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Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs

Agency Profile 1

<https://mn.gov/mcla/>

AT A GLANCE

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) advises the Governor, the Minnesota Legislature, and government agencies on issues affecting Latino Minnesotans. The Council serves as a nonpartisan bridge between government and Minnesota's Latino community by conducting research, informing public policy, facilitating community engagement, and advancing community-informed solutions that improve opportunity and outcomes for Latino Minnesotans.

MCLA represents Minnesota's growing Latino population of approximately 381,000 residents, or about 6.6 percent of the state's population. Minnesota's Latino community is diverse, with the largest populations tracing their heritage to Mexico, Puerto Rico, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, and many other countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The Council consists of 11 gubernatorial appointees representing Minnesota's congressional districts, who provide regional perspectives and community input from across the state, and four legislative members, supported by 5 full-time staff.

General State of the Minnesota Latino Community

Latino Minnesotans have been part of the state's history since the late 1800s and continue to play a vital role in Minnesota's economic, civic, cultural, and political life. Today, Latino Minnesotans serve as business owners, educators, health care professionals, agricultural workers, public servants, elected officials, community leaders, and policymakers who help shape the state's future. While the community has made significant contributions across every sector, disparities persist in educational attainment, homeownership, health outcomes, workforce advancement, and equitable access to the resources and systems that support success. MCLA works collaboratively with communities, policymakers, and state agencies to identify barriers, elevate community perspectives, and advance policies that promote equitable opportunities and improve outcomes for Latino Minnesotans statewide.

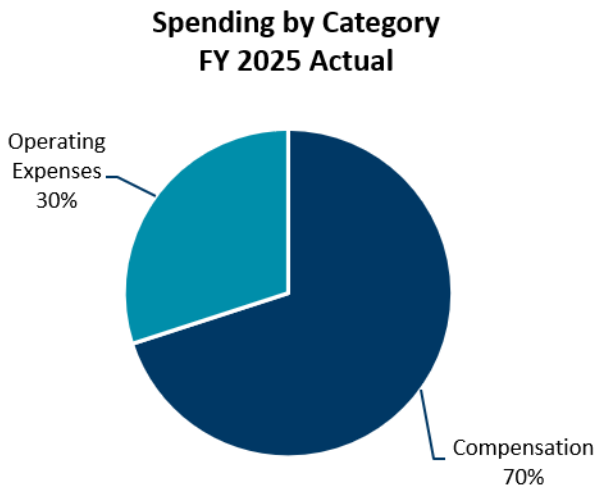
PURPOSE

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) was established under Minnesota Statutes § 15.0145 to promote the economic, social, legal, and political equality of Latino Minnesotans. The Council fulfills this mission by serving as the State of Minnesota's official advisory agency to the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies on issues affecting Latino communities.

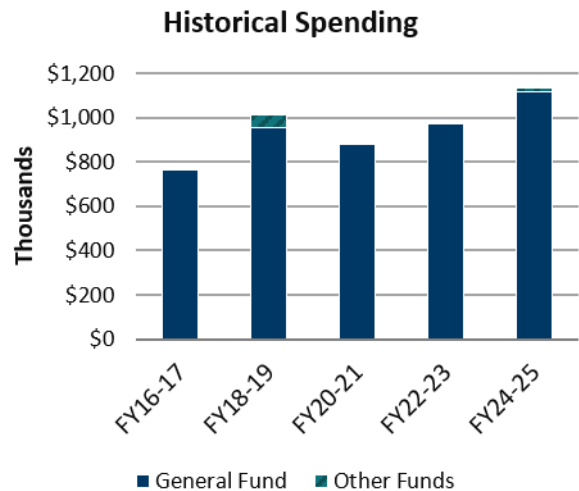
MCLA carries out its statutory responsibilities by:

- Advising the Governor and Legislature on policies, legislation, and emerging issues affecting Latino Minnesotans.
- Analyzing the impact of proposed legislation and administrative actions and providing research-based recommendations to improve outcomes for Minnesota's Latino communities.
- Serving as the liaison between state government and Latino-serving organizations, strengthening communication, collaboration, and public engagement.
- Conducting research, community engagement, and statewide listening efforts to identify challenges, opportunities, and policy solutions in areas including education, employment, economic opportunity, health, housing, human rights, and social well-being.
- Informing and empowering Latino communities by sharing information about government programs, public policy, and opportunities for civic participation.

BUDGET



Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs is funded primarily through General Fund appropriations. The FY 2024–25 biennial appropriation totaled \$1,344,000, supporting the agency's operations, staffing, contracted services, and other operating expenses necessary to fulfill MCLA's statutory responsibilities. MCLA's work is carried out by a professional staff of five full-time employees responsible for policy analysis, legislative affairs, research, communications, operations, and statewide community engagement.

STRATEGIES

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs advances its statutory mission by bringing community voices, research, and regional perspectives into state policymaking through policy leadership, research, strategic communications, and statewide engagement. The Council works in partnership with the Governor, Legislature, state agencies, community organizations, and Latino Minnesotans to identify emerging issues, elevate community-informed solutions, and improve outcomes across Minnesota.

Legislative and policy leadership

- Advise the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies on issues affecting Latino Minnesotans and on community-informed solutions that address those issues.
- Elevate regional perspectives through the Council's board members, who represent Minnesota's congressional districts and bring local priorities, emerging issues, and community recommendations into state policymaking.
- Monitor, analyze, and provide recommendations on proposed legislation and administrative actions.
- Develop, support, and advance policy priorities informed by community engagement, research, and collaboration with Latino-serving organizations.
- Provide objective research, testimony, reports, position statements, and policy recommendations.
- Promote civic participation by connecting community members with the legislative process.

Research, communications, and public information

- Conduct and publish research, demographic analyses, reports, and policy recommendations that inform public policy and state decision-making.
- Provide timely, accessible, and bilingual information through digital communications, newsletters, publications, and public education initiatives.
- Strengthen partnerships with media, community organizations, and public agencies to increase awareness of state programs, services, and policy issues affecting Latino communities.

Community engagement and partnerships

- Conduct listening sessions, public forums, and outreach activities throughout Minnesota to identify emerging community needs, priorities, and solutions.
- Serve as the liaison between state government and Latino-serving organizations, community leaders, and residents.
- Foster collaboration among state agencies, legislators, nonprofit organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and other partners to improve public policy and service delivery.
- Participate in statewide community, cultural, educational, and civic events to strengthen relationships, increase public engagement, and ensure community voices inform state government.

RESULTS

Part A: Performance Data

Measure	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data
% of legislative proposals developed in collaboration with the Council that passed	Quality	Bill Tracking Spreadsheet	2022: 50% 2023: 100% 2024: 75%	2025: 40%
# of Legislative testimony/position statements submitted	Result	Bill Tracking Spreadsheet	2022: 20 2023: 50 2024: 15	2025: 11
# of state agency workgroups in which MCLA played an advisory role	Result	Monthly Staff Reports	2022: 6 2023: 11 2024: 11	2025: 11
# of community forums and listening sessions held	Quantity	Monthly Staff Reports	2022: 5 2023: 5 2024: 5	2025: 11
# of participants in forums and listening sessions held	Result	Surveys to participants and registered attendees	2022: 90 2023: 70 2024: 110	2025: 70
# of meetings with constituents, community organizations, legislators, policymakers, and other stakeholders	Quantity	Monthly staff Reports	2022: 305 2023: 406 2024: 300	2025: 350
Estimated number of people reached through newsletters, social media, publications, videos, and other public communications	Quantity	Monthly staff reports Social media metrics GovDelivery metrics	2022: 40,000 2023: 45,000 2024: 45,000	2025: 45,000

The 2025 performance data reflect the Council's work across its legislative and policy leadership, research and communications, and statewide community-engagement strategies.

Through testimony, formal letters, position statements, and policy analysis, the Council elevated issues affecting Latino Minnesotans in education, healthcare, economic opportunity, worker protections, immigration, and public safety. Outcomes aligned with several Council positions, including the establishment of a spoken-language healthcare interpreter workgroup with \$265,000 in one-time funding, preservation of the North Star Promise program, and the failure of legislation requiring greater local cooperation with federal immigration enforcement to advance. Other legislative outcomes, including the elimination of MinnesotaCare eligibility for undocumented adults, did not align with the Council's recommendations.

The Council's community forums, listening sessions, site visits, and stakeholder meetings identified recurring concerns involving education, healthcare, housing, transportation, childcare, economic opportunity, immigration, language access, discrimination, and community belonging. Engagement in Greater Minnesota included conversations with parents, educators, school leaders, legislators, local officials, businesses, nonprofit organizations, higher-education institutions, and community advocates. These findings helped identify potential policy directions involving immigrant legal support, rural transportation, affordable housing, renter protections, nonprofit funding, and practices that strengthen belonging in schools and local government.

The Council also produced two in-house reports, distributed 201 demographic fact sheets for state legislators, published 13 newsletters, and produced six informational videos. Together with social media and other public communications, these efforts contributed to an estimated annual reach of 45,000 people.

Tracked activities are aimed at fulfilling the Council's following statutory responsibilities:

- Legislation and Policy: Statute 15.0145, Subd. 6, Paragraphs A, C, D, & F
- Statewide Community Engagement: Statute 15.0145, Subd. 6, Paragraphs B & E
- Reports and Studies: Statute 15.0145, Subd. 6, Paragraphs B, E, & F

Part B: Evidence of Effectiveness

MCLA does not directly fund or operate programs or services that qualify as evidence-based practices. As a statutory advisory agency, MCLA conducts research, gathers community input, provides policy recommendations, advises state agencies and policymakers, and shares public information. The Council uses demographic data, research, community input, and stakeholder feedback to inform policy recommendations and evaluate its work.

Legal Authority: Minn. Stat. § 15.0145 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=15.0145>) provides the legal authority for the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs.