

# REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Illinois

## REFUGEES IN ILLINOIS

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. Illinois residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to IA communities. In 2016, organizations and communities across [Illinois](#) welcomed over [4% of refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) In 2016, Illinois welcomed 3,125 number refugees and 519 unaccompanied children who were released to the care and custody of sponsors.

Where are most  
refugees in Illinois  
from?

Bhutan  
Burma  
Dem. Rep. Congo  
Iraq

## SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN ILLINOIS

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. The [Illinois Department of Human Services](#) 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 ILLINOIS FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS								
Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Refugee Social Services	State Targeted Assistance	School Impact	Survivors of Torture	Elderly Services	Refugee Health Promotion	Ethnic Community Self-Help
\$11,683,223	\$7,138,060	\$2,161,868	\$1,023,033	\$527,622	\$375,440	\$97,200	\$175,000	\$185,000

Another service available to refugees in Illinois 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.

## REFUGEES MAKE ILLINOIS STRONG

[David Fahnbulleh](#) and his family fled war in Liberia at age 7. Four years later, David and his family left a refugee camp and settled first in Willmette, IL and later Evanston, IL. Currently, David is a 22 year old graduate from Purdue University with a degree in construction management. Right after graduation he began working. David and his family were welcomed by RefugeeOne in 2007, a Chicago-based refugee resettlement agency. RefugeeOne helped them secure housing in Willmette and provided David's entire family with English classes and help to pass their US citizenship tests. RefugeeOne works with families throughout Illinois providing support through volunteer communities that help build connections between refugee families and other residents.

## LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN ILLINOIS

- **WR, World Relief**, Aurora
- **CWS, Refugee One**, Chicago
- **ECDC, Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago**, Chicago
- **USCRI, Heartland Alliance For Human Needs And Human Rights**, Chicago
- **WR, World Relief**, Moline
- **WR, World Relief DuPage**, Carol Stream
- **USCCB**, Remote Placement Illinois

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.