



The United States Refugee Admissions Program



If you are a refugee and cannot return to your home country, you may be eligible to relocate to another country. This is called *resettlement*. To resettle to another country, you must be accepted through a formal admissions process. All the countries that accept refugees for resettlement have very different resettlement procedures.

The United States of America is one of the countries in the world that accepts refugees for resettlement. Since 1980, Americans have welcomed over 3 million refugees from all over the world through the **United States Refugee Admissions Program, or USRAP**.

Every refugee resettlement case is unique and the length of time required to complete the USRAP process depends upon the circumstances of each case. Resettlement is an option available only to a very limited number of refugees. Before you begin the process, which will involve time and effort on your part as well as on the part of the U.S. government, you should be sure you are ready to resettle to the United States if you are found to be eligible.

If you are being considered for resettlement to the United States through a referral by UNHCR or an eligible direct access application, the steps are:

STEP 1: PRESCREENING INTERVIEW



The first step in the USRAP process is a prescreening interview with a Resettlement Support Center, or RSC. The U.S. Government funds international and non-governmental organizations to operate the RSCs.

RSC staff will look at your identifying documents and create a case file for you (and your family, if you are applying together). You will have your photo taken. They will ask you important questions about your experiences and compile the biographic information needed for initial security checks.

STEP 2: USCIS INTERVIEW

The RSC will contact you to schedule an interview with an officer from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) which is a division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). They will ask you many of the same or similar questions you answered in the prescreening interview. You should answer the questions in detail and to the best of your knowledge.



USCIS will make the final decision about whether you are eligible to resettle to the United States. When the RSC receives information about your case decision from USCIS, they will let you know:

- If you and your family members on your case are eligible for resettlement to the United States;
- If you and your family members on your case are NOT eligible for resettlement to the United States; or
- If USCIS requires more time to determine your eligibility.

If you are informed that your case is eligible or that a decision is still pending, your application will continue to move forward in the process. However, *every case is subject to security clearance throughout the entire process. Case decisions can change at any time.*



Throughout the entire process, your information will be sent to other U.S. Government agencies for security checks. These agencies investigate the information you have provided to make sure that it is true and accurate. *Sometimes, security clearance can take many months to complete and, in some cases, may never be granted by the U.S. Government.*



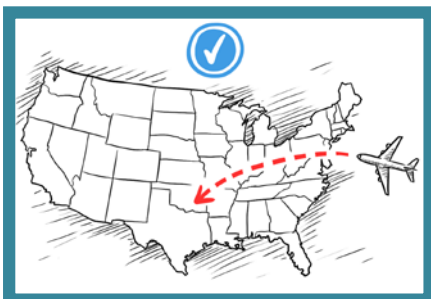
STEP 3: MEDICAL SCREENING

You and each family member on your case will be scheduled for a mandatory medical screening. Sometimes medical screenings will take place before your USCIS interview. Please bring all available medical and vaccination records. Refugees undergo a series of vaccinations prior to departure.

STEP 4: CULTURAL ORIENTATION

The RSC will also schedule you to attend Cultural Orientation where you will receive important information about traveling to the United States and what to expect when you arrive.

At this time, a Resettlement Agency in the United States will work with the U.S. Government to make arrangements for you and your family if you continue to the next step of the process. If all security clearances are granted, your final destination in the U.S. will be determined and you will be approved for travel.



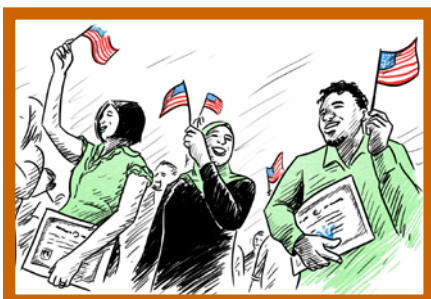
STEP 5: TRAVEL

At this point, the RSC will coordinate with the International Organization for Migration, or IOM, to schedule your flight to the United States. You are required to sign an interest-free travel loan, called a **Promissory Note**, to pay for the cost of your flight. You will need to repay the travel loan within three and a half years after arrival in the United States.

In preparation for your departure, you will also undergo a pre-departure medical screening. This will ensure that you are healthy enough to travel and will help staff determine if you require any medical assistance as you travel.

STEP 6: ARRIVAL

When you arrive in the United States, a representative of the Resettlement Agency (or your relative, if you have a U.S. tie) will meet you at the airport. The Resettlement Agency is responsible for helping you with basic services for your first 30-90 days in the United States. You will have the legal right and responsibility to work in the United States and the Resettlement Agency will connect you to employment services. If you have school-age children, they can attend free public schools upon arrival.



POST-RESETTLEMENT

After one year in the United States, you must apply to become a lawful permanent resident. Five years after arrival, you may apply to become an American citizen, with all of the rights and responsibilities of other Americans.



All resettlement processing services are free of charge. At no time in the process should anyone request payment from you for any services. If anyone asks you for money, forces you to make an application, claims to be able to intervene or expedite your application, or threatens you in any way, please report this to the Resettlement Support Center.



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