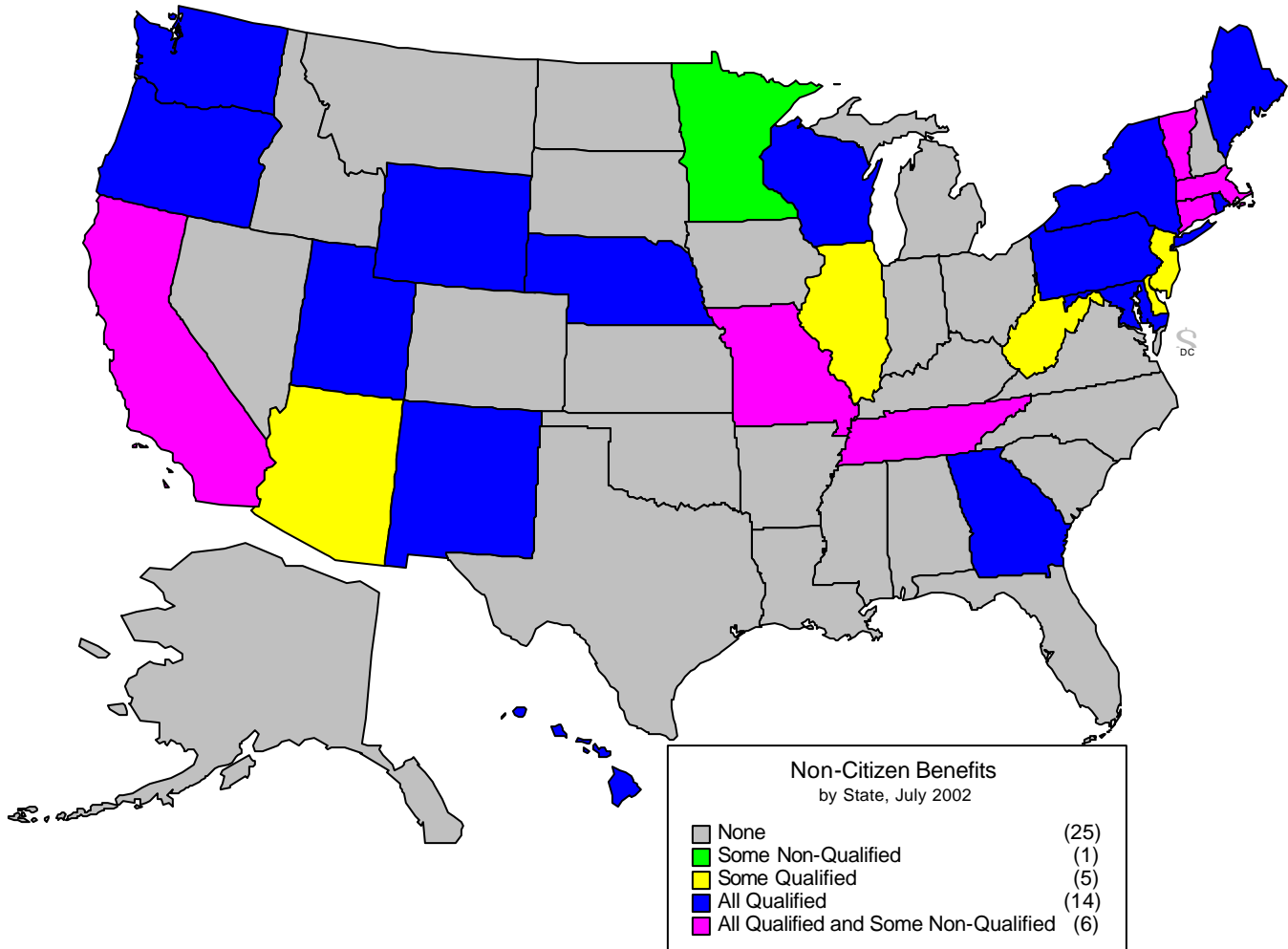




Fast Facts

Non-Citizen Benefits During First 5 Years



Most legal immigrants entering the U.S. on or after August 22, 1996 must wait 5 years before receiving federally funded cash assistance. Qualified, non-citizens exempt from the five-year bar include refugees and asylees, individuals who had their deportation withheld, veterans or individuals in active duty along with their spouses and unmarried dependent children, Cuban/Haitian entrants, and certain Amerasians.

States can provide state-funded assistance to both ineligible qualified and non-qualified non-citizens. Qualified non-citizens include legal permanent residents, parolees, and battered non-citizens. Non-qualified non-citizens include any other groups of non-citizens who are ineligible for federally funded assistance.

As of July 2002, 26 states provide assistance to all or some groups of non-citizens, with 6 states funding all qualified and some additional non-qualified non-citizens, 14 funding all qualified, 5 funding only some qualified, and one state, Minnesota, funding only some non-qualified non-citizens. Currently, 25 states do not provide any non-citizens with state funded benefits during their first five years in the country.

Source: [The Welfare Rules Database](#), 2002.

The Welfare Rules Database (WRD) provides a longitudinal account of the changes in welfare rules in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The WRD organizes the detailed information on welfare rules across states, time, and geographic areas within states as well as across different types of assistance units. Caseworker manuals and state regulations provide the data from 1997 to the present, while AFDC State Plans and Waiver Terms and Conditions provide the data for years prior to 1997.