

The United States Program for Initial Resettlement

Initial Resettlement Services in the U.S.

When you arrive in the United States, you will receive support to help you get settled, find housing, and start working toward a stable, independent life. This support is provided through the Program of Initial Resettlement (PIR). The PIR is funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



What Is the Program of Initial Resettlement?

PIR provides support during your first 30 to 90 days in the United States. The goal of the program is to help you become self-sufficient as quickly as possible through assistance finding stable housing, connecting to important services, and finding employment.

You will be connected to a local resettlement provider — a nonprofit organization funded by the U.S. government to help newcomers. Your provider will assign you a case manager who will be your main point of contact.

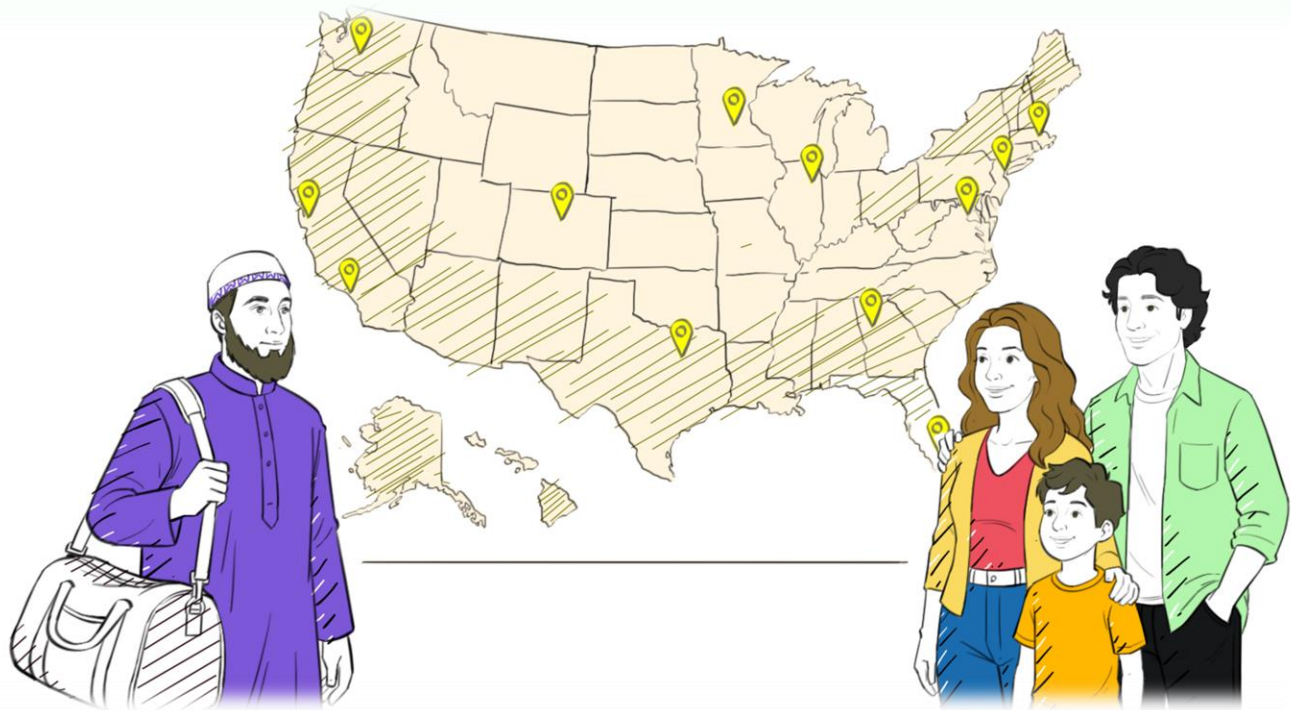
All resettlement services are free of charge. If anyone asks you for money, favors, or threatens you in any way, please report this to your local resettlement provider.



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Before you arrive, the U.S. government decides where you will be placed. If you have family or friends already in the United States — called "U.S. Ties" — every effort will be made to place you near them. How this works depends on your situation:

- **If your U.S. Tie lives near a local resettlement provider**, they may be asked to help support your arrival. For example, they may be asked to pick you up from the airport or help find housing.
- **If your U.S. Tie lives in an area without a local resettlement provider nearby**, you may be assigned a virtual case manager to help you navigate benefits, complete important documents, and connect you to employment programs and other services.
- **If you do not have U.S. Ties**, or your U.S. Tie cannot provide support, you will be placed in a community where a local resettlement provider can assist you in person.



Your Case Manager

Your case manager will meet you at the airport or make sure someone is there to welcome you. They will help you:

- Find and move into permanent housing
- Apply for important documents
- Access benefits you may be eligible for
- Connect to employment programs for adults
- Enroll your children in school
- Find English language classes



Case managers are individuals who are legally authorized to work in the United States and may be of any race, religion, ethnicity, or country of origin



Your First Home

When you arrive, you will be taken to safe housing arranged for you and your family. Your home will have basic furniture, household supplies, and an initial supply of food. Interpretation will be provided for required services — you do not need to speak English to receive help.



About your lease: When your case manager helps you find permanent housing, you will likely be asked to sign a one-year lease agreement. This is standard practice in the United States. It protects your rights as a renter and provides stability as you find work and build your life here



Financial Assistance and Benefits

Your local resettlement provider receives limited funding to help cover your basic expenses during your first few months in the United States. This typically includes help securing and furnishing housing and covering initial food costs.

Your case manager may also connect you to other time-limited cash and medical assistance programs that you may be eligible for. This financial assistance helps you get established while you look for work, not to replace income from employment.

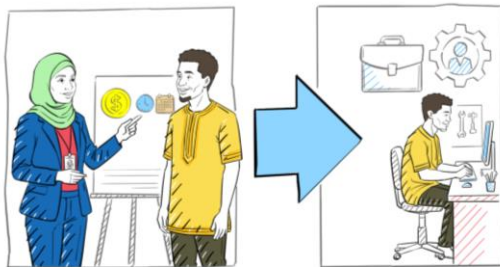


Employment

Employment is the fastest way to self-sufficiency and is necessary for success. Be prepared to actively look for work as soon as you arrive and to accept available jobs, including entry-level positions, while you build your work history in the United States.

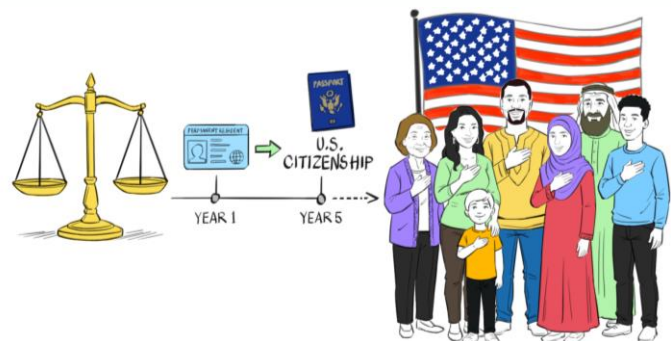
Your case manager will help you apply for a Social Security card and enroll in employment services to support your job search.

As soon as refugees arrive in the United States, they are legally authorized to work. However, a common misconception among employers is that refugees cannot begin working until after they receive their Employment Authorization Document (EAD) and Social Security Number (SSN) cards. This can pose challenges for refugees who are seeking employment and who are also experiencing delays in documentation.



Your Rights and Your Future in the U.S.

From the time you arrive, you are protected by the same laws that protect all U.S. residents. Your case manager will help you understand your rights and responsibilities. After one year in the United States, you and your family must apply to become legal Permanent Residents. Five years after arrival, you can apply to become United States citizen.



About Settle In

Settle In is your trusted source for reliable, responsive, and relevant, newcomer-friendly information about the United States. Available in multiple languages, Settle In's digital platforms offer essential resources, guidance, and multi-lingual support to help newcomers navigate life in the U.S.

About Switchboard

Switchboard is a one-stop resource hub for strengthening refugee services across the United States and offers tools, learning opportunities, and technical assistance on resettlement-related topics.

Funded by ORR, Switchboard is implemented by the IRC.

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