



The International Rescue Committee

Harriet Kuhr
Executive Director
Charlottesville@rescue.org
434-979-7772

The International Rescue Committee

Founded in 1933 at the request of Albert Einstein, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people to survive and rebuild their lives. At work in over 40 countries and 28 U.S. cities to restore safety, dignity and hope, the IRC leads the way from harm to home.

What is a refugee?

A person who is unwilling or unable to return to his country of nationality or habitual residence because of persecution or a well founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

What is an SIV?

Special Immigrant Visa holders (SIVs) are Afghan and Iraqi nationals who were employed or contracted by or on behalf of the U.S. government or U.S. armed forces in Afghanistan and Iraq and who have experienced or are experiencing an ongoing serious threat due to that employment.

According to the UN Refugee Agency...

- There are 89.3 million displaced people in the world, 27.1 million of whom are refugees.
- 1 in every 88 people of the world's population is forcibly displaced.



Durable Solutions



**Voluntary return
to country of origin**



Host country integration



Third country resettlement

Refugee Safe Haven is an essential American value

Historically, one half of one percent of the world's refugees have been resettled in the USA.



How does a refugee reach the US?

Step 1

MARCH 2013



Register with the United Nations

Step 2



Interview with the United Nations

Step 3



United Nations refers for resettlement

Step 4



Process application

"We didn't hear back about our application for almost three years."

Step 5

FEBRUARY 2016



First interview with an American official

Step 6

MARCH 2016



Second interview with an American official

Step 7

APRIL 2016



Third interview with an American official

Step 8



Refugee vetting and security screenings

Step 9



Fingerprint screenings

Step 10



Medical screenings

Step 11



Cultural orientation class

Step 12



Matched with a resettlement agency

Step 13

SEPTEMBER 18, 2016



Prepare for travel

"Just three days before departing, our travels were delayed by further screenings."

Step 14

OCTOBER 7, 2016



Arrive to America

*The refugee resettlement process varies for each individual applicant.

IRC Charlottesville Arrivals

Charlottesville has resettled 4,600 refugees in the last 24 years



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Afghanistan <i>Parolees</i>	145	110	100	79	87	91 340
Bhutan	16	9				
Burma	4				7	4
Burundi		1	2			
Colombia	1		6			10
Congo, DR	15	23	91	15	20	23
El Salvador		1				
Ethiopia	1					
Honduras						3
India						
Iran	6				1	3
Iraq	19		3	2	6	6
Pakistan	12	1	2			
Somalia	8					
South Sudan						6
Syria	13		9	6	5	35
Ukraine						2
TOTALS	240	145	213	102	126	523

IRC in Charlottesville provides ongoing support throughout refugees' first years in the US

- Resettlement/Case Management
- Employment Services
- Medical and Mental Health Support
- School and Youth Programs
- Immigration Services
- Educational Programs
- Interpreter Services
- New Roots Food and Agriculture Program



Employment Services

- Job readiness training
- Resume writing
- Online job search and application assistance
- Interview preparation
- Ongoing support after job placement



Career Advancement Services

- Referrals to workforce training programs
- Career counseling and mentoring
- Professional re-credentialing
- Financial coaching and education
- Access to loans and credit-building programs



Medical and Mental Health Support



- Psycho-social adjustment
- Health orientation and education
- Individualized support
- Medical case management
- Appointment transportation

School and Youth Programs

- School orientation and enrollment
- Support for student integration and achievement
- Afterschool and summer enrichment programs
- Career and educational mentoring for high potential youth and young adults



Immigration Services

- Applications for legal permanent residence (green cards)
- Applications to naturalize as a US citizen
- Family reunification petitions
- Civic engagement – “know your rights”, voter registration and education, etc.



Educational Programs

- ESL classes and tutoring
- Cultural orientation
- Financial literacy
- Life skills
- Nutrition education



Interpreter Services



- 60 trained and certified interpreters
- 20 languages including Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Pashto, French, Spanish, Swahili, Mandarin, and Nepali, Russian, Ukrainian
- Serves over 75 public agencies, nonprofit organizations, medical providers, courts, and businesses in Central Virginia

New Roots Food and Agriculture Program

- Community Gardens: 5 locations including New Roots Farm
- Microproducer program
- Stand at IX Farmers' Market
- Food access
- Charlottesville Food Justice Network



Operation Allies Refuge



- July 30 – August 30, 2021
- Approximately 80,000 Afghans airlifted out of Kabul
 - 65,000 directly to U.S.
 - Others held at military facilities overseas for processing and later arrival.

Operation Allies Welcome



Operation Allies Welcome



- Afghan parolees resettled throughout U.S. refugee resettlement network.
- **IRC Charlottesville** resettles **340** (app. 95 families) in 4 months.
- **Emergency response** different from normal resettlement.
 - Limited affordable housing available, pressure on service providers – medical, schools, social services
 - Afghans experienced recent trauma
 - Urgency of departing their homes
 - Lack of clear answers for their long-term wellbeing
 - Extreme concern for relatives left behind in Afghanistan

Uniting for Ukraine



Ukrainians

- DHS launched a private sponsorship program, *Uniting for Ukraine*, implemented by **Welcome.US**.
- Effective May 21, 2022, Ukrainians who entered the U.S. and were granted **humanitarian parole** are eligible for federally funded benefits such as Medicaid, SNAP, and cash assistance and services.
- These also include **services** provided by resettlement agencies such as assistance with employment, access to healthcare, school enrollment and other youth programs.
- Resettlement funding is not available – this will be provided by the sponsors.
- A fact sheet with details is available at www.acf.hhs.gov/orr.

Private Sponsorship – Welcome Corps



On 1/19/23, the U.S. Department of State announced a goal of 10,000 Americans (2,000 groups) sponsoring 5,000 refugees this year.

NEW: Private Sponsorship - The Welcome Corps

Private Sponsor Groups (PSG)

- ✓ Minimum 5 individuals in each sponsor group
- ✓ 90-day commitment
- ✓ Groups apply, submit a welcome plan, and pass background checks
- ✓ Initially support refugee cases pulled from RSC Africa
- ✓ Groups raise (cash and in-kind) \$2,275 for every refugee sponsored.
- ✓ Located anywhere in the USA

- ✓ PSGs must be US Citizen or LPR holders
- ✓ PSGs will commit to providing core private sponsorship services to refugees for their first 90 days in the US.
- ✓ These services will mirror **Reception & Placement services**. This will include connecting refugee newcomers to essential benefits and services for which they may be eligible, **including mainstream federal benefits** and those funded by ORR

Co-Sponsorship vs Private Sponsorship

	Co-Sponsorship	Private Sponsorship -- Welcome Corps
Sponsors groups are	Within 100 miles of an IRC office	Anywhere in the US
IRC will provide	Hands-on support	Technical assistance
Time commitment	6-months	90-days
Group Size	6 to 8 people per group	5 people per group
Type of group	Must be a community group or organization	Can be composed of 5 individuals (friends, family, etc.)
Group's Financial Contribution	\$5,000 group financial commitment combined of cash and in-kind supports (e.g., donated housing).	\$2,275 financial commitment per refugee sponsored . Can include cash and in-kind support.
Group partners with	local IRC office	Community Sponsorship Hub (CSH)
Services provided	Provide majority of services to the clients supported	Provide all services to the clients supported
Training & Monitoring	provided by local IRC office	provided by CSH and other non-profit organizations
Documentation	Assist with case file documentation and case notes	Complete 30- and 90-day report

How you can help?

- Financial Contributions
- In-Kind Contributions
- Hire Refugees
- Advocate on behalf of refugees to elected officials (rescue.org/take-action)
- Volunteer
- Follow us on Facebook
- Sign up to receive email updates
- Organize your faith congregation or community organization to sponsor a refugee family





Questions?