

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Nebraska

REFUGEES IN NEBRASKA

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. Nebraska residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Nebraska communities. In 2016, organizations and communities across [Nebraska](#) welcomed nearly [2% of refugees arriving in the U.S.](#) In 2016, Nebraska welcomed 1,441 refugees and 486 unaccompanied children who were released to the care and custody of sponsors.

Where are most refugees in Nebraska from?

Burma
Bhutan
Iraq
Somalia
Syria

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN NEBRASKA

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 [Nebraska Refugee Resettlement Program](#) is administered by the [Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services](#). 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 NEBRASKA FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS							
Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Refugee Social Services	State Targeted Assistance	School Impact	Targeted Assistance Discretionary	Services to Older Refugees	Refugee Health Promotion
\$6,871,884	\$4,852,370	\$966,818	\$495,160	\$211,499	\$150,000	\$97,200	\$100,000

Another service available to refugees in Nebraska 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.

"You're in it to help change a life. What we're asking for is that long welcome."

- [Lacey Studnicka, director of advancement at Lutheran Family Services \(LFS\), to would-be volunteers in Omaha, Nebraska](#)

REFUGEES MAKE NEBRASKA STRONG

With a history of serving refugee, immigrant, and migrant children, [The Omaha Public Schools](#) have also created a place for parents. The Yates Community Center offers classes in English, citizenship and computers, as well as a "sewing lab" where refugees can make their own items. There are additional informal networks and services that help refugees, such as a group that holds fundraising dinners cooked by refugee women to give Omahans a chance to hear their stories. The Benson Area Refugee Task Force offers citizenship classes, clothing giveaways and other services. Furthermore groups like the Karen, pronounced 'Kuh-REN', have divided Omaha into districts in which restaurants and other businesses are started to employ other refugees. One of these businesses is the restaurant Salween Thai. (Story courtesy of *Omaha World-Herald*)

LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN NEBRASKA

- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Lincoln
- USCCB, Remote Placement Nebraska
- CWS, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Inc., Omaha/Lincoln
- ECDC, Southern Sudan Community Association, Omaha
- LIRS, Lutheran Family Services, Omaha

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.