

Immigration and the Love of Neighbor

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An abbreviated timeline of major moments in immigration history in the territories that are now part of the United States

Date	description
1535	Spain establishes its Virreinato de Nueva España, which includes Florida, California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, parts of Colorado and Wyoming,
1607	Colony of Jamestown is founded in what will be Virginia.
1610	City of Santa Fe, Nuevo Mexico founded, Church & Government seat.
1781	13 colonies defeat British, U.S. established on east coast.
1790	Naturalization Act. As U.S. is established, excludes anyone from citizenship who is not a “free white person,” of “good moral character.”
1848	Present border set by treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (15 generations).
1870	Following Civil War, citizenship eligibility extended to persons of African origin.
1875	Some immigration controls begin to be established.
1882	Chinese Exclusion Act, other regulations put in place.
1917	Immigration Act: requires literacy and medical inspection at port of departure.
1918	Passport requirements begin (WWI).
1921-24	Immigration Acts, set up system to limit immigration based on quotas imposed by nationality. Visa requirements set up. The Border Patrol is established and “deportations” begin.
1933	agencies combined. 1940 – Immigration responsibilities move from Dept. of Labor, to Dept. of Justice.
1942	Executive Order 9066, rounds up and sets up internment camps for persons of Japanese ancestry.
1942	Begins Alien Registration Program for all immigrants.
1942 -1964	Bracero “guest worker” program because of labor shortages.
1948 and 1953	Displaced Persons Act and Refugee Relief Act.
1952	Limited number of Asians allowed in, race removed as grounds for exclusion, but national origins quota kept in place.

1954	Operation Wetback, 300,000, undocumented immigrants and also their families are rounded up through raids and deported.
1965	Immigration and Nationality Act – favors skilled immigrants and family reunification. Imposes first limits on immigration for persons from the American continent (Latin America).
1986	Immigration Reform and Control Act. Made it possible for 2.7 undocumented immigrants to normalize their immigration status. It did not address underlying issues.
1990	Law creates Temporary Protective Status designation for certain asylum seekers.
1996-today	Laws to tighten employer sanctions, enforcement and changed admissions eligibilities.
2012	Executive Order of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals – DACA.