



Refugee Resettlement Program

Overview

Since 1975 Catholic Charities has assisted refugees to resettle in the Diocese of Rockford: sometimes as many as 350 persons per year. Operated under the auspices of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities works with the U.S. Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Justice, to assist refugees in becoming self-sufficient. The majority of those settled by our program are gainfully employed, purchase homes and even are business owners in the first few years after arrival.

Who is a refugee?

A refugee is a person who has fled his or her country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular group.

How to Help?

- **Financial** - your monetary gift can help provide the first three months of rent and deposit; gift cards for food and clothing.
- **Volunteer** - Donate your time to tutor refugee parents and children in English, assist in collecting donations for new arrivals, transport refugees to appointments, classes.

How Refugees Come to Rockford

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees provides support and begins the process for resettlement.
- Refugee participates in multiple lengthy security screenings.
- U.S. State Department reviews the cases and distributes them to one of ten authorized resettlement agencies, including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).
- USCCB assigns refugees to Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement throughout the country.
- International Organization for Migration helps with transportation for the refugee to move to the U.S.
- Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement welcomes refugee families assigned to them.

What Resettlement Means

When refugees arrive, Case Managers guide them through the process of adjusting to life in the U.S. This includes:

- Securing housing and providing food, clothing, and household items;
- Applying for documents such as Social Security cards and State IDs;
- Scheduling required health screenings and addressing emergency health problems;
- Orienting them to public transportation;
- Developing family budgets;
- Enrolling the family in English classes;
- Providing cultural orientation;
- Ensuring children are enrolled in school and helping parents understand the U.S. education system;
- Developing relationships with employers to assist in job placement for refugees.



Where do our refugees come from?

Countries of origin for refugees settled by Diocese of Rockford Catholic Charities

Afghanistan
Burundi
Central Africa
Congo
Cuba
Haiti
Iran
Iraq
Guatemala
Myanmar
Rwanda
Sudan
Syria
Ukraine
Venezuela
Vietnam

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Janet Biljeskovic, Program Director

(815) 399-1709 or jbiljeskovic@rockforddiocese.org

Your help makes their hope for a new life more than just a dream.

Our Mission

Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Rockford continues the ministry of Jesus in faithfulness to the Magisterium of the Church. Our Mission is to serve God's people for the common good with compassion, dignity and respect; to assist people in achieving a degree of independence consonant with their human dignity; and to work in solidarity with the Church and other people of good will in advocating for justice.