

UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINORS PROGRAM

Through its network of providers, the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) Program serves some of the most vulnerable children and youth in the world — those who were fleeing persecution, violence, or abuse, and entered the United States without a parent or custodian. The program provides foster care and other living arrangements, as well as the necessary care and services to help the minors develop appropriate skills to enter adulthood.

Client Services



Placement in foster care/other living arrangements



Case Management



Family tracing/reunification



Health/mental health care



Cultural orientation/social adjustment



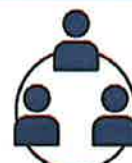
English language training/education support



Vocational training/career planning



Independent living preparation



Ethnic/religious heritage preservation



Immigration assistance

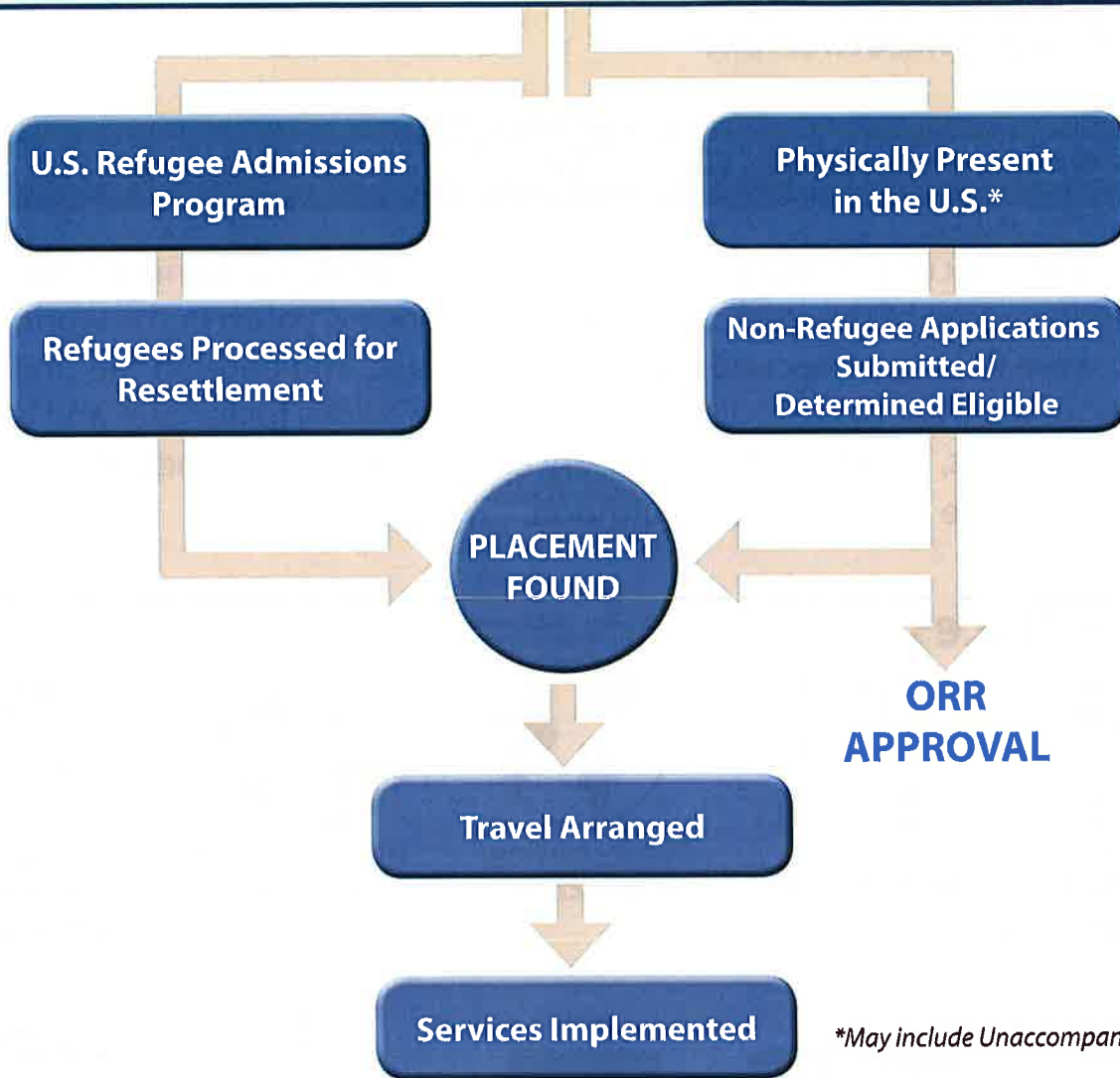
QUICK FACTS

- Program offers the same range of child welfare benefits and services available to other foster care children.
- Since the '70s, it has served **thousands** of children and youth.
- Most enter the program between the ages of 15-17.
- State-administered program: funded through ORR's Cash and Medical Assistance grant.

Who we serve

-  **Refugees**
-  **Special Immigrant Juveniles**
-  **Victims of Trafficking**
-  **Asylees**
-  **Cuban and Haitian Entrants**
-  **U Status Recipients**

PATHWAYS INTO THE PROGRAM



**May include Unaccompanied Alien Children*

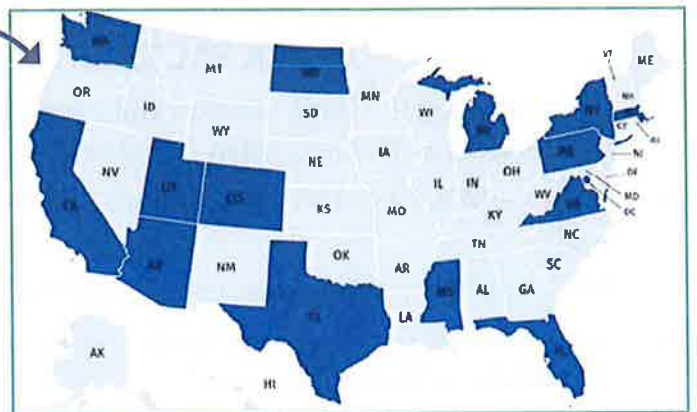
Caseload

Minors represent approximately
50 nationalities

Highest representation from **Guatemala, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Honduras, Burma, and Afghanistan**

Nearly **2,000 youth** served annually
in 14 states and DC

AZ, CA, CO, DC, FL, MA, MI, MS, ND, NY, PA, TX, UT, VA, WA



Learn more: www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/programs/urm • E-mail: urmprogram@acf.hhs.gov



Correcting Misconceptions About Refugee Resettlement in North Dakota

There are several misconceptions in our community and around North Dakota about refugees and refugee resettlement. Here are some of the most common, along with accurate information.

Many refugees are violent people who were criminals in their home countries.

Refugees are screened intensely before they are allowed to enter the United States. In fact, we know more about refugees than you know about a person you might allow into your home to perform routine maintenance. The truth is refugees go through an intensive, exhaustive screening process that involves the the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and, in some cases, other U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Refugees are more likely to commit crimes and are increasing our crime rates.

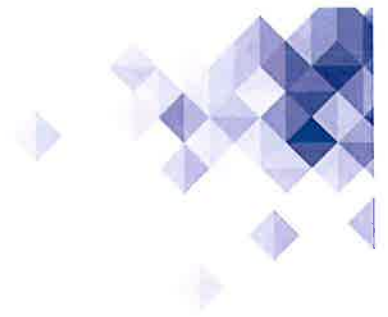
There is no data to support the suggestion that refugees commit more crimes compared to any other group of people. Law enforcement agencies do not gather or track immigration status when arrests are made. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Fargo Police Department Cultural Liaison Officer Vince Kempf (vkempf@cityoffargo.com).

Refugees who come to North Dakota become long-term welfare recipients.

No data we are aware of supports the assertion that refugees are reliant on public assistance for the long term. What we do know is the longer someone is in the country, the more their household incomes rise. Locally, we know the vast majority of refugees resettled are employed soon after they arrive. Some refugee families, like other lower-income families living in the community, qualify for certain social service programs. These supports are important for many lower income families who are working to make ends meet. However, a large part of our job is to help the families we work with get jobs and achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

Do the refugees who come to North Dakota even want to be here?

Yes, the refugees who come to North Dakota want to be here, for many reasons. The first is that 9 times out of 10, a refugee is reuniting with family members already living here. Once they are legally admitted, refugees have the right to live wherever they want in the United States. Those who choose to remain in Fargo-Moorhead tell us they do so for many are the same reasons we all choose to live here: job availability, proximity to family and what the community has to offer.



Refugees refuse to learn English.

Refugee clients are required to take English classes. For the most part they do so happily and willingly. English language proficiency is recognized by resettlement experts as a key to success for refugees, and the vast majority of refugees understand its importance. Issues do arise related to transportation to classes, childcare and difficulty coordinating with work schedules. We work with our clients to address these issues as best we can so they can continue to further their learning.

Refugees don't pay taxes.

Refugees pay taxes from the moment they arrive in the United States. All federal and state income taxes, as well as local and state sales taxes, apply to refugees as they do to anyone else who is a legal resident of the United States. Once established, many new Americans begin saving to purchase a home, just like other Americans aspire to do. As homeowners, they pay property taxes just like other members of the community.

Refugees get free apartments.

Refugees are required to pay for their housing, just like anyone else. They usually use funds from the refugee cash assistance they receive from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for their first few months in the country, but as soon as they are working this resource goes away. They might also qualify for low-income housing assistance, but they must meet the same criteria as any other person who is living legally in the United States. In addition, they have to wait for rental assistance to become available, which can take years in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Refugees get free cars when they get to the United States.

Refugees do not receive free cars. They are responsible for their own transportation, and many rely on public transportation options, especially in the first several months/years they are here. In Fargo, they can receive a bus pass from the resettlement agency for up to four months so they can get to and from their English classes. Many refugees save up to buy a car as soon as they are able to do so but, in addition to the cost, English is also important to their transportation success as it is necessary to get a driver's license.