



FACT SHEET

May 2016



COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

Background

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB) supervises county administration of the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) within the parameters of federal and state statutes and regulations, and the State Plan for Refugee/Entrant Assistance and Services. The RPB issues program regulations and guidelines, provides policy direction, and ensures coordination of public resources for refugee resettlement in California in partnership with the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and local county governments.

County Boards of Supervisors determine which agency within the county governmental structure will be responsible for administering the RRP. Most often the County Welfare Department (CWD) is the designated agency.

The CWDs accept applications from refugees for various assistance programs and services, including Refugee Cash Assistance, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), CalFresh (Food Stamps), etc. They determine eligibility for these programs, deliver benefits and services and, when appropriate, refer refugees to services provided by other agencies and organizations. The CWDs in counties designated as "refugee-impacted" also provide services under the Refugee Social Services (RSS), Targeted Assistance (TA) Programs, and ORR Discretionary grants, either directly or through contracts with resettlement agencies (formerly known as voluntary agencies), faith- or Ethnic Community-Based Organizations (formerly known as Mutual Assistance Associations) or other agencies.

Refugee-Impacted Counties

Counties that have received 400 or more refugee arrivals during the most recent five year period are considered "refugee-impacted." In Federal Fiscal Year 2013, the following counties are designated as refugee-impacted:

- Alameda
- Los Angeles
- Orange
- Sacramento
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Santa Clara
- Stanislaus

In each refugee-impacted county a representative is appointed to serve as the County Refugee Coordinator (CRC). In most cases, the CRCs are employed by the CWDs.

Responsibilities

The CRC is responsible for planning, coordinating and overseeing the delivery of public social services in the county to assist refugees in becoming economically self-sufficient. The CRC has knowledge and experience in both refugee policies and issues and public assistance programs and services. The CRC works with local governmental and non-governmental organizations to ensure necessary services are available to refugees. The CRC manages RSS, TA, and ORR Discretionary grant funds allocated to counties by the RPB.

The CRCs regularly participate in local refugee forums and community meetings to address concerns in an ongoing effort to improve the provision of services for the refugee population.

The RPB holds quarterly meetings with all CRCs to share information on issues and developments affecting the California RRP. In addition, the CRCs select from among themselves a CRC that represents them on the State Advisory Council on Refugee Assistance and Services.

Contact Information

For a current listing of the CRCs in each refugee-impacted county in California, please go to the CRC web page at

www.cdss.ca.gov/refugeeprogram/PG1530.htm.