



Announcement of Amnesty 2022

On December 7, 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Immigration announced its amnesty program for 2022. The following are highlights of the program prepared by the ministry:

- Amnesty to those qualified will offer Permanent Residence status with path to citizenship
- Significant increase in mixed migratory flows, globally and in our region
- Belize had the greatest % population change, increasing by 24% from 2009 to 2019
- 2010 Census by the Statistical Institute of Belize, found that 14.2% of Belize's population was born abroad
- Irregular migrants are often employed at very low wages, work in dreadful conditions, and many are paid 'off the books'.
- The Belize Refugee Department with the support of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the registration and processing of asylum cases in Belize. To date, less than 100 refugees have been confirmed as refugees resulting in over 4,000 with an asylum seeker status.
- Two previous amnesty programs: April 1984, 8,680 undocumented migrants; and 1999, 11,168 migrants. In 2010 there was a plan, 20,000 undocumented migrants were to be registered.
- Estimated number of irregular migrants in Belize in 2021 - 40,000-60,000
- Initiative seeks to embrace the key principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Global Compact for Migration
- Our strategic international partners have informed that they will be assisting
- Ministry will embark on a proper awareness campaign
- Initiative will lead to an accurate count of our population, accurate statistics for social, economic, and migration planning and policies
- Only those who duly qualify will be registered, and only upon proof of documents

- The ministry will insist on stricter compliance with immigration laws

The below listed shall apply:

1. **Registered Asylum Seekers**
2. **Irregular migrants** who:
 - a. Have resided continuously in Belize from 2010
 - b. Have Belizean children born prior to 2020
 - c. Have completed primary and/or secondary education in Belize and continue to reside in Belize
 - d. Are married to Belizeans for at least one year
 - e. Are in common law union with a Belizean national for a continuous period of five years or more
 - f. Are children who have resided in homes or foster care and recommended by the Ministry of Human Development
 - g. Have maintained gainful employment in Belize for at least five years