

VOLUME

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# COPAL NEWS



N U M B E R 9

## Exciting News: Driver's Licenses for All Implementation on October 1st and more with COPAL!

Hello community,

As we bid farewell to the summer season, COPAL continues to work toward una vida digna para todos, a dignified life for all.

August was jam-packed, from accompanying workers in recovering stolen wages to connecting community members to outdoor activities to using popular education to promote health among our communities. Another significant focus for us during this time has been the upcoming implementation of Licenses for All.

The spring saw the successful passage of the Licenses for All bill, and we have been eagerly preparing for its implementation on October 1. This momentous achievement, which is changing the lives of thousands of immigrants throughout Minnesota, represents the culmination of tireless efforts from a countless organizations, dedicated individuals, community leaders, and elected officials. The right to drive, which had been revoked in 2003, is finally being restored, putting an end to a 20-year debt that began under former Republican Governor Tim Pawlenty.

For those looking to obtain their license, appointments can be scheduled at [drive.mn.gov](https://drive.mn.gov). Additionally, our navigators are available to address any questions (612) 249-8736.

You can read more about some of the other highlights from the past month below. We also invite you to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



WWW.COPALMN.ORG



# Minnesota Driver's Licenses for All

Want to learn more about this great achievement? [Click here.](#)



Do you want to participate in leadership development and decision-making at COPAL?

# SOMOS COPAL

Grow your impact by becoming a member today!





## South Central Initiative Mankato, MN

COPAL remains committed to providing resources at community events, health and wellness fairs, and vaccination initiatives. At Bethel Church in Madelia, MN during the Back-to-School program, we equipped over 130 children with school supplies and provided families valuable information about Licenses for All, while also providing COVID-19 vaccinations and blood pressure and blood sugar tests, with the support of Odam Medical Clinic and the Minnesota Department of Health. We also joined a community event in Fairmont, MN, aiming to celebrate culture and uplift Latine voices, where we provided a resource table and collaborated with the ODAM mobile unit for vaccinations and health check-ups.

At COPAL, we believe that knowledge is power. This month, we hosted the workshop series "Open Your Heart to Health" led by Dr. Francisco Ramirez. Through three interactive workshops, community members delved into essential health topics, gaining insights into preventative measures and healthy lifestyles. The series concluded with a shared healthy meal and celebration.

[Did you know that Latine individuals are still more than 3 times more likely to be uninsured, and experience health conditions such as diabetes and asthma at higher rates than their white counterparts?](#) The stark reality of health inequities among our communities underscores the vital importance of making health resources available without barriers, in languages spoken by our communities, and in ways that resonate with our cultural backgrounds. COPAL remains committed to addressing the urgent need for equitable access to healthcare for all Minnesotans.



COPAL working to ensure that students are equipped with school supplies for the start of the school year in Madelia, MN.



**JOIN THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**





# South Central Initiative Rochester, MN

Last month, COPAL joined the Mexican Mobile Consulate at Riverside Central Elementary School in Rochester. We engaged in over 40 conversations with attendees, providing information about available resources for Latine communities, and preparing people with information related to the process of obtaining a Minnesota driver's license or state ID on October 1.

At the end of August, we organized a health fair at Oak Terrace Mobile Home Park, where we offered free blood pressure and glucose checks, as well COVID-19 vaccinations.

We continue to not only bring resources to our communities, but also build the community power in Rochester through our regional committee. Community leaders meet to discuss and address the issues and barriers faced by Latine communities in region, and will soon launch a local campaign to combat these barriers. The next meeting will be on September 22nd. Want to get involved? Contact David at (507) 517-9530.



 COPAL in Rochester, MN with information on Driver's Licenses for All. Questions on the process? Contact our navigators at (612) 249-8736.

 [CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT LICENSES FOR ALL](#)



## Health & Wellness

Last month, our Health and Wellness team organized five health and resource fairs for Latine communities in Madelia, Chaska, Fairmont, Rochester, and Minneapolis. Nearly 100 individuals received preventive healthcare services and other resources including blood pressure and blood sugar checks, vision screenings, assistance with medical insurance enrollment, and more.

Recognizing the significant role of education in preventive healthcare, COPAL's health promoters and community educators were actively involved in these health fairs and engaged with communities by raising awareness about diabetes and advocating for a healthier lifestyle among Latine communities.



Did you know that [Latine individuals have a higher likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes compared to white individuals? It is estimated that over half of Latine adults in the United States will experience type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.](#)





## Civic Participation and Leadership

Last month, COPAL's Organizing Team organized numerous events, [including the COPAL delegation to Puerto Rico](#), bringing COPAL staff, community leaders, and elected officials across the island to discuss community issues, art and movement, and environmental factors affecting migration.

In Rochester, MN, we participated in a resource fair with the Oaxacan community in Austin MN. In Winona, MN, we completed our road safety courses to prepare individuals for upcoming driver's license exams.

Throughout the state, we organized study groups for license exams in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Motor Vehicles. We invite everyone to attend these meetings and classes to prepare for the license tests available starting October 1st. For more information, contact our navigators at (612) 249-8736.



University of Minnesota students team up with COPAL to get out the vote for the local elections through phone banking.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ELECTIONS HERE!



## Primero de Mayo Workers' Center

In August, the Workers' Center team alongside a member of our young program organized an event where we learned more about Ecuador's culture. There, young Minnesotans performed a dance, connecting with their ancestral culture.

We also celebrated the graduation of those who completed computer courses and three individuals who graduated from our citizenship classes, had interviews, and have become U.S. citizens.

Last month, we accompanied one member in recovering \$7,000 in unpaid wages. The Workers' Leadership committee meets weekly to educate members about their rights and recover wages from unscrupulous employers who exploit workers.

We continue to offer GED, citizenship, computer, software, and citizenship classes. Citizenship classes will now be in-person at the Workers' Center, with the option of Zoom for those farther away from the Twin Cities or who prefer a virtual option. You can [learn more about our classes here](#).



Join us at the Primero de Mayo Workers' Center on Wednesdays from 10am to 4pm. All are welcome, and no appointment is necessary.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PRIMERO DE MAYO WORKERS' CENTER HERE



## Environmental Justice

One aspect of COPAL's Environmental Justice work is connecting community members with outdoor activities. BIPOC Minnesotans are less likely to utilize and connect with Minnesota's outdoor spaces. Although people of color make up around 20% of Minnesota's population, they only make up 5% of state park visitors. COPAL recognizes the importance of connecting to nature in order to invest in the fight to preserve it. Therefore, we offer monthly events to help COPAL members connect with the outdoors.

In the past, we have collaborated with Baztec, the first Minnesotan fishing company created to provide fishing opportunities to Latine communities. The event, held in New Ulm, MN, allowed community members to learn the basics of fishing with hands on experience.

In the coming months, there will be several other opportunities for community members to join us in other outdoor activities. The next event will be a canoeing trip at Fort Snelling State Park on September 22nd from 12:30pm - 3pm. Registration is free, and all equipment will be provided. If you are interested, you can [register here!](#)



COPAL members attend a fishing event as part of our initiative to connect Minnesotans of color with nature.



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WORK HERE





We at COPAL can do this work thanks to your support.



Make a donation to increase opportunities and foster a dignified life for Latinos in Minnesota!



## Mental Health Resources

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact the MN Mental Health Crisis Line:



**\*\*CRISIS or \*\*274747**

Dial from your cell phone and you will be connected to your county crisis team.

Please see the following summary of mental health, general health and dental services compiled by the Minnesota Department of Health for the lowest cost or at scale. Look at the column that specifies if they have interpreters or people who speak Spanish.

Low-cost healthcare resources



Radio Jornalera has grown and now has five weekly shows every day of the week and our daily morning show, *El Jornal de la Alegría* with Mike Castillo every weekday from 7 to 10am.



Tune in here



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# COPAL

[WWW.COPALMN.ORG](http://WWW.COPALMN.ORG)

Established in 2018, COPAL is a member-based organization leading social impact initiatives to improve the quality of life for Latine families and communities. COPAL advocates for a legislative agenda and mobilizes the Latine community to take action on issues that impact their lives such as health care for all, dignity for workers, environmental justice, popular democracy, immigration and public safety, and education for all by building collective power, transforming systems, and creating opportunities for a dignified life. COPAL envisions a future where the Latine community thrives and is fully empowered to lead significant change in their communities and beyond.