



FACT SHEET

May 2016

CUBAN/HAITIAN ENTRANT PROGRAM



Background

The Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP) is supervised by the California Department of Social Services, Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB), and administered by county welfare departments. The RPB manages and coordinates the CHEP within federal regulations, funding availability, and the California State Plan for Refugee/Entrant Assistance and Services. The CHEP is funded by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to provide eligible Cuban/Haitian Entrants with medical assistance, cash assistance, and social services.

Cuban and Haitian nationals are given “entrant status” after they arrive in this country and may be unable to return to their respective countries. Cuban and Haitian entrants are eligible for the CHEP under Title V (Fascell-Stone Amendment) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980.

Cuban and Haitian nationals who are neither refugees nor asylees may also be eligible for ORR-funded assistance programs. They are the only population eligible for assistance and services while they are in removal proceedings, paroled, or awaiting an asylum determination. These clients retain eligibility for services even if the validity period of their parole status expires. However, these individuals must provide documentation that confirms their nationality and their immigration status in order to receive ORR-funded benefits and services.

Parole Status

According to the Pew Research Center, over 2.0 million Hispanics of Cuban origin resided in the United States (U.S.) in 2011. Many of these individuals are known as “Cuban lottery parolees” and are eligible for CHEP services. Parole is a temporary status granted by the

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) pursuant to the Attorney General’s authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), Section 212(d)(5). Individuals may be granted parole for humanitarian reasons or for emergent or compelling reasons of “significant public benefit.”

Documentation

Acceptable documentation for CHEP eligibility includes a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services I-94 Card (Arrival/Departure Card) showing a current parole stamp indicating status under the INA, Section 212(d)(5), Cuban or Haitian national, and the date of parole. Lottery parolees are documented with a parole stamp on a Cuban passport and an I-94 Card showing their date of entry. Cuban or Haitian parolees who adjust their immigration status under applicable legislation would continue to be eligible for CHEP benefits even if the parole status expires.

Program and Benefits

Cuban and Haitian entrants are eligible for assistance and services, such as Entrant Cash Assistance, for a period of up to eight months from the date of entry or release from DHS custody, and medical assistance programs. Cuban entrants who adjust their immigration status under the Cuban Adjustment Act may continue to be eligible for refugee services after their adjustment; however, they lose eligibility for CHEP benefits if they become U.S. citizens.

For further information on the CHEP program:
<http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/humanitarian-parole/cuban-haitian-entrant-program-chep>