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## INTRODUCTION

### OVERVIEW

Under the Refugee Act of 1980, the responsibility for carrying out various functions in refugee resettlement is delegated to a number of federal agencies. For instance, the numbers and allocation of refugees to be admitted during a given year are determined by the President in consultation with Congress. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has the responsibility of determining, on an individual basis, which of the many applicants meet the eligibility criteria for the United States' refugee program based on categories outlined by law and priorities set by the Department of State. The Department of State is also charged with the responsibility for overseeing processing of refugees abroad and ESL/cultural orientation programs in camps, determining the rate of flow into the United States, and monitoring the cooperative agreements with voluntary agencies for initial reception and placement.

The Department of Health and Human Services is responsible, through its regional offices and grants to states, for provision of educational and social services. The states, in turn, through a variety of mechanisms, including grants to counties, purchase-of-service contracts and interagency agreements, are responsible for determining the type and location of services offered. The Department of Education is responsible for the distribution of funds to local school districts for educational services to refugee children. In addition, a number of international organizations including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM) have responsibility for aspects of refugee resettlement worldwide.

### PRIVATE VOLUNTARY AGENCY ROLE

The private voluntary agency role, although only a part of a complex process, is central to resettlement. It is essentially two-fold, involving both assistance with overseas processing and initial domestic reception and placement.

VOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT AGENCY

STATE SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION

FISCAL YEAR 1983

COMMITTEE ON

MIGRATION AND REFUGEE AFFAIRS

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES FOR FOREIGN SERVICE, INC.  
200 Park Avenue South  
New York, N.Y. 10003

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PART TWOSTATE SPECIFIC DESCRIPTIONS

Alabama	Kentucky	Ohio
Alaska	Louisiana	Oklahoma
Arizona	Maine	Oregon
Arkansas	Maryland	Pennsylvania
California	Massachusetts	Puerto Rico
Colorado	Michigan	Rhode Island
Connecticut	Minnesota	South Carolina
Delaware	Mississippi	South Dakota
District of Columbia	Missouri	Tennessee
Florida	Montana	Texas
Georgia	Nebraska	Utah
Guam	Nevada	Vermont
Hawaii	New Hampshire	Virginia
Idaho	New Jersey	Washington
Illinois	New Mexico	West Virginia
Indiana	New York	Wisconsin
Iowa	North Carolina	Wyoming
Kansas	North Dakota	

## PREFACE

The purpose of this document is to provide basic information about private, voluntary organizations' involvement in refugee resettlement in the United States. It has been assembled by the Refugee Resource Center on behalf of the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs primarily for use by public agencies endeavoring to carry out their resettlement-related responsibilities. While this handbook can be helpful in understanding the processes, organizations and services associated with voluntary agency resettlement activities, it is not, nor is it intended to be, a complete guide to resettlement in the United States. Users of this guide are encouraged to request additional information from the appropriate resettlement agency or others involved in resettlement.

This document contains three main sections:

1. Description of the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs and the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, and an overview of refugee admission, reception and placement;
2. Descriptions of the national level operations of the twelve private, voluntary organizations involved in refugee resettlement;
3. Descriptions of voluntary agency activities by state.

Both the national overview section and the individual state descriptions contain projections of numbers to be resettled in FY 1983. It must be understood, however, that these numbers are tentative projections which can change as the myriad conditions affecting the flow of refugees into the United States change.

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OVERSEAS PROCESSING

Specific procedures by which refugees reach the United States from countries of first asylum depend not on the country of origin or nationality of the refugee, but on current location. Individuals may apply for the United States refugee program at any United States Embassy or Consulate, or request assistance through the UNHCR. They may also seek guidance from a United States voluntary agency in applying to the proper United States government official.

Refugees in Europe

In Europe, care and maintenance of refugees in countries of first asylum is usually provided mainly by the host government, with some assistance from UNHCR and, for U.S. bound refugees, from the United States government. While refugee camps housing large numbers at a single location do exist, the majority of refugees in European countries are scattered throughout the country.

Persons in first asylum countries in Europe wishing to apply for resettlement in the United States may do so at a voluntary agency office where they receive assistance in filling out the necessary forms. Voluntary agency staff sends the biographic file to its United States office for an assurance of sponsorship and submits the case to an INS officer who determines the applicant's eligibility for admission to the United States as a refugee. Voluntary agencies currently maintain offices in Austria, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

Refugees from Southeast Asia, Africa or Pakistan

When a refugee applies for admission to the United States from Southeast Asia, Africa or Pakistan, initial processing leading to presentation of the case to INS is carried out by a Joint Voluntary Agency Representative (JVAR) who assists United States government officials with the processing. Although JVAR offices operate on behalf of all U.S. voluntary resettlement agencies, each is administered by one agency under contract with the Department of State. Currently, JVAR offices are located in Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, Sudan and Pakistan. In addition, a special Orderly Departure Program JVAR is stationed in Bangkok to assist in the processing of United States bound refugees released directly by the government of Vietnam.

*Leoni  
Humboldt, Karpel, Sokoys added*

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An initial interview with JVAR staff provides basic information needed for application for the United States refugee program. When family ties in the United States or previous affiliation with the United States are claimed by the applicant, the JVAR contacts domestic agencies to collect documentation and substantiate eligibility. Each case is reviewed by the United States Embassy Refugee Officers who determine if the refugees meet the criteria for the United States program. The case is then submitted to an INS officer who makes the final determination of admissability to the United States.

Refugees from Latin America (Central and South America, including the Caribbean)

Refugees admitted from Latin America are current or former political prisoners, persons in life-threatening situations and immediate relatives of previously admitted refugees still holding that status (Visa-93 cases). Small, special programs have been set up to process these groups. Otherwise, the Department of State anticipates that Latin American refugees with rare exceptions will not require resettlement in the U.S. These exceptions may apply at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate or through the UNHCR. The applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

One specific group considered eligible for the U.S. program is Argentine political prisoners. Friends or relatives may file applications on their behalf at the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy seeks permission from the Argentine Foreign Ministry to have the INS interview the persons in jail. Final permission to leave must be granted by the Argentine government. The process is lengthy and the numbers small: one Argentine arrived in FY82 and two have arrived so far in FY83.

Another specific group eligible for U.S. resettlement is former Cuban political prisoners and their families who arrived in Panama, Spain or Costa Rica before May 1982. All applicants are interviewed by the INS. In Spain, IRC and USCC have offices and process applications. Files from Panama and Costa Rica are sent to the Refugee Data Center for distribution to the voluntary agencies. The refugees usually resettle with family members already in the U.S.

INITIAL RECEPTION AND PLACEMENT

The twelve voluntary resettlement agencies and two states currently providing reception and placement services for refugees do so under cooperative agreements with the

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Department of State's Bureau for Refugee Programs. Under these agreements, the agencies and states involved (Iowa and Idaho) receive a per capita grant for each refugee resettled. The current per capita grant for Europeans is \$365, for all others, the per capita grant is \$528. # 560

Once a refugee has been determined eligible by INS, the JVAR or the voluntary agency completes the biographic file and sends it to the Refugee Data Center, which distributes the cases through an allocation process to the national offices of the voluntary agencies. Each national office then explores placement options within its national network. Each agency considers a number of factors in determining the best resettlement location for the refugees it accepts for sponsorship. These factors include:

Family ties;

Availability of jobs;

Availability of affordable housing;

Availability of public and private resources, such as health facilities, schools and social services;

Local voluntary agency resettlement capabilities and long-term service strategies;

Community attitudes towards refugees;

Number of refugees and their ethnic composition in the community;

Long-term welfare dependency situation among refugees in the area;

Degree of secondary migration among the existing refugee population.

Based on these considerations, the voluntary agency arranges placement through its network of local affiliates. The local affiliate may be a church parish, a social service agency or other community group. When a placement has been arranged, an assurance of sponsorship, by which an agency assumes responsibility for a particular case, is telexed overseas. Final arrangements for travel to the United States can then be made.

The cooperative agreements outline the basic or "core" services which are deemed necessary to resettlement, and authorize agencies to insure the availability of "core"



services for a period of 90 days after arrival. Additional or "optional" services which continue or expand assistance to refugees may be provided from any unexpended per capita grant funds or other agency resources.

The following sections of this document describe how individual voluntary agencies carry out their responsibilities under the cooperative agreement with the Department of State.

## AMERICAN COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES (ACVA)

All twelve resettlement agencies are members of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service. ACVA was founded in 1943 by a group of United States private voluntary organizations wishing to enhance their effectiveness in relief, rehabilitation and refugee assistance overseas. There are currently 43 member agencies and 4 cooperating (non-voting) agencies.

Structurally, ACVA is a confederation of autonomous agencies which, through a process of consensus, work together on matters of mutual concern. It provides a forum which facilitates cooperation, joint consultation and information exchange among member agencies. Other functions include acting as a liaison between member organizations and government bodies and other national and international organizations, and providing information to the public regarding member organizations' activities. The basic operating budget of ACVA is financed by member organizations through a system of graduated fees based primarily on the level of an agency's overseas program expenditures and the number of committees in which it participates. ACVA itself does not maintain overseas programs, nor does it fund the programs of its member agencies or of any other organization.

ACVA maintains three standing committees: The Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs, the Committee on Material Resources and the Committee on Development Assistance.

### COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION AND REFUGEE AFFAIRS

The member agencies of the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs have roots deep in the history of American immigration. Many have traditional ties to ethnic, religious or community groups, although their current service is to all. In addition, the agencies have a wide

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variety of contacts and networks in all segments of American society as well as overseas, with the aim of a speedy and flexible response to refugee emergencies. Since World War II, they have been involved in all major refugee crises and have helped create a nation-wide refugee resettlement network.

The Committee serves as a forum for discussion of refugee resettlement and migration issues of concern to member agencies on a national level. The Committee is also responsible for the operation of two distinct units: The Refugee Data Center and the Refugee Resource Center.

### Refugee Data Center

The Refugee Data Center was organized in 1977 with funding provided by the Department of State. Originally charged with compiling data and providing statistical information on Southeast Asian refugees scheduled to come to the United States, the Center's operations have expanded to include data collection on refugees coming from Africa, the Near East and Europe. It is anticipated that certain segments of the Latin American refugee program will also be added to the Data Center information base.

In the processing of refugees for movement from countries of first asylum to the United States, the Data Center serves as a link between the JVAR and the refugees overseas, and voluntary agencies and sponsors in this country. Reunification requests are also recorded at the Data Center. The Center matches incoming case files with its record of requests and distributes the case to the appropriate agency at an allocations meeting. Once the agency confirms the sponsorship, the Center telexes the JVAR and tracks the refugee's progress till his arrival in his new community.

The Center produces regular reports on the numbers of refugees allocated, assured and arrived by agency, and special reports at the request of various government bodies. The center has also been charged with maintaining accurate statistics of all dependants in a refugee case, and of the ESL level of those who have completed the ESL training in camps overseas.

The Center operates as an independent unit under the auspices of the International Catholic Migration Commission and is directly responsible to the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs.

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Refugee Resource Center

The Refugee Resource Center was developed in 1980 under a federal grant to the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs. Current funding is provided under grants from the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and State.

The major objectives of the Refugee Resource Center are to:

Provide information and interpretation on refugee resettlement as carried out by the private sector, to the general public;

Assist in developing communication networks between the voluntary resettlement agencies and other participants in the resettlement program, including Federal, state and local governments, mutual assistance associations, and other service providers;

Facilitate coordination among the national resettlement agencies in order to enhance their collective capacity to cooperate with other public and private participants in the resettlement program.

Regional conferences--bringing together all of the actors in resettlement in a given area of the country--are held in order to foster the development of regional coordination and cooperation.

The Center also facilitates bi-annual meetings between the resettlement agencies and state refugee coordinators to discuss areas of mutual concern and to develop better understanding of the respective roles of state coordinators and the voluntary agencies.

Under its function of research, analysis and data collection, the Center produces and distributes periodic mailings, such as information on resettlement processing, descriptions of resettlement programs, and reports of the activities of other agencies involved in resettlement.