

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Massachusetts

REFUGEES IN MASSACHUSETTS

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. Massachusetts residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Massachusetts communities. In 2016, organizations and communities across [Massachusetts](#) welcomed [2% of refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) In 2016, Massachusetts welcomed 1,734 refugees, 194 unaccompanied refugee minors, and 1,541 unaccompanied children who were released to the care and custody of sponsors.

Where are most refugees in Massachusetts from?

Iraq
Bhutan
Dem. Rep. of Congo
Somalia
Syria

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN MASSACHUSETTS

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 Massachusetts Office for Refugees & Immigrants](#) 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 MASSACHUSETTS FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS

Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Wilson Fish RCA	Refugee Social Services	State Targeted Assistance	Targeted Assistance Discretionary	School Impact	Services to Older Refugees	Survivor of Torture	Micro enterprise Development
\$18,009,245	\$10,169,380	\$3,814,588	\$1,447,813	\$818,391	\$186,225	\$471,749	\$97,200	\$755,820	\$250,000

Another service available to refugees in Massachusetts 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 majority of our agriculture workforce is made up of immigrants, and their hard work has helped America's farmers and ranchers lead the world."
-Jon Niedzielski,
Massachusetts State Executive Director, USDA

REFUGEES MAKE MASSACHUSETTS STRONG

[When a rock](#) with a death threat wrapped around it was thrown into her house in Baghdad, Saba Al Khadady, 36, and her family knew it was time to leave Iraq. The threat prompted Al Khadady and her family to pack their bags and head to Syria. Part of the Mandaean religious minority, she believes her religion might have been the cause behind the violence against her family. The family moved to the United States in May 2008 and was relocated to Worcester, MA, by Lutheran Social Services. Since arriving, Al Khadady has found two stable jobs — one as a professor at Worcester State University and the other as a Case Management Coordinator at Lutheran Social Services. She said that although she misses Iraq, Worcester now feels like home and she's grateful for the welcome she and her family have received.

LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN MASSACHUSETTS

- ECDC, Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center, Jamaica Plain
- ECDC, Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center, Worcester
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts, Springfield
- USCCB, Catholic Charities-Refugee & Immigration Services, Archdiocese of Boston,
- USCCB, Catholic Charities-Refugee & Immigration Services, South Boston
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Northampton
- LIRS, Ascentria Community Services, Westfield
- LIRS, Ascentria Community Services, Worcester (URM)
- LIRS, Ascentria Community Services, West Springfield (URM)
- LIRS, Ascentria Community Services, Waltham (URM)
- USCRI, International Institute of New England, Boston
- USCRI, International Institute of New England, Lowell

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