

Vermont

REFUGEES IN VERMONT

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. Vermont residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Vermont communities. In 2016, organizations and communities across Vermont welcomed less than [1% of refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) In 2016, Vermont welcomed 386 refugees and 1 unaccompanied child who was released to the care and custody of a sponsor.

Where are most refugees in Vermont from?

Bhutan
Somalia
Dem. Rep. of the Congo

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN VERMONT

In addition to [programming](#) to support refugees when they first arrive to the United States, 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. A local office of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), the [Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program](#), serves as the refugee resettlement office for the state. Primary program services include cash and medical assistance, access to English language classes, vocational and employment assistance. [Discretionary grants](#) are also awarded to private agencies for various other self-sufficiency programs.

FEDERAL FY16 ORR FUNDING TO VERMONT FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS										
Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Wilson/ Fish Obligation	Refugee Social Services	Services to Older Refugees	Refugee School Impact	Survivors of Torture	Ethnic Community Self Help Program	Refugee Health Promotion	State Targeted Assistance	Targeted Assistance Discretionary
\$1,902,896	\$185,259	\$584,185	\$230,460	\$75,000	\$175,736	\$172,900	\$125,000	\$75,000	\$129,356	\$150,000

Another service available to refugees in Vermont 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.

"The hallmark of the Vermont [Refugee Resettlement] program, which arranges rental apartments and housing for its clients in downtown Burlington and accessible surrounding towns, is a 450-strong force of volunteers who facilitate outreach with local employers and community organizations."
- Colchester, VT, [Women's eNews](#)

REFUGEES MAKE VERMONT STRONG

"After surviving refugee camps in Africa, [Janine Ndagijimana](#) settled in Vermont and began to dream of farming. When she considered what to plant, she thought back to her time in Tanzania and settled on the African eggplant, also called bitter ball or garden egg. It wasn't found in Vermont, and she remembered how it garnered a good price at the refugee market. These days, Ndagijimana's farming of the oblong white fruit and other varieties has turned her into a refugee success story in Vermont ... She's part of a growing number of farmers from other parts of the world who have used social media, the internet and niche markets often in big cities to successfully sell crops native to their home countries...The 38-year-old Ndagijimana's success goes well beyond Vermont. Since she planted her first crop in 2013, she has sold her 5,000-pound harvest through the mail to Africans in Arizona, Texas, Utah, Michigan and Idaho." [The Sumter ITEM](#)

LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN VERMONT

- USCRI, Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, Colchester
- USCRI, Vermont-Rutland, Rutland

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.