

Connecticut

REFUGEE POPULATION OF CONNECTICUT

The United States has been a leader in welcoming [refugees](#) who seek safety from persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Following World War II, the U.S. began welcoming refugees and over time the system has evolved to have a strong infrastructure centered on [public-private partnerships](#). Communities across the U.S. have recognized the important economic and social benefits of resettling refugees. Connecticut residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to communities in Connecticut. In 2016, organizations and communities across [Connecticut](#) welcomed close to [1% of refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) In 2016, Connecticut resettled 819 refugees and 454 unaccompanied children who were released to the care and custody of sponsors.

Where are most refugees in Connecticut from?

Syria
D.R. of Congo
Somalia
Iraq
Sudan

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN CONNECTICUT

In addition to [programming](#) to support refugees when they first arrive to the U.S., the federal government provides monetary aid through grants to the state, Voluntary Agencies, and other refugee aid organizations for community and short-term refugee support. The [Connecticut Department of Social Services](#) serves as the refugee resettlement office for the state. Primary program services include cash and medical assistance, access to English language classes, and vocational and employment assistance. Discretionary grants are also awarded to private agencies for various other self-sufficiency programs.

Federal FY16 ORR Funding to Connecticut for Refugee Programs								
Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Refugee Social Services	School Impact	State Targeted Assistance	Targeted Assistance - Discretionary	Services to Older Refugees	Refugee Health Promotion	Services for Survivors of Torture
\$2,466,297	\$1,115,499	\$405,164	\$175,736	\$237,118	\$175,000	\$75,000	\$100,000	\$182,780

Another service available to refugees in Connecticut is the employment [Matching Grant Services](#), administered by Voluntary Agencies in the state. An alternative to public cash assistance, private agencies match federal contributions and provide intensive case management services to help refugees get employed and become self-sufficient within 120 days of arrival.

"They are highly motivated survivors, tough, resourceful people who really want to contribute and stand on their own two feet."

- [Chris George](#) speaks concerning refugees in New Haven.

REFUGEES MAKE CONNECTICUT STRONG

[Hussein and his wife](#) arrived to the United States in 2012. In Iraq he worked as an interpreter and in security. His dream job is to teach English and literature and he is currently looking into graduate programs for TESOL (teaching English to students of other languages). His wife Zulaika attends English class at New Haven Adult Education. "Now I am working and improving my life," Hussein says. "I live in New Haven but I work in Milford. If I did not have a car I would not have been able to take such a job far away. The car did not just help me; I also help other refugees with their doctor appointments, groceries and shopping." Within a week of being hired, Hussein was given more responsibility and a 25% wage increase. He was recently offered a promotion. His supervisors say he's one of the best employees they have.

LOCAL AFFILIATES AND OFFICES OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN CONNECTICUT

- **EMM, Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS)**, New Haven
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities**, Hartford
- **USCRI, International Institute of Connecticut**, Bridgeport

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees to aid in the resettlement of fellow refugees by providing a variety of direct services, increasing civic participation, and preserve the community's cultural identity and history.