Catholic Charities Refugee Services

Catholic Charities
Diocese of Des Moines

www.catholiccharitiesdm.org

The Refugee Experience

- A refugee is someone who was forced to flee their country because of persecution, war, or violence.

The Refugee Experience

- Refugees must prove fear of persecution based upon:
  - Race or ethnicity
  - Religion
  - Nationality
  - Political opinion
  - Membership of social group

REFUGEE VETTING PROCESS

Stage 1.

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Stage 2.

Resettlement Support Center
RSC

Stage 3.

Stage 4.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Stage 5.

Medical Screening
Recurrent Vetting

Stage 6.

Cultural Orientation Classes and Resettlement Location Chosen

International Organization for Migration

Transportation Security Administration

U.S. Arrival

The CENTER for VICTIMS of TORTURE

www.cvt.org | ©2016 Center for Victims of Torture

Refugees	Immigrants	Asylum Seekers	Special Immigrant VISA (SIV)
Refugees are people who have fled their own country because they are at risk of serious human rights violations and persecution there. They apply for refugee status in the country they have fled to.	Immigrants are foreign born people who have voluntarily or involuntarily left their country of origin and have been admitted to live in another country.	Asylum-seekers are people who have fled their country and are seeking asylum from persecution and human rights violations in another country. They have not been legally recognized as a refugee and are waiting to receive a decision on their asylum claim.	A Special Immigrant VISA is issued to those who assisted the U.S. military contractors in Iraq or Afghanistan.

2023

World

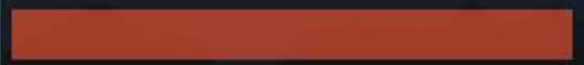
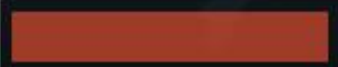
Total Population

7,989,753,830

Total refugees

27,320,316

Data sources: UNCHR Refugee Data, UN Population Data

Afghanistan	**6,381,331**	
Ukraine	**5,454,779**	
Syria	**3,082,100**	

Where are they coming from?

(Gjelten, 2020)

IRAQ
Countless Iraqis have escaped violence and political upheaval
UKRAINE
Ukranians have fled due to increased conflict and deteriorating civil and political infrastructure
IRAN
Religious and LGBT minorities have fled Iran due to harassment, intimidation, and fear of execution
AFGHANISTAN
Fighting between factions has plagued Afghanistan since 1989, destroying numerous cities and towns
SYRIA
Countless Syrians have been uprooted due to civil war and the occupation of the "Islamic State"
BHUTAN
Bhutanese have fled or been expelled from their country because of ethnic persecution
CUBA
Cubans have fled political persecution
SUDAN
The Sudanese have suffered through periods of forced migration since the 1950s as a result of genocide
BURMA/MYANMAR
Violent civil war and "ethnic cleansing" have forced ethnic and religious minorities out of Burma
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
Congolese have fled decades of genocide and war, and many still live in overcrowded camps
SOMALIA
Terrorism, drought, and disputes over food stocks have driven out Somalis
COLOMBIA
Colombians have fled as a result of guerrilla warfare and drug-trafficking networks

(Ready, 2019)

How do refugees get here?

- There are 9 VOLAG's in the US.

Facts & Figures

- 374 R&P clients arrived in FY24
- For FY 2025, Catholic Charities is anticipating 425* refugees
- Currently welcomed 121 individuals

*this number likely to change with new administration

FY 2024 Countries	No. of clients
Afghanistan	55
BM Burmese	32
CF Congolese	152
CO Colombian	12
CS Costa Rican	1
ER Eritrean	15
ES Elsalvadorian	1
ET Ethiopian	1
GT Guatemalan	10
HO Honduras	4
IZ Iraqi	3
SO Somali	19
SS Republic of South Sudan	4
SU Sudanese	20
SY Syrian	30
VE Venezuelan	10

Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2025

Africa	30,000-50,000
East Asia	10,000-20,000
Europe and Central Asia	2,000-3,000
Latin America/Caribbean	35,000-50,000
Near East/South Asia	30,000-45,000

PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

REALIGNING THE UNITED STATES REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE ORDER

January 20, 2025

Catholic Charities- Refugee Resettlement Programs

- Catholic Charities has three resettlement programs and two Post Resettlement Programs:
  - Reception & Placement (R&P)
  - Matching Grant (MG)
  - Post Resettlement Case Management
  - PC Intensive Case Management

Case Management

- <u>Pre-Arrival</u>
  - Connecting with family/friends
  - Housing
  - Apartment Set Up
  - Groceries

Post-Arrival Services

- Refugees meet with their case managers once they arrive at the airport from their country of origin.

Post-Arrival Services

- The case manager is responsible for providing food and housing for the client, all this should be organized prior to clients' arrival.
- Some clients have UST here who help a lot during the first few days of arrival
- The first few days are overwhelming for clients
- Client depends fully on the help from CM and UST

Post-Arrival Services

- Airport pickup
- Housing
- Public Benefits
- ESL Enrollment
- School Enrollment
- Home Visits
- Refugee Health Screening
- Employment Services
- Bus Training
- Cultural Orientation
- Other projects (digital literacy class, community resource referrals financial literacy class)

Current situation

- Employment challenges
- Housing situation
- Pause in arrivals

Volunteering

CATHOLIC CHARITIES
DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Post Arrival Services

- Although the case managers provide all the core services to the clients normally there are other needs the clients might have.
  - Understanding their mail
  - Practicing English
  - Acquiring a library card
  - Transportation to appointments
  - Touring Des Moines

Resettlement vs Volunteering

Resettlement Services

- Airport pickup
- Housing
- Public Benefits
- ESL Enrollment
- School Enrollment
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Catholic Charities Connect Volunteers

- Setup up housing with essential furnishings
- School enrollment
- Client Transportation to Appointments
- Local events (State Fair)
- Extra curricular activities for children (Recreational Soccer)
- Sharing meals (not required!)
- Reviewing mail
- Cultural Orientation
- Answering general questions
- English language practice

Donations

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www.catholiccharitiesdm.org

We Accept Donations

- Warehouse 3 College Avenue Mon 12pm – 4 pm
- Send donation pickup email details to donations@catholiccharitiesdm.org
- Details needed: Name, address, items being donated and phone number.

Financial donations

Bobbi Jo Smith

Director of Development & Marketing

bsmith@catholiccharitiesdm.org

515-237-5064

Questions or Comments

THANK YOU!

If interested in volunteering/ donating reach out:
slule@catholiccharitiesdm.org.