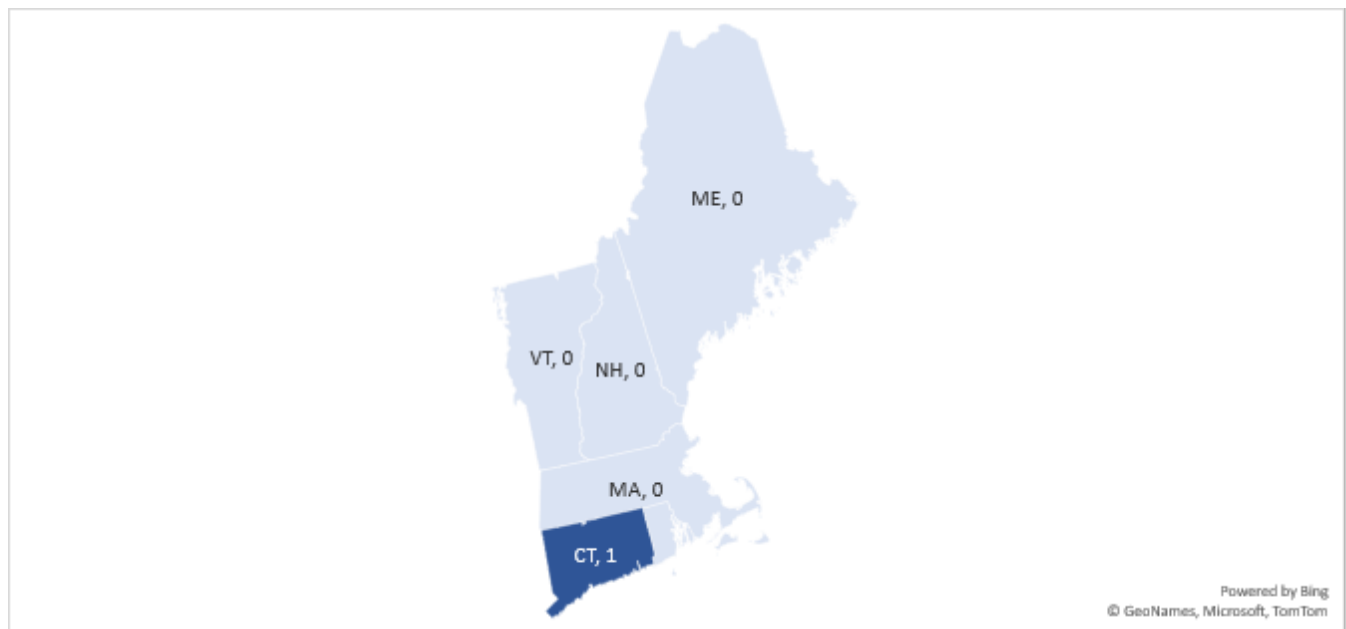
Based on the most recent census data, it is estimated that:

- Massachusetts has almost 890,000 Latinos, and approximately 12.3% have a disability.
- Connecticut has almost 630,000 Latinos, and approximately 11.8% have a disability.
- Rhode Island has almost 186,000 Latinos, and approximately 13% have a disability.
- New Hampshire has almost 59,000 Latinos, and approximately 10.6% have a disability.
- Maine has almost 25,000 Latinos, and approximately 10.8% have a disability.
- Vermont has 13,000 Latinos, and approximately 10.8% have a disability.

### Which States From Region 1 Participated in the Interviews?

As shown on the map, only one interview was conducted with a community member from Connecticut. No interviews were conducted with community members from Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

Figure 3: Maps of states involved from Region 1



## Observations From the Interviews

### Participants

Only one community member participated in the interviews. This participant was a Hispanic male who had minimal knowledge about the ADA. The interview was conducted in English. The participant was a community advocate for a disability organization and a person with a disability.

### What Did We Find?

The following table organizes the three main sections of the interviews: barriers, access to information, and recommendations from the community.

### Barriers

<b>1. Language Barriers</b>	
In Region 1, the participant reiterated that language barriers continue to be a relevant issue for Spanish-speaking communities. Challenges arise when community members ask for help but do not receive accurate information due to the low availability of bilingual staff in state and federal organizations.	
<b>Participant Testimony</b>	
1.1. Language	"It's hard for people to explain what their issue is, so I think we need more people that speak Spanish."  "Most people get information from me because I am bilingual, but not a lot of resources."
<b>2. Lack of Trust</b>	
The participant stated that this barrier is not different in their location. For leaders to build trust within the communities, they must actively engage with the members and provide insight into the ways organizations can benefit the Spanish-speaking community.	
<b>Participant Testimony</b>	
2.1. Lack of Trust	"People come to me because I speak Spanish, because it generates trust, I send them where to go, and I do my best to provide information in Spanish."

### 3. Lack of Awareness of Resources

Due to the lack of information in Spanish, it was suggested that community members are not aware of services, programs, and benefits, even if they are documented.

#### Participant Testimony

3.1. Lack of Awareness

"Lots of Spanish speaking people, they don't know the services available . . . when I got on board, I didn't know of any program they had, so telling my family and my friends they would tell me 'oh, I never knew that you guys had this program', so it's hard."

"I often have to provide information/resources about topics that are outside of my job duties. Even today my aunt asked me 'Can you get me some information?', so I had to get that information from my own research to give to her."

### 4. Technology

According to the participant in Region 1, older people from Spanish-speaking communities struggle to understand how technology works, which can impact the amount of information that they receive.

## Access to Information

Information	
The participants identified four main ways in which the Spanish Speaking community access information: social media, word of mouth, TV, and Radio.	
Participant Testimony	
1. Social Media	"Facebook is a very good way."
2. Word of Mouth	"I think this would be the easiest because a lot of Spanish speaking people don't know how to use email or check information online, how to use the computer, so I would say find the easiest way for them."
3. TV and Radio	"They play a lot, one in the morning, one at noon, and one at nighttime, I would say 3 times a week."  "We have a lot in Spanish, I would say between 2-3 stations."  "Every year we have an event where we do a one-mile walk at the park and I try to get the Spanish radio and news to promote us."

## Recommendations

Recommendations	
<p>Based on the testimony of the participating community member, recommendations include more training on ADA and disability, educating the community on services and benefits, increasing participation in community events, training staff members from different state and federal organizations, and providing specific information for each state.</p>	
Participant Testimony	
1. In-Person Sessions and Workshops	<p>"Letting people know that you will always back them up and providing trust."</p> <p>"I really would like any information that will allow me to help people [so] they won't be stress[ed] out in their lives."</p>
2. More Letters in the Mail	<p>"More letter[s] in the mail, and provide information in Spanish."</p>
3. Increase In-Person Interactions	<p>"Using more in-person communication such as word-of-mouth [and] using family and friends to share information."</p> <p>"Sharing more information in Spanish . . . will help increase awareness of services."</p>

## Suggested Next Steps for Region 1

Based on the recommendations from the community member from Region 1, the region should take the following specific steps:

1. Considering the relatively large population of Hispanics and Latinos in the states of Connecticut and Massachusetts, increase outreach efforts in these states. Connect with Lawrence Community Works (Lawrence, MA), as they provide community planning, organizing, and asset-building efforts. Connect with Sociedad Latina (Roxbury, MA), which works closely with young Spanish speakers in civic engagement, workforce development, and education. Connect with Progreso Latino (Center Falls, RI), a community resource center with various programs for adults and seniors that include social services.
2. Connect with radio stations such as Bomba 97.1 FM (CT), La Mega 101.7 FM (CT), Cumbre 1450 AM (CT), Viva 107.3 FM (CT), Mega 890 AM (MA), to evaluate the possibility of disseminating information via radio.
3. The participant interviewed believes that sending newsletters to organizations in Region 1 can be an effective way to communicate with the Spanish-speaking community.

# **SECTION THREE: KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## SECTION THREE: KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides key highlights from the first stage of the project as a whole and includes consolidated findings and recommendations from the national and regional interview data.

### Observations From National and Regional Interviews

This last section of the report summarizes all the information gathered at both regional and national levels. Collectively, results from national and regional interviews have many similarities. The following comparative table shows the topics identified at both levels in terms of barriers and recommendations to address those barriers.

Table 1: Comparison of observations from national and regional interviews

	REGIONAL	NATIONAL
<b>BARRIERS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Language</li> <li>2. Lack of information</li> <li>3. Fear/Lack of Trust</li> <li>4. Stigma /Lack of Education</li> <li>5. Technology</li> <li>6. Low Literacy</li> <li>7. Discrimination</li> <li>8. Survival Mode</li> <li>9. Lack of Access to Resources</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Language</li> <li>2. Lack of Information</li> <li>3. Fear/Lack of Trust</li> <li>4. Stigma /Lack of Education</li> <li>5. Technology</li> <li>6. Low literacy</li> <li>7. Challenge in Outreach</li> <li>8. Funding</li> </ol>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In-Person Trainings/Education</li> <li>2. Partnering With Trusted Leaders</li> <li>3. Make Information Accessible and Relevant</li> <li>4. Provide State-Specific Information</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In-Person Trainings/Education</li> <li>2. Partnering With Trusted Leaders</li> <li>3. Use of Social Media and Networking</li> <li>4. Culturally Appropriate Outreach</li> </ol>

After comparing the information gathered, the following observations were made:

1. Language barriers were identified in both national and regional interviews as the primary barrier for the Spanish-speaking community.
2. Other barriers, such as lack of access to information, fear, lack of trust, stigma about disability, low literacy, and technology were identified in both national and regional interviews.
3. Barriers such as challenges in outreach and funding come from a more global perspective from national organizations.



4. The discrepancy between barriers in some of the regions does not necessarily mean that the identified barriers are not present in each region. Some regions had higher participation in the interviews, which leads to more insight into barriers.
5. In-person training and partnering with local organizations at both national and regional levels were the most frequently recommended.
6. Because the number of participants is low, observations cannot be generalized, but they provide important and deep insights into the barriers that Spanish-speaking communities face across the U.S.

## **What We Found in Relation to the ADA**

Based on the testimonies of members from the Spanish-speaking community, the following observations were made:

- From a national and regional perspective, the Spanish-speaking community is not well informed about disability and civil rights.
- 71% of the community members interviewed had never heard of the ADA or the ADANN.
- Some staff members from national organizations had not heard of the ADA before, specifically, those organizations that serve Hispanics and Latinos but not necessarily those with disabilities.
- Outreach efforts have not been successful in reaching the Spanish-speaking community, even though there are materials and information in Spanish for this community.

Based on community members' testimonies, the Spanish-speaking community requires specific training and materials related to the ADA so the community can be informed, trained, and more aware of their rights. Results from this project suggest that people in the Spanish-speaking community might not access ADA information due to some of the following reasons:

- The information is not being delivered consistently in Spanish to this community.
- The information is too difficult for people in the community to understand and apply.
- People in the community do not know how ADA information applies to their specific case or situation.
- The fear and lack of trust related to immigration status and discrimination may interfere with access to ADA knowledge and any other legal or civil rights related information.
- Dissemination of ADA information is not reaching the Spanish-speaking community.
- Information may be translated, but it is not culturally appropriate.

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ADA National Network

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# APPENDIX

## Appendix: Region 1 Organizations for Outreach Efforts

<b>State</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Name</b>
Connecticut	Government	Ecuador Consulate
Connecticut	Government	Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission of Connecticut
Connecticut	Government	Peru Consulate
Connecticut	Hispanic Serving Institution	Capital Community College Latin American Student Association (LASA)
Connecticut	Hispanic Serving Institution	Housatonic Community College Association of Latin American Students (ALAS)
Connecticut	Hispanic Serving Institution	Naugatuck Valley Community College Hispanic Student Union (HSU)
Connecticut	Hispanic Serving Institution	University of Connecticut-Stamford Latin E Club
Connecticut	Hispanic Serving Institution	University of Connecticut-Waterbury Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center
Connecticut	Immigration	Center for Immigrant Development
Connecticut	Immigration	Center for Latino Progress
Connecticut	Immigration	Connecticut Association of Latinos in Higher Education
Connecticut	Immigration	Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition
Connecticut	Immigration	Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants
Connecticut	Immigration	Connecticut Worker Center
Connecticut	Immigration	Greater Bridgeport Latino Network
Connecticut	Immigration	Hartford Public Library/The American Place
Connecticut	Immigration	Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut
Connecticut	Immigration	Hispanic Clinic & CT Latino Behavioral Health System
Connecticut	Immigration	Spanish Community of Wallingford
Connecticut	Immigration	Universal Presbyterian Church of God
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Connecticut Association of Latinos in Higher Education
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Connecticut Worker Center
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Greater Bridgeport Latino Network
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Hispanic Clinic & CT Latino Behavioral Health System

Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Hispanic Federation
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Human Resource Agency of New Britain
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Junta For Progressive Action
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latina/o Studies Association
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission of Connecticut
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latino Community Services
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latino News Network
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	New Britain Housing Authority
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	New Britain Parks and Rec
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Progreso Latino Fund
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	San Juan Center
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	South Norwalk Community Center Inc.
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	South Windsor Parks and Rec
Connecticut	Nonprofit and other organizations	Unidad Latina en Acción
Maine	Immigration	Catholic Charities of Maine
Maine	Immigration	Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Maine	Immigration	Immigrant Welcome Center
Maine	Immigration	Maine Immigrant Network
Maine	Immigration	Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services
Maine	Nonprofit and other organizations	Maine MultiCultural Center
Maine	Nonprofit and other organizations	Mano en Mano (Hand in Hand)
Maine	Nonprofit and other organizations	Presente Maine
Massachusetts	Government	Colombia Consulate
Massachusetts	Government	El Salvador Consulate
Massachusetts	Government	Honduras Consulate
Massachusetts	Government	Latino Advisory Commission
Massachusetts	Government	Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Massachusetts	Government	Peru Consulate
Massachusetts	Hispanic Serving Institution	Bunker Hill Community College Latino Club
Massachusetts	Hispanic Serving Institution	Springfield Technical Community College LLAVE Club (Hispanic Association)
Massachusetts	Immigration	Catholic Charities Springfield
Massachusetts	Immigration	Catholic Social Services
Massachusetts	Immigration	Center for New Americans
Massachusetts	Immigration	City Life Vida Urbana
Massachusetts	Immigration	Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
Massachusetts	Immigration	Family Resource Centers
Massachusetts	Immigration	Fundación Dominicana Del Arte Y La Cultura



Massachusetts	Immigration	Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
Massachusetts	Immigration	HarborCOV
Massachusetts	Immigration	Immigrants Assistance Center
Massachusetts	Immigration	Immigration Law Clinic UMASS Law
Massachusetts	Immigration	International Institute of Greater Lawrence Inc
Massachusetts	Immigration	International Institute of New England
Massachusetts	Immigration	Lawrence Prospera
Massachusetts	Immigration	Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers
Massachusetts	Immigration	Merrimack Valley Immigrant and Education Center
Massachusetts	Immigration	New American Association of Massachusetts
Massachusetts	Immigration	Open Door Immigration Services
Massachusetts	Immigration	Project Citizenship
Massachusetts	Immigration	Refugee & Immigrant Assistance Center
Massachusetts	Immigration	South Coastal Counties Legal Services
Massachusetts	Immigration	The Immigrant Learning Center
Massachusetts	Immigration	Waltham Alliance for Teaching Community Organizing and Housing
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Casa Esperanza
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Center for New Americans
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	City Life Vida Urbana
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Family Resource Centers
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Fundación Dominicana Del Arte Y La Cultura
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Hyde Square Task Force
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	La Alianza Hispana
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	La Colaborativa
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latino Advisory Commission
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latino Support Network
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Lawrence Community Works
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Mujeres Unidas Avanzando
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	New England Council of Latin American Studies Secretariat
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Puerto Rican Cultural Center
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Sociedad Latina
Massachusetts	Nonprofit and other organizations	Spanish American Center
New Hampshire	Immigration	New Hampshire Catholic Charities

New Hampshire	Immigration	New Hampshire Legal Assistance
New Hampshire	Immigration	Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success
New Hampshire	Immigration	Centro Latino de Hospitalidad
New Hampshire	Nonprofit and other organizations	Centro Latino de Hospitalidad
New Hampshire	Nonprofit and other organizations	New Hampshire Public Radio
Rhode Island	Government	Guatemala Consulate
Rhode Island	Government	Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
Rhode Island	Hispanic Serving Institution	Rhode Island College
Rhode Island	Immigration	Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island
Rhode Island	Immigration	Genesis Center
Rhode Island	Immigration	Progreso Latino
Rhode Island	Immigration	Sojourner House
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Genesis Center
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Latino Policy Institute
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Ocean State Center for Independent Living
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Puerto Rican Institute for the Arts and Advocacy
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Rhode Island for Community and Justice
Rhode Island	Nonprofit and other organizations	Rhode Island Latino Arts
Vermont	Nonprofit and other organizations	Migrant Justice