

Refugee Program Eligibility Guide for Service Providers

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Office of Trafficking in Persons (OTIP)	www.acf.hhs.gov/otip
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)	www.uscis.gov

Disclaimer

This guide will help refugee service providers throughout the State of Florida to identify individuals and families eligible for programs funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is for general reference only and should be used in conjunction with relevant federal and state laws, regulations, and rules. If connected to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system, providers should verify the client's status through SAVE. Providers should refer unresolved questions regarding eligibility to the Refugee Services Program in the Florida Department of Children and Families.

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Preface

Use of Guide

The Refugee Program Eligibility Guide for Service Providers will assist refugee service providers throughout the State of Florida in identifying individuals and families eligible for programs funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. If at any time questions arise regarding eligibility, providers are asked to contact the **Refugee Services Program at the Florida Department of Children and Families**.

This eligibility guide contains eight chapters, each devoted to a special section on determining refugee eligibility. Four chapters (chapters one through four) are devoted to the groups who are eligible for refugee programs: refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, special immigrants of Iraqi or Afghan nationality, certain victims of severe forms of trafficking in humans, and other eligible individuals. Each chapter provides a definition of each eligible group and explanations of each group's immigration statuses/DHS codes¹.

Also included in chapters one through four are helpful points related to the chapters. These items are in boxes.

- Chapter 1:** **Refugees**—describes issues particular to refugees.
- Chapter 2:** **Asylees**—describes issues particular to asylees.
- Chapter 3:** **Cuban and Haitian Entrants**—describes issues particular to Cubans and Haitians other than those who are refugees and asylees.
- Chapter 4:** **Amerasians and Other Eligible Individuals**—describes issues particular to Amerasians and other eligible persons, including Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants, and certain victims of severe forms of trafficking in humans.
- Chapter 5:** **Verification of Immigration Status, SAVE and FOIA**—provides guidance on verifying the immigration status of clients with USCIS through the SAVE system or E-Verify. The secondary verification system is also discussed, as well as when to request information from DHS or EOIR under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Chapter 6:** **Eligibility Determination**—provides eligibility determination guidelines along with sample DHS documents and helpful charts showing codes for the refugee program.
- Chapter 7:** **Frequently Asked Questions**—provides a list of questions and answers that are often asked concerning refugee issues.
- Chapter 8:** **Common Refugee Codes**—provides a listing of codes often found on DHS documents issued to persons who may qualify for refugee services, codes used on Employment Authorization cards, and three-letter and numerical lists of U.S. ports of entry used by USCPB and the U.S. Department of State.
- Appendix A:** **ORR State Letters**—provides ORR guidance on issues affecting eligibility.
- Appendix B:** **DHS Admission Codes**—provides a detailed listing of entry and adjustment codes used by the DHS Office of Immigration Statistics to refer to groups of noncitizens.

¹ The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) uses various terms and codes to refer to categories of persons according to their immigration status. These terms or codes describe the status held by the individual and may be relevant in determining whether an applicant holds a status that will qualify him or her for refugee program eligibility. More than one term or code may refer to an individual applicant. These DHS codes may be used on DHS documentation and/or in the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system. Codes are not used on all DHS documentation, however, and certain codes may be used for only part of the information required for an eligibility determination. Descriptions are intended to assist in determining client eligibility, but should therefore be used in conjunction with ORR eligibility guidance and pertinent laws and regulations. Providers should be alert to changes in status which would affect eligibility of persons, particularly those with Cuban/Haitian entrant status.

Introduction

The federal resettlement assistance provisions in the Refugee Act of 1980 and the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 allow for several different types of cash and medical assistance, social and employment services, voluntary agency matching grant programs, targeted and discretionary assistance, preventative health programs, and refugee education assistance. These federal programs are currently made available to refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants, and certain victims of severe forms of human trafficking, who may be temporarily dependent to assist them in becoming economically self-sufficient as quickly as possible and to reduce their need for future public assistance. These groups are eligible for refugee program services for a transitional period, even if they have adjusted status to become legal permanent residents.



Note: Except for Cuban and Haitian nationals, individuals applying for asylum, conditional asylees, or persons awaiting decisions on removal are not eligible for refugee services, nor are persons paroled into the United States. Persons granted Temporary Protected Status are ineligible for refugee program services unless they have some other qualifying status, even if USCIS authorizes them to work. Formerly eligible clients who become U.S. citizens no longer qualify under refugee assistance programs.

For Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance (RCA/RMA), the eligibility period for services is up to eight months at the present time. Most refugee services are limited to five years (60 months) after arrival, although food stamps and supplemental social security income for eligible clients may continue up to a maximum of seven years after entry into the United States (or date of status in the case of asylees and certain other groups). Programs such as citizenship and interpreter services that assist refugees, asylees, and other eligible groups to become American citizens may be provided to clients beyond the five-year limit as provided in individual contracts between a service provider and the Refugee Services Program.

