



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE | OFFICE OF INCOME MAINTENANCE

BUREAU OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

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DEC 22 2011

Mr. Eskinder Negash, Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement
Administration for Children and Families
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Washington, DC 20447

Dear Mr. Negash:

Attached is the revised State Plan for the Pennsylvania Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2012. In the past year, there have been some minor changes to the RRP and the modified Plan reflects those changes. Revisions include:

- The addition of Erie County as part of the Targeted Assistance Formula Program;
- The addition of Penn Hills and Allentown School Districts; and HIAS, in collaboration with Lutheran Children and Family Service, in Philadelphia; as recipients of the Refugee School Impact Grant (RSIG); and the deletion of Baldwin-Whitehall and Philadelphia School Districts as recipients of the RSIG;
- Additional responsibilities of the Pennsylvania Department of Health as a result of being awarded the Preventive Health Grant;
- Deletion of the reference to the Refugee Advisory Board and in its place, reference to the quarterly regional collaborative meetings with all parties in each region who work with refugees.

As per Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Section 400.107, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requests the continued use of Refugee Medical Assistance funds to provide health screenings, if needed.

Thank you for the continued opportunity to participate in the RRP and serve the refugees who have resettled in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at (717) 787-8608 or by email at nrothermel@state.pa.us.

Sincerely,

Norm-Anne Rothermel
State Refugee Coordinator

cc: Mr. Ramon Colon

<p style="text-align: center;">FFY 2012 STATE PLAN REFUGEE SERVICES</p>
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**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Limits

This State Plan is submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to receive Refugee Resettlement Assistance funds under Section 414 of the Immigration and Nationalities Act (INA), 42 U.S.C. 1501, et.seq. Provision of services included in this State Plan will be within the limits of available federal funds.

Legislative Authority

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's State Plan was developed in accordance with Title IV of the INA, as amended by the Refugee Act of 1980; (Public Law 96-212) and its regulations; and Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Chapter IV, Part 400. This State Plan describes the Refugee Resettlement Program's (RRP) administration and services to eligible refugees as issued by federal regulations at 45 CFR Part 400. This plan contains all necessary and required assurances.

Program Goals

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania fully supports the goals of the ORR to promote economic self-sufficiency within the shortest possible time after a refugee's arrival into the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth's refugee program offers planned and coordinated support services, as well as cash and medical assistance when necessary, as a transitional aid to self-sufficiency. The RRP's primary goal is to help refugees obtain employment and reach a level of self-sufficiency that meets the basic economic needs of the refugees and their families.

SECTION I – ADMINISTRATION

A. DESIGNATION OF AUTHORITY

The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) is the single state agency charged with the authority and responsibility for the administration and supervision of Pennsylvania's Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP).

Ms. Norm-Anne Rothermel, Human Services Program Specialist Supervisor, Pennsylvania RRP, is the State Refugee Coordinator.

The State Refugee Coordinator assures coordination of public and private resources for the RRP and implements the State Plan. DPW will not delegate responsibility of administering or supervising of this plan, other than to its own officials.

The State Refugee Coordinator assures that DPW's goals and objectives will not alter or infringe upon the goals and objectives of the RRP as specified in the Refugee Act of 1980, as amended; and official issuances of the Director of the Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement.

DPW, Office of Income Maintenance (OIM), is responsible to ensure proper overall coordination and integration of the RRP. OIM has direct responsibility for the Refugee Social Services, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors, Targeted Assistance and discretionary grant programs. It is also responsible for the administration of the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) programs.

The State Refugee Coordinator will facilitate the coordination of RRP services within DPW and with other Commonwealth departments.

B. ORGANIZATION

Refugee resettlement in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires the successful coordination of a complex set of inter-related services provided by a large number of diverse public and private agencies. It is the responsibility of the designated RRP office to carry out the planning, administration and coordination of the resettlement services.

The State Refugee Coordinator has been delegated the lead responsibility to ensure overall coordination and integration of the RRP and is responsible for the day-to-day overall management and coordination of this program.

DPW's overall objectives for the RRP are to:

1. Assist refugees in attaining self-sufficiency as soon as possible after arrival;
2. Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate employment and support services;
3. Coordinate cash and medical assistance with employment and support services to promote early employment and economic self-sufficiency;
4. Assure effective use of available public and private resources; and,
5. Assist refugee community-based organizations to develop greater organizational capacity so that they are able to assume a larger role in the resettlement and adjustment of refugees, also to promote economic development efforts in refugee communities, where possible.

In order to meet these goals, DPW contracts with a single private agency to provide the following direct services.

1. With the approval of DPW, the contractor prepares and executes subcontracts containing appropriate program components, eligible clients, anticipated service outcomes, related performance requirements, and appropriate fully justified budgets. Subcontracts are in compliance with federal and state refugee regulations, policy and procedures, as well as cost allocation guidelines. Subcontracts provide all legal assurances that are required by federal and state regulations.
2. The contractor assists DPW in facilitating a range of meetings and in the upkeep of Pennsylvania's refugee website, www.refugeesinpa.org.

As the arrival numbers and demographics for refugees and asylees change, Pennsylvania's RRP must take advantage of special expertise in cultural, organizational, business, health, legal and technical matters in order to ensure flexibility, appropriateness, and where possible, advocacy in its planning and implementation of services for refugees and asylees seeking self-sufficiency through employment.

Towards this end, DPW coordinates regional collaborative meetings throughout the Commonwealth. At a minimum, these meetings must meet the federal requirement for quarterly consultations with volunteer agencies, federal agencies, service providers, community-based organizations, and others involved in refugee resettlement. DPW coordinates and arranges meetings of these various groups. Minutes are taken at each meeting and included in the Trimester Performance Report to the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

In addition, DPW coordinates and facilitates an annual statewide consultation to provide networking opportunities and training on current issues affecting refugees in Pennsylvania.

DPW performs all required on-site monitoring of subcontracts to verify accuracy of performance data, completeness of case files, and reporting compliance with the subcontracts. Monitoring assures compliance relative to contract performance standards. Any subcontractors with program deficiencies will be required to submit corrective action plans. DPW staff will ensure that approved corrective action plans are implemented.

DPW also ensures that all federal and state record keeping and reporting requirements are met. These include, but are not limited to, Trimester Performance Reports, Semi-Annual Performance Reports, Annual Service Plan, Annual Goal Plan, ORR 1, ORR 11, quarterly Financial Status Reports (FSRs), and Unaccompanied Refugee Minors' Placement and Progress Reports.

DPW provides or provides for technical assistance and training to agencies under subcontract, as required.

The State Coordinator assures that all contracts and subcontracts meet the Requirements of 45 CFR §92.36b (8).

The RRP website, prime contractor's website and the electronic mail system assures the proper receipt and transmittal of all appropriate federal regulations, policies, directives, and guidelines to all appropriate offices within the state. Applicable state regulations, directives and guidelines are reviewed by the State Refugee Coordinator to ensure compliance with applicable federal statutes and regulations. Regular meetings and communications take place and will continue with all refugee liaisons and coordinators.

In addition, Refugee Program Guidelines have been developed to ensure that services are provided in a consistent way and according to Federal regulation and State requirements. Guideline training is provided at least once per year.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's RRP includes the following components related to refugee cash and medical assistance, employment service and social services:

Cash and Medical Assistance includes:

- Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)
- Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)

In accordance with Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 400.154(a), Refugee Employment Services must include the following:

- A Family Self-Sufficiency Plan
- An Individual Employability Plan (EP)

In accordance with 45 CFR Section 400.154, Refugee Employability Social Services may include the following:

- Employment services
- Assessment
- On-the-job training
- English language training
- Vocational training
- Skills recertification
- Day care for children
- Transportation for employment service or for the acceptance or retention of employment
- Employment case management
- Interpretation and translation services
- Assistance with self employment, if a self-sufficiency plan indicates that this is viable
- Assistance in obtaining Employment Authorization Documents (EADs)

Other Social Services may include:

- Information and referral services
- Outreach services to facilitate access to services
- Emergency services to persons or families in a crisis
- Health-related services and referrals, including domestic violence
- Home management services
- Day care for children (when necessary for participation in a service other than an employability service)
- Transportation (when necessary for participation in a service other than an employability service)
- Case management services (when necessary for participation in a service other than in connection with employment or an employability service)
- Citizenship services

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program may include:

- Custodial Foster Care
- Child Welfare
- Case Planning
- Case Management Services

Targeted Assistance Formula Program (TAP)

- Due to the high number of refugee arrivals, Targeted Assistance formula funds are received to provide employment services in Philadelphia, Lancaster and Erie Counties. Services are

provided in accordance with 45 CFR Section 400.314-318. All services are provided by contracted refugee service providers.

C. ASSURANCES

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania assures that the RRP will comply with all specific requirements of Title IV of the Immigration and Nationality Act, with all official issuances of the Director of the ORR, and with the regulations in 45 CFR 400.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania assures compliance with all applicable Federal regulations that are in effect during the time the state is receiving grant funding. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania agrees to amend this plan as needed to comply with standards, goals and priorities established by the Director of the ORR.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania assures the maintenance of all operational records that are necessary for federal monitoring of the State's Refugee Program in accordance with 45 CFR 400.28.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania assures that it will provide services to all refugees without regard to race, religion, country of origin, sex, or political opinion, and will provide services in full compliance with Title VI, Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §2000d et.seq.), Title V, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. §701 et.seq.), and in all applicable state and local civil rights requirements.

RCA and RMA benefits are provided through the Office of Income Maintenance. Local County Assistance Offices (CAOs) use bilingual caseworkers and the Language Line for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients. Portions of the Common Application Form for CAO benefits, including RCA and RMA, have been translated into Vietnamese, Russian, and Spanish. Tag lines have been translated into six languages for inclusion with notices that are electronically generated. An OIM workgroup has been established to continue with the development and implementation of all LEP policy and procedure.

Refugee Social Services are provided through contracts, grants, and subcontracts with agencies throughout the state and are required by contract to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. DPW provides LEP training to all refugee service providers at least once per year. All service providers are monitored yearly for LEP compliance including the identification and assessment of the language needs of newly arriving refugees, how interpretation is provided or secured for these refugees, how notices are provided to refugees, and how the agency's staff is trained on the LEP policy and Title VI requirements.

The Commonwealth assures that it will conduct quarterly meetings with the voluntary agencies (VOLAGS), local community service agencies, and other agencies that serve refugees to plan and coordinate the appropriate placement of refugees in advance of the refugees' arrival as required by 45 CFR §400.5(h) (see Section I (B)).

The Commonwealth will amend this plan as necessary in order to comply with standards, goals and priorities established by the Director.

SECTION II – ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

A. CASH AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Cash and Medical Assistance

DPW's Office of Income Maintenance administers RCA and RMA through its CAOs. DPW administers these programs pursuant to 55 Pa. Code Chapter 293.1 (www.pacode.com) which incorporates regulations found at 45 CFR Chapter 400, Subparts E and G.

Refugee Cash Assistance

Pennsylvania will operate the refugee cash assistance program consistent with the provisions of its TANF program as per 45 CFR Section 400.66.

Eligibility for RCA is limited to those refugees who:

1. Are new arrivals, who have resided in the United States less than the RCA eligibility period determined by the ORR Director in accordance with 45 CFR Section 400.211;
2. Are ineligible for TANF, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Old Age Assistance (OAA), Aid to the Blind (AB), Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (APTD), or Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (AABD) programs;
3. Meet immigration status and identification requirements in 45 CFR, Part 400, Subpart D; or are the dependent children of, and part of the same family unit as, individuals who meet the requirements in Subpart D, subject to the limitations in 45 CFR Section 400.208 with respect to non-refugee children;
4. Are not full-time students in institutions of higher education, as defined by the ORR Director; and
5. Are determined financially eligible.

The procedure used to determine eligibility for RCA is:

1. The CAO determines the refugee eligibility for TANF before determining eligibility for RCA. Eligibility is determined as it would be for any other TANF client. If ineligible for RCA, eligibility for General Assistance is determined.
2. Eligibility for SSI, OAA, AB, APTD or AABD must be determined for refugees who are 65 years of age or older, or who are blind or disabled. If the refugee is eligible for RCA, the CAO must furnish such assistance until eligibility for SSI, OAA, AB, APTD, or AABD is determined.
3. Eligibility for RCA is determined using TANF income and resource requirements and need standards found at 55 Pa. Code Chapters 175.21, 183.11 and 183.101.
4. The CAO will consider only those resources available at the time assistance is needed. Any resources remaining in the applicant's country of origin are excluded in determining income eligibility.
5. A sponsor's income and resources may not be considered when determining a refugee's income eligibility.
6. Any cash grant received by a refugee under the Reception and Placement Programs may not be considered in determining income eligibility.
7. The date of application is used as the date of RCA authorization, if eligible, regardless of the date that eligibility was determined.

8. Each RCA applicant and recipient is informed about eligibility regulations and the rights and responsibilities of applicants and recipients of RCA. These rights and responsibilities are available in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese, and are translated into other languages as needed.
9. Notices that clearly explain the reasons for TANF ineligibility are provided to refugees who apply for cash assistance and are found ineligible for TANF, but are found eligible for RCA. Notices of eligibility for RCA are also provided.

Note: An asylee's date of entry will be the date the individual is granted asylum in the U.S. The eligibility period for RCA will begin on the date asylum is granted.

The State will notify the refugee's local resettlement agency which provided for the refugee's initial resettlement whenever the refugee applies for RCA as per 45 CFR Section 400.68.

Refugee Medical Assistance

The following steps are taken to determine RMA eligibility for refugees:

1. Eligibility must first be determined for Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) prior to determining RMA eligibility.
2. Individuals who do not meet the categorical requirements for any TANF-related Medicaid, SSI-related Medicaid or CHIP, qualify for RMA if:
 - The refugee meets immigration status and identification requirements applicable to RMA; and
 - Meets the income and resource requirements for RMA based on the applicant's income and resources on the date of application.
3. Resource eligibility is determined for RMA using Medically Needy Only (MNO) resource limits based on the number of persons in the budget group. Resources are excluded for all applicants/recipients with a natural or adoptive child under 21 years of age (including unborn children) living in the household.
4. Income eligibility for RMA is determined by applying the TANF-related MNO income disregards and comparing total countable income of the budget group to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIGs).
5. In-kind services and shelter provided to an applicant by a sponsor or VOLAG is excluded in determining eligibility for and receipt of RMA.
6. Cash assistance payments made under the RCA program, the Reception and Placement Programs and Match Grant Programs are excluded and not counted when determining eligibility for RMA.
7. If a refugee, who is receiving RCA, TANF or Medicaid and has been residing in the U.S. less than the time-eligible period for RMA, becomes ineligible for RCA, TANF or Medicaid because of earnings from employment, the refugee is automatically transferred to RMA without an eligibility redetermination.

8. Earnings are disregarded and RMA benefits are continued for refugees who are receiving RMA and receive earnings from employment until the recipient reaches the end of the time-eligibility period.
9. Applicants for RMA who do not meet the financial eligibility standards (185 percent of the FPIGs) are permitted to spend-down to such a standard using deductions incurred for medical expenses.

Note: An asylee's date of entry will be the date the individual is granted asylum in the U.S. The eligibility period for RMA for the asylee will begin on the date they are granted asylum.

Cuban/Haitian Entrants

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania extends to entrants under the Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP) those same benefits and services available to refugees under Title IV of the Immigration and Nationality Act. For the purposes of determining the eligibility of Cuban/Haitian Entrants for cash and medical assistance, the same standards and criteria shall be applied to entrants as are applied to refugees under 45 CFR §400.62. The same social services available to the refugees provided directly or purchased by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and funded with federal funds will also be made available to entrants.

Iraqi/Afghans with Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs)

The same benefits and services available to refugees under Title IV of the Immigration and Nationality Act are available to Iraqis and Afghans granted SIV status under section 101(a)(27) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, beginning on their date of entry or date of change in immigration status to the special immigrant status. Iraqi/Afghan SIVs are eligible for benefits to the same extent and for the same time period as refugees.

B. SERVICES

Employment Services

The Road to Economic Self-Sufficiency through Employment and Training (RESET) Program is Pennsylvania's welfare reform program for helping welfare clients move into the workforce and become self-sufficient. To this end, refugee service providers are engaged to supplement the CAOs efforts in assisting clients to find, retain and advance in employment so that they can become economically independent and self-sufficient.

All employable refugees receiving RCA or TANF are required to participate in an employment program administered by a refugee social services provider and are referred to the appropriate contracted employment services program at the time of application by the CAO. If the refugee has been in the U.S. for less than five years, he/she is referred to a refugee specific employment services program. If the refugee has been in the U.S. for over five years, he/she is referred to a mainstream employment provider. Employment participation requirements are the same for and applied uniformly to refugee and non-refugee TANF recipients. These requirements are found in 55 Pa. Code Chapter 165 (www.pacode.com) (see Appendix B). However, as per Title 45 CFR Section 400.67, TANF work requirements may not apply to RCA recipients. Sanctions are applied to refugees who do not cooperate with refugee employment service providers.

A refugee who is not exempt from employment requirements must cooperate with the employment service provider designated to provide services to the refugee. To be exempt from employment requirements, a refugee must be:

- Under the age of 18 and pursuing a high school diploma or GED;

- Verified as physically/mentally disabled and temporarily or permanently precluded from any form of employment or work-related activity;
- Caring for a child under one year old.

Before referring the refugee to the employment services provider, CAOs are required to complete an Agreement of Mutual Responsibility (AMR) for each refugee and include the number of employment activity hours required to be completed by the client. For clients who have good cause to participate for fewer than the required hours per week, the CAO will include on the AMR, the number of hours required to be completed by the client. A copy of the AMR is given to the Service Provider.

Refugee service providers assisting clients in the development of employment activities must ensure that both the federal and state requirements are met.

A refugee receiving RCA must accept, at any time, from any source, an offer of employment. The State will contact the recipient's sponsor or the local resettlement agency concerning offers of employment as per 45 CFR Section 400.68.

Eligibility Redetermination

Pennsylvania requires periodic redetermination of eligibility for all public assistance programs. Refugees are redetermined for cash and medical assistance on the same schedule as non-refugee clients. These requirements are found in 55 Pa. Code Chapter 133 (www.pacode.com).

Notices

Pennsylvania will follow the procedures outlined in 45 CFR §400.54 and will provide the same notices listed in 55 Pa. Code Chapters 125 and 133 to the refugee as it provides to any other applicant/client (www.pacode.com). The notices will be available in English and in the appropriate language(s) of the respective recipient population.

Compliance Review

In accordance with 45 CFR Section 400.83 (a), Pennsylvania will follow the TANF compliance review procedures found at 55 Pa. Code 165.51. The compliance review takes the place of Mediation/Conciliation.

Right to Appeal

The refugee has the right to request a fair hearing when any benefit is denied, terminated, reduced or suspended. All hearing requests will be referred to DPWs, Bureau of Hearings and Appeals and will be processed according to established regulations, policy and procedures found at 55 Pa. Code Chapter 275, Appeal and Fair Hearing; and as per 45 CFR Sections 400.54 and 400.83 (b).

If the refugee is appealing because he believes the CAO is using an incorrect date of entry, the CAO will resolve the issue by inspecting the refugee's INS documents and notifying INS that there is no need for a fair hearing.

Non-TANF Refugees

Refugees who have not obtained employment through Reception and Placement or Match Grant Programs are automatically referred to refugee employment service providers by those programs after they are terminated from those programs. In addition, outreach is conducted by all employment service providers to encourage refugees who are not receiving cash assistance to register for employment services, if desired.

English Language Training (ELT)

The lack of English proficiency can be a major barrier to securing and maintaining employment and, therefore, can impede a refugee's attainment of self-sufficiency. Participation in ELT is required for all employable refugees, if needed. As part of the Family Self-Sufficiency Plan, ELT is made available to all eligible refugees in each region through contracted or mainstream ELT providers.

The duration of the ELT will depend upon the proficiency level of the individual. Refugees are encouraged to continue their ELT after obtaining employment by attending classes available through employers (Vocational ELT) and at times that do not interfere with their work schedules. ELT is made available concurrently with employment or employment related activities outside normal business hours and to accommodate those individuals working different shifts.

Priority of Service Provision

Except in certain extreme circumstances, the state provides RSS in the following order of priority:

1. All newly-arriving refugees during their first year in the U.S. who apply for services;
2. Refugees who are receiving cash assistance;
3. Unemployed refugees who are not receiving cash assistance; and,
4. Employed refugees in need of services to retain employment or to attain economic independence.

The Commonwealth provides services through Targeted Assistance funding in the following order of priority:

1. Cash assistance recipients;
2. Unemployed refugees who are not receiving cash assistance; and,
3. Employed refugees in need of services to retain or upgrade employment.

Time Eligibility

With the exception of translation/interpretation, referral and citizenship services, the refugee population's time-eligibility period for services is 60 months from their date of arrival.

Bilingual/Bicultural Requirements

To the maximum extent possible, all refugee service providers provide services in a manner that is culturally and linguistically appropriate and includes the use of bilingual/bicultural women on agency staff.

To further ensure that services are provided in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enters into contracts with Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs), which provide services to specific ethnic groups. In addition, many refugee service providers have collaborations with MAAs throughout the Commonwealth.

Family Self-Sufficiency Plan

All refugee employment service providers must complete a Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (FSSP) for each refugee participating in employment services. This plan must include a series of well-planned activities that enhance vocational, educational and personal strengths while addressing linguistic and cultural barriers to self-sufficiency. Achieving independence for refugee families through long-term employment in a non-subsidized job is the goal of the FSSP.

The FSSP includes an employment assessment and an Employability Plan (EP) for each employable refugee. The EP includes all support services that need to be provided, by whom, and how these services will lead to employment and self-sufficiency. The EP must include specific time frames for the provision and completion of all necessary support services. The EP is the essential planning document around which all services, including case management, vocational training, and ELT, as well as employment services, are provided. The EP is completed in coordination with other service providers and, if the individual is receiving cash assistance, the CAO; and a copy is given to those agencies when completed. The EP is updated every time an individual's goals change and a copy of the revised EP is given to the CAO if the individual is receiving cash assistance.

If an individual is receiving cash assistance, the copy of the EP forms a basis for continued eligibility for refugee cash and medical assistance. As part of the cash and medical assistance recipient's re-determination review, the refugee employment service provider is required to submit an updated EP with a case management plan in order to ensure integration of the overall planning process for the refugee. The updated EP and case management plan is then made part of the refugee's public assistance case file and incorporated into the AMR.

C. UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINOR CHILDREN

Unaccompanied Refugee Minors' Program (URMP)—(In accordance with 45 CFR Sections 400.110-120)

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's URMP is administered by DPW/OIM through a contract with Lutheran Children and Family Service (LCFS) of Southeastern Pennsylvania. Services provided for these children include custodial foster care placement, case management services, supervised semi-independent living, medical and cash assistance.

The URMP in Pennsylvania is part of a national effort to resettle unaccompanied refugee minors in the U.S. Minors are selected through a complex process administered by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and the U.S. Department of State. Often, children are identified for resettlement because of humanitarian concern. A joint committee of VOLAGS assigns minors to their respective state affiliates. Currently, several states have a single VOLAG designated to resettle minors. In Pennsylvania, LCFS is designated as that agency. Funding for the URMP is provided through the Federal ORR.

Once it has been determined that the minor will be resettled by LCFS, the agency processes the required paperwork and notifies the RRP of its intention to place the minor in care. LCFS then petitions the Montgomery County Court system for custody of the child and works on foster care home placement. Some unaccompanied refugee minors may be placed in semi-independent living situations or in residential centers. LCFS works cooperatively with other resettlement agencies and with the Office of Children and Youth Services to ensure that refugee minors receive appropriate care.

Legal responsibility for the unaccompanied refugee minor is vested in LCFS, with close monitoring by the RRP. Social services are provided until the minor reaches the age of 21 years or until self-emancipation or family reunification occurs. In accordance with 45 CFR Section 400.116(a), the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides unaccompanied minors with the same range of child welfare benefits and services available in foster care cases to other children in the Commonwealth.

The one exception is the John H. Chafee Educational Training Vouchers Program (ETV), which provides financial assistance for post secondary education until age 21. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania assures that parity of benefits with the ETV Program will be met.

Reporting and record keeping for this program is in accordance with 45 CFR §400.120 and §400.28. Within 30 days of resettlement, LCFS prepares a written service plan which identifies the daily care and treatment to be provided. LCFS then submits the ORR 3 Placement Report to the RRP who, after verifying the report's accuracy, forwards it to ORR's URM staff. ORR 4 Progress Reports for unaccompanied minors are submitted 12 months after initial placement to ORR's URM Program Director. A procedural manual to include RRP supervision and management roles and a programmatic monitoring process is currently in development.

D. REFUGEE SCHOOL IMPACT GRANT (RSIG)

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (DOE), through a Notification of Subgrant (NOS) with DPW, provides federal funding to school districts that experience the greatest impact of refugee students in their schools and communities. Currently, there are five school districts in the state that provide services to refugee students, including Penn Hills in Pittsburgh, Erie, Lancaster, Allentown and Upper Darby in Delaware County. In addition, due to a lack of interest by Philadelphia School District in the RSIG, refugee service providers in Philadelphia are collaborating to provide needed services to refugee youth in Philadelphia.

The goal of this program is to support refugee students so they can graduate from high school. The objectives of the Refugee Education Program are to:

- Enhance refugee children's educational achievement and offset the financial impact of these students on local schools;
- Build the capacity of districts to respond to the needs of refugee students, families and community by improving their ability to meet goals and the mission more effectively;
- Foster the development of partnerships among schools, voluntary resettlement agencies and community support/social services;
- Expand cooperation and coordination efforts among state, local and federal programs designed to meet the needs of the refugee population; and
- Facilitate students' and families' integration into the community and increase their access to services and resources.

The program is divided into four components with corresponding activities:

1. **Overcoming Barriers:** Raise awareness in the community, support teachers with professional development, provide opportunities for cultural exchange opportunities and help administrators understand their role and ways they can promote tolerance and diversity.
2. **Coordinating Services:** Develop relationships with competent, reliable providers; communicate effectively between families and schools; and assess students accurately and in a timely manner.
3. **Participating in the Community:** Forge partnerships with community-based organizations, provide enrichment opportunities for all students and strengthen the community as a whole.
4. **High School Graduation:** Provide career exploration, job shadowing, tutoring, summer

programs and community service.

DOE provides technical assistance and supports districts' capacity to:

- Connect school districts to the appropriate refugee resettlement agency in their areas
- Identify refugee students at enrollment
- Record the achievement of refugee students to contribute in increasing the overall achievement of the district
- Provide a free and appropriate education for refugee students in the least restrictive environment
- Facilitate school districts' requirements to provide translators and interpreters in their native languages for refugee parents
- Link refugee students to appropriate programs within the district to help them achieve academic and social success
- Work with community-based organizations to support refugee youth
- Involve refugee parents in the education of their children
- Help schools value and use the diversity that exists within the refugee community to prepare all students for global service and leadership

E. MEDICAL SCREENINGS

In accordance with 45 CFR §400.107, Pennsylvania utilizes Medicaid funds for refugee families and RMA funds to provide medical benefits for single adult refugees. The health screening procedure is also funded through these benefits. Health screenings and follow-up care procedures are issued medical codes so that the appropriate Federal program is billed. Through the CAO, a Medical Assistance Access Card is issued to the refugee and a health screening is scheduled by staff at the VOLAG.

The RRP defers to the VOLAGS who receive information pertaining to medical needs as these organizations are the first point of contact for arriving refugees. Medical examinations performed overseas are forwarded to resettlement agencies for reference; as well as, the Department of Health's Office of Communicable Diseases if the case pertains to tuberculosis. The Bureau of Epidemiology, Division of Infectious Diseases Epidemiology (IDE), Refugee Health Program, should be notified for other infectious diseases. If refugees are arriving with specific health concerns, VOLAGS are made aware of these conditions by their national affiliate and health screenings are scheduled within 30 days of arrival to provide for continuity of care. VOLAG caseworkers often accompany refugees to health screenings and follow-up appointments to provide interpretation and transportation if the refugees feel more comfortable with that arrangement.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH), through a Notification of Subgrant with DPW, provides that refugees receive initial health assessments in a timely, culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. To accomplish this task, the PADOH's Refugee Health Program, under the Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology, has established a standard health screening protocol (Attachment One) and a Participating Provider Agreement (PPA) (Attachment Two), introduced to all health providers who provide health screening to all newly arriving refugees. Each health provider

who signed a PPA will submit a completed health screening report to the State Refugee Health Program for reimbursement.

DOH is also responsible to:

- Monitor all information disseminated through the Epi-X and Electronic Disease Notification (EDN) systems. These notices serve the purpose of alerting the DOH and the RRP to arriving refugee groups with specific health issues that may require special attention. If action is required by the CDC, DOH and the RRP work closely with the resettling VOLAGS to ensure that proper and timely care is given to the affected refugees.
- Plan and monitor PPA implementation to facilitate health screenings for all newly arriving refugees and immigrants.
- Identify emerging health issues among newly arrived and longer-term resident refugees based upon the health assessment date; and recommend appropriate responses to the problem.
- Train and provide consultation on all health related issues pertaining to refugees.
- Develop and implement a Electronic Reporting system for refugee health screening.
- Include Mental Health Screening as part of the general refugee health screening program.
- Collect and disseminate health screening data.
- Collaborate with VOLAGs in the development and implementation of refugee health goals.
- Provide technical assistance and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updates on medical examination guides on emergency preparedness needs of refugees and immigrants.
- Conduct site reviews of the health screening process and management and resolve any health related issues affecting refugees in Pennsylvania.
- Develop and implement a mental health screening protocol and provide case management services through the Preventive Health Grant.

Staff from the Refugee Health Program, participate in monthly and quarterly conference calls held by the Association of Refugee Health Coordinators and ORR to keep apprised of refugee health issues. Staff also participate in the quarterly regional collaborative meetings to disseminate new information and to discuss any new health issues which arise. New and follow-up data provided in those calls are disseminated to refugee service providers. This enables agencies to better prepare themselves for any health problems associated with their newly arrived or soon-to-be arriving refugees.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONAL PLANNING FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

INTRODUCTION

The Pennsylvania Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) hereby amends its State Plan to include an Emergency Operational Plan in the event of a Pandemic Influenza. This amendment once received and approved by the Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), will hereafter be found as an addendum to the existing State Plan.

The RRP is in the very beginning stage of a collaborative effort with the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) through two key offices under the DOH's umbrella. Through discussions with relevant staff in the Bureau of Community Health Systems (BCHS) and the Office of Public Health Preparedness (OPHP), the RRP unit has identified the need to establish a working relationship with these offices to provide the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) with direction in emergency operational planning for refugees in the event of a pandemic influenza.

Activities include "first-steps" planning, stakeholder notification, regional meetings, workgroup formation and reporting, and information dissemination to result in the creation of a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

PROGRAM ACCESS AND INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNMENTAL PLANNING

Through established contact with DOH, the RRP will collaborate with and contribute to any relevant summits, forums, stakeholder meetings, planning, and implementation for emergency preparedness. In particular, the OPHP has invited staff from the RRP to attend and participate in their Special Populations Initiative which will directly address the needs of all disadvantaged persons throughout Pennsylvania, including refugees, who may be physically restricted and/or have Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

ASSURANCE OF REPRESENTED REFUGEE POPULATIONS IN EMERGENCY PLANNING

Using the Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System Network (WRAPSNET) to identify arriving groups, the RRP will prepare refugee demographic profiles for the DOH. Staff in the RRP has already indicated to DOH that certain refugee populations, such as the Somali Bantu or the Burmese, may require special assistance due to potential physical health issues. Demographic, cultural, and religious affiliation data of refugee groups that have resettled to Pennsylvania in the last 60 months will also be made available to the DOH. The RRP will provide this all-encompassing approach to assist in narrowing the margin of error when considering the target population.

AVENUES FOR REFUGEE INVOLVEMENT IN PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

With DOH approval, through DOH District Offices and County Municipal Health Departments (CMHD), refugee clients will be involved in the Special Populations Initiative by being provided information relative to their ethnic backgrounds, personal experiences, and specific requirements. This involvement will include the dissemination of H1N1 Influenza educational materials in various languages, as well as serve as a contact point to mobilize the refugee's community for vaccination or another emergency operation. Special attention will be placed on cultural and linguistic sensitivity for all refugee populations.

IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

National Voluntary Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGS) in Pennsylvania, in collaboration with the DOH District Offices and the CMHDs, address the need for infection control by seeking preventive health screenings for refugee clients within the first 30 days of resettlement. In addition, the DOH's District Health Offices, which oversee State Health Centers, have plans, which address containment procedures and infection control for all residents of Pennsylvania. State Health Centers are located

in 60 counties with six District Offices in Jackson Center, Williamsport, Wilkes-Barre, Reading, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh. In addition, practices such as personal hygiene habits, to help avoid the spread of infectious diseases, are regularly discussed with refugee clients through VOLAGS and contracted service providers.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The RRP will disseminate emergency planning to its refugee communities in the following manner:

- Supplying handouts (translated into principal refugee languages) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the DOH concerning a pandemic influenza to include disease prevention and other health care information. Informational pamphlets that list local health care facilities such as Federally Qualified Health Centers, as well as the DOH State Health Centers across the state. **(these will be provided if made available by the program)** The City of Philadelphia provides medical interpretation, on site, should refugees with LEP living in that area require that service.
- Sharing information regarding impending pandemic influenza strains that may affect individuals and service providers. Regular regional meetings with providers will be venues for relaying new pandemic influenza information from all significant government and media sources. Pending availability of DOH resources, training will be provided to health care provider staff to ensure the effective implementation of the RRP's devised COOP.
- Providing the DOH website as an informational resource for refugees with internet access.
- Disseminating up-to-the-moment printable internet materials for those who may receive information through outreach services in the form of leaflets, flyers and brochures.
- Placing informational advertisements in ethnic newspapers and other publications distributed in areas with a large refugee population. Utilizing large-scale media sources to broadcast and publish information will be coordinated in conjunction with DOH strategies pertaining to communication with special needs populations.

THE CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)

The delegating authority for the Emergency Operational Plan in Pennsylvania rests on the State Refugee Coordinator in DPW, Office of Income Maintenance (OIM).

Following the receipt of a DOH warning that an emergency has occurred, the delegate will inform the RRP to advise refugee clients to immediately practice safety measures and to seek medical attention if needed. Provider agency staff will be on-call to assist with questions and concerns as they pertain to specific refugee issues and refugee-focused mental health referrals.

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