

# FACT SHEET

## Refugee Resettlement

### Refugee Services Program

Refugees come to the United States in search of protection from persecution, for peace, freedom, and opportunities for themselves and their families. The Refugee Services Program is designed to integrate refugees into American society economically and socially, while helping them maintain their cultural heritage. Following their arrival in the United States, the major goal of the program is to help them find work to support their families and to connect the family with local schools and the community.

### Who is a refugee?

A refugee is someone outside his or her country of origin who is unable or unwilling to return to that country and does not want the protection of that country because of persecution or fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, or political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

### Where do refugees who live in Ohio come from?

In 2008, there were 1,354 refugees from 19 countries resettled in Ohio. The majority were from Somalia, Burma, Bhutan, Burundi and Iraq.

### Where do refugees in Ohio reside?

The majority of refugees in Ohio live in five counties: Franklin, Cuyahoga, Summit, Hamilton and Montgomery.

### What services are provided?

The Refugee Services Program provides cash assistance, medical assistance and social services. All costs associated with the refugee program are provided with 100 percent federal funds. Cash assistance and medical assistance is provided for eight months for refugees who are not eligible for other federal and state programs. The eight-month time period begins the month the refugee enters the United States. Social Services may be provided for up to five years to help refugees become self-supporting as quickly as possible. Citizenship and naturalization services can be provided beyond the five year time period.

### What do refugees need?

Refugees need help assimilating into American culture as soon as possible. To do this, they need help understanding cultural differences and help with interpreting and translating the language of their native country, into English, as well as classes to help them learn English as a second language. They also need help with transportation, child care, and employment.

### What types of Social Services are available to refugees?

Examples of refugee social services include job training, language skills development, employment counseling, job placement, child care, transportation, citizenship and naturalization. Contact the county department of job and family services to determine if you, your family or someone you know may be eligible for the Refugee Services Program. After an interview, an application will be completed and filed regarding each household's specific situation.

For more information on the Refugee Services Program, call 614-466-4815.