

## **STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON REFUGEE ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES (SAC)**

### **PURPOSE:**

In accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980, the California State Advisory Council on Refugee Assistance and Services (SAC) was established by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

The SAC meets periodically to analyze critical issues affecting refugees and assures citizen involvement in policy discussions crucial to the development of a cost-effective, sensitive, comprehensive, and successful refugee resettlement program. The CDSS attempts to keep the SAC informed on current issues affecting refugee resettlement in California and solicits advice from the SAC on the administration of the refugee resettlement process. The advice given to CDSS by the SAC through formal recommendations and general discussions at SAC meetings has been given serious consideration by the CDSS and incorporated in the development of the refugee resettlement process in California.

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

As specified in the SAC by-laws, the SAC is intended to represent a cross-section of experience from all sectors involved in or affected by the refugee resettlement process. Thus, the 15 members of SAC are selected considering ethnic representation, expertise, constituency, geographical location, and association representation.

Membership is defined by two categories, public members and organizational/agency members. Appointments are as follows:

- Seven positions are held by members of the public refugee community selected from nominations made by Mutual Assistance Associations, Voluntary Resettlement Agencies, service providers, and other interested organizations on a statewide basis.
- Eight organizational/agency positions have been allocated. One nominee is submitted by each of the following to fill these positions:
  - Governor's Office
  - California State Refugee Forums
  - Joint VOLAG Committee
  - Director, California Department of Health Services
  - Chief, Refugee Programs Branch
  - County Welfare Directors Association
  - County Refugee Coordinators
  - Local Refugee Health Program Coordinators

In accordance with the SAC bylaws, the Governor's Office appointed member serves on the SAC at the discretion of the Governor's Office.

The seven public members serve for three-year terms beginning at the date in which approval is provided by the CDSS. Public members are allowed only two consecutive terms. Organizational/agency members are allowed as many consecutive terms as their nominating agency so chooses.

Members do not receive a salary for serving on the SAC, but are reimbursed for travel expenses incurred to attend the meetings, in accordance with CDSS travel policies.

### **APPOINTMENT PROCESS:**

The SAC members serve at the pleasure of the Director of the CDSS as described by the Refugee Act of 1980.

Organizational members are nominated by the organizations they represent. When a vacancy for an organizational seat occurs, the Refugee Program Bureau is required to notify the organization of the vacant seat and solicits a nomination from that particular organization for a replacement. The organization's nomination is presented to the SAC membership for input and advice. The nomination is forwarded from the Welfare to Work Division, Deputy Director to the CDSS Director for appointment approval. After the appointment is approved by the Director, the nominee must sign an "Acceptance of Appointment" to formally become a member of the SAC.