

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Texas

REFUGEES IN TEXAS

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. Texas residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Texas communities. In 2016, organizations and communities across Texas welcomed [9% of refugees arriving in the U.S. In 2016, Texas welcomed 7,802 refugees](#), 150 unaccompanied refugee minors, and 6,550 unaccompanied children who were released to the care and custody of sponsors.

Where are most refugees in Texas from?

Dem. Rep. of the Congo
Burma
Iraq
Syria

SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN TEXAS

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. In 2017, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) selected four “Regional Replacement Designees” to administer the refugee resettlement program in Texas: International Rescue Committee (IRC) ([Abilene](#) and [Dallas](#)), [Catholic Charities Fort Worth](#) (Dallas/Fort Worth), [Refugee Services of Texas](#) (Austin, Corpus Christi and San Antonio region), [YMCA of Greater Houston](#) (Houston). 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 TEXAS FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS

Total	Cash & Medical Assistance	Refugee Social Services	State Targeted Assistance	School Impact	Targeted Assistance Discretionary	Services to Older Refugees	Survivors of Torture	Refugee Health Promotion	Refugee Family Child Care Microenterprise	Cuban/Haitian Program	Ethnic Community Self-Help Program
\$97,625,138	\$78,178,878	\$10,112,010	\$5,134,308	\$1,171,426	\$300,000	\$121,500	\$340,860	\$195,000	\$372,500	\$1,348,656	\$350,000

Another service available to refugees in Texas 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.

"That's really the goal of our long term partnership: to provide more jobs and more opportunities for hardworking women."

- [Amy George](#) of Open Arms, Inc commenting on hiring refugee women in Austin, Texas.

REFUGEES MAKE TEXAS STRONG

Odile is a 56-year-old mother of six from the Congo. Leslie is a 47-year-old mother of four from Texas. Odile is a refugee. Leslie is an entrepreneur. These two women from extremely different backgrounds now work together. At [Open Arms](#) they up-cycle T-shirts headed to the landfill into trendy, hipster, life-giving skirts and scarves. Odile is from a small village in the Congo. She fled with her six children in 1999 when the rebels attacked. They hid and traveled barefoot in parts of the jungle for almost a year before they reached a safer place. After a third application attempt, Odile was accepted to resettled in the United States. Unfortunately she was only able to bring her three daughters, as her sons were not eligible. Initially, things were very difficult for Odile. She was illiterate, couldn't speak English, and didn't have a job. Eventually she found out about Open Arms and began working there. She uses her artistic sewing abilities and crafts designs on fabric to be sold in stores. Not only is she working, but she's also able to take English classes at Open Arms before her shift starts. She has friends now and her family is doing well. Odile is so happy for the opportunity.

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Texas

LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN TEXAS

- **EMM, Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston**, Houston
- **EMM, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.**, Austin
- **CWS, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.**, Amarillo
- **CWS, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.**, Dallas (Main Office)
- **LIRS, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.**, Fort Worth
- **IRC, International Rescue Committee**, Abilene
- **IRC, International Rescue Committee**, Dallas
- **LIRS, Refugee Services of Texas**, Houston
- **USCCB, Catholic Social Services**, Corpus Christi
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities**, Fort Worth (URM)
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities of Galveston/Houston**, Houston (URM)
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities**, San Antonio
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities of the Texas Panhandle**, Amarillo
- **USCCB, Refugee and Empowerment Services**, Dallas
- **USCCB, Migrant and Refugee Services**, El Paso
- **USCCB**, Remote Placement Texas
- **USCRI, YMCA International Services**, Houston
- **USCRI, Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services**, San Antonio
- **World Relief Fort Worth**, Fort Worth
- **ECDC, Alliance for Multicultural Community Services**, Houston

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.