

## **Welcoming America: Certified Welcoming**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Who is Welcoming America?**

Welcoming America is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization that leads a movement of inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by ensuring everyone belongs. Welcoming America believes that all people, including immigrants, are valued contributors and vital to the success of our communities and shared future.

#### **What is Certified Welcoming?**

Certified Welcoming is a formal designation for local governments that have created policies and programs reflecting their values and commitments to immigrant inclusion. This innovative program assesses local governments on their efforts to include and welcome immigrants in all areas of civic, social, and economic life in their communities. With the certified designation, governments distinguish their local efforts to build community cohesion.

#### **Why is it important to become Certified Welcoming?**

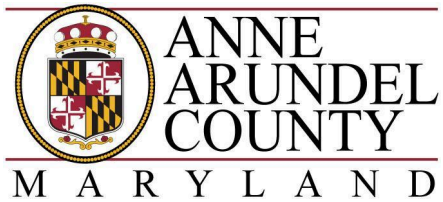
Welcoming communities create spaces where neighbors from all backgrounds can connect and collaborate. This sense of belonging strengthens neighborhoods, local economies, and civic trust.

#### **What is the Certified Welcoming designation costing county taxpayers?**

\$0. There is no cost to county taxpayers. The County is pursuing the 1-star designation, which allows us to receive technical support to conduct a self assessment, submit our findings, and receive a final report from the Welcoming America team with a roadmap to continue our work of keeping communities safe and connected.

#### **Is being Certified Welcoming the same as being a “sanctuary city”?**

No. Being a Certified Welcoming government means that your community has committed to adhering to inclusive policies and practices, as outlined in the [Welcoming Standard](#). A common theme for “sanctuary city” includes policies that limit cooperation with federal immigration officials. On the other hand, the Welcoming Standard emphasizes building trust and



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relationships between law enforcement and local community members, as well as providing education to community members about their rights and responsibilities under the law.

**Does this initiative only benefit undocumented immigrants?**

No. This initiative benefits all residents by building trust and unity. It creates spaces for community members to come together and work toward common goals.