

Benefits and programs to assist refugees who are NOT assigned to refugee resettlement agencies (USCRI, ECDC, Grace Initiative Global)

Includes: Ukrainian humanitarian parolees, Cuban/Haitian parolees, and refugees who have private sponsors through Welcome Corps

## **Introduction:**

This information is for sponsors/financial supporters and the refugees, humanitarian parolees or other parolees in Vermont that they support through Uniting for Ukraine, Welcome Corps or the Cuban/Haitian parole support program. Sponsors/financial sponsors who are supporting these newcomers have agreed through the sponsor process to provide some financial and other supports for these newly arriving guests. While refugee resettlement agencies can and will assist with services after the initial 90 days of resettlement, a sponsor agrees to take a lead role in assisting with securing initial housing and basic needs, applying for federal or state benefits, ensuring healthcare and medical needs are met and accessing education. The information below should guide you through your first steps.

## **Quick resources:**

[Home - Welcome Corps](#)

[Uniting for Ukraine | USCIS](#)

[Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans | USCIS](#)

## **Apply for a Social Security Number by submitting an I-765 Form**

A humanitarian parolee or refugee arriving through Welcome Corps can apply for federal and state benefits PRIOR to RECEIVING a Social Security Number (SSN). However, to be approved for most of those benefits, the individual may need to show proof that they have APPLIED for an SSN. Therefore, submit an I-765 form first and save confirmation of the submission (electronic or paper receipt, if possible) to show to State of Vermont offices when you are applying for federal and state benefits. The I-765 form also is an application for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), which is a key document utilized by employers for hiring employees with refugee/humanitarian parole/parole status. [Application for Employment Authorization | USCIS](#). Even if the sponsored refugee or humanitarian parolee does not plan to work, it is recommended to apply for an SSN.

## **Health Services and Benefits**

## Apply for Medicaid

General information: Ukrainian, Cuban and Haitian humanitarian parolees, as well as refugees arriving through Welcome Corps, are eligible for health insurance through the State of Vermont. New arrivals are generally eligible for Medicaid. If the applicant is not eligible for Medicaid due to income, they may be eligible for Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA). RMA is available up to the first 12 months post arrival. Eligibility for RMA is screened using the same application that is submitted for Medicaid.

If the humanitarian parolee or refugee does not yet have an SSN, Medicaid will generate a temporary SSN. Be sure to use this temporary SSN when applying for other benefits so that a duplicate temporary SSN is not generated. This can complicate the benefits enrollment process.

- Online application: [Application for Health Coverage](https://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/sites/vhc/files/doc_library/205ALLMED%20Non-LTC.pdf) ([https://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/sites/vhc/files/doc\\_library/205ALLMED%20Non-LTC.pdf](https://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/sites/vhc/files/doc_library/205ALLMED%20Non-LTC.pdf))
- Find an Assister: Assisters are trained to help Vermonters understand and enroll in health coverage. Use the [Assister Directory](#) to find a trained Assister in your area.
- Vermont Agency of Human Services local field service offices are available to provide support in accessing various health services and programs. Refer to the [AHS Local Offices – Field Services directory](#) for contact information of the office in your area.
- For general inquiries or application support, the main call center can be reached at: 1-855-899-9600 Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM -4:30 PM.

Application process: Once the humanitarian parolee or refugee arrives to Vermont, contact the Vermont Refugee Health Coordinator for specific instructions on how to submit the Medicaid application. Allie Perline, Refugee Health Coordinator, [Allison.Perline@vermont.gov](mailto:Allison.Perline@vermont.gov)

## Connection to primary care

Help connect humanitarian parolees and refugees arriving through Welcome Corps with a primary care provider in their local community. Check with health clinics, family practices, and Federally Qualified Health Centers. If you are struggling to locate providers that are accepting new patients, your local health department office may be able to offer recommendations on clinics with available capacity (see contact information below, under “Local Vermont Department of Health Office Directory”).

Interpretation at health care appointments: Health care providers in Vermont that accept Medicaid are required to provide any needed interpretation during appointments. When scheduling an appointment, be sure to notify the clinic of interpretation needs. Clinics often need advanced notice to coordinate this service.

## **Vermont Domestic Health Assessment (Medical Screening)**

All refugees are required to have a domestic health assessment (DHA), otherwise known as the domestic medical screening. However, other Office of Refugee Resettlement-eligible populations (including Ukrainian, Cuban and Haitian humanitarian parolees and refugees arriving through Welcome Corps) are also eligible to access the medical screening within 90 days of eligibility. Eligible populations are listed below:

- Asylee
- Special Immigrant Visa Holder
- Certified Victim of Trafficking
- Cuban and Haitian Entrant
- Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee (UHP)
- Afghan Humanitarian Parolee (AHP)

The domestic health assessment is a comprehensive exam of an individual's physical and emotional health to help identify and address any ongoing or emerging health issues. This includes screening for a wide range of infectious and non-communicable conditions. Treatment plans, referrals to specialty care and connection to primary care can be arranged during the appointment.

### **Medical providers with experience conducting the Vermont Domestic Health Assessment:**

- **University of Vermont Medical Center, Burlington, Vermont:**
  - Pediatric New American Program, 1 South Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401: Conducts screenings children
  - Infectious Disease Clinic, 111 Colchester Ave., Burlington, VT 05401: Conducts screenings for adults
- **Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region, Rutland, Vermont:**
  - 215 Stratton Rd., Rutland, VT 05701
  - Conducts screenings for adults and children
- **The Dr. G. Richard Dundas Free Clinic, Bennington, Vermont:**
  - 121 Depot St., Bennington, VT 05201
  - Conducts screenings for adults
- **Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, General Pediatrics, Lebanon, New Hampshire:**
  - 1 Medical Center Dr., Lebanon, NH 03756
  - Conducts screenings for children

Any other licensed health care provider, such as a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, can conduct the DHA. The provider should use the Vermont Medical Screening Form (as listed below) to conduct the health assessment and should reference the CDC screening guidance included in the form.

- [Vermont Refugee Medical Screening Form, updated 11/8/2022](#) (Domestic Health Assessment/DHA). (Note that the DHA is formatted as a dynamic form. These forms are not compatible with many of the internet browser previews and may need to be downloaded in order to view form content. [See Dynamic PDF Forms and Web Browser Incompatibility](#) for more information).
- Completed forms can be submitted by the provider to the Vermont Refugee Health Program via **encrypted email** to [AHS.RefugeeHealthDHA@vermont.gov](mailto:AHS.RefugeeHealthDHA@vermont.gov)

***For general inquiries and to request a referral for a domestic health assessment appointment for a humanitarian parolee or refugee arriving through the Welcome Corps program, please email Allie Perline, Vermont Refugee Health Coordinator at [Allison.Perline@vermont.gov](mailto:Allison.Perline@vermont.gov)***

### **Billing and reimbursement**

Most new arrivals to Vermont will be eligible for Medicaid health insurance coverage. The domestic health assessment appointment, all related initial screenings, and provision of any necessary interpretation or translation services are reimbursable through Vermont Medicaid.

### **Health screening conditions of humanitarian parole status - Vaccine and tuberculosis attestation**

Ukrainian, Cuban and Haitian humanitarian parolees are required to complete minimum medical screening per condition of their humanitarian parole status. Screening requirements may change over time, so be sure to ask newly arriving humanitarian parolees to check their MyUSCIS account for up-to-date information on which screenings they require. Tuberculosis screening within 90 days of arrival is almost always required. Humanitarian parolees will also likely need to submit vaccine attestation via their MyUSCIS account. Tuberculosis screening must include an Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA). Polio screening may be required for some newcomers. \*Note that the health screening requirements can be completed at the time of the Domestic Health Assessment. Be sure to specifically request Tuberculosis IGRA and Polio (if required) as screening tests to be completed during the Domestic Health Assessment. USCIS guidance can be found at the following links:

[USCIS Uniting for Ukraine Vaccine Attestation](#)

[USCI Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans – Vaccine Attestation](#)

If the DHA cannot be completed within 90 days of arrival due to health care provider capacity, Tuberculosis (TB) screening and vaccines mandated per condition of humanitarian parole status should be scheduled separately ahead of the DHA. The humanitarian parolee's assigned primary care provider can likely complete the required TB screening and vaccines. If this is not the case, check with other local health clinics in your area to make an appointment. If you cannot get the help you need, your local health department office can guide you to the

appropriate location for TB screenings in your area or will be able to provide a TB screening for you (see contact information below).

### Local Vermont Department of Health Office Directory:

If you have trouble getting an appointment through local primary care providers, contact your local state health department office for resources related to required TB screenings, local health care providers, and available health promotion programming and benefits (such as WIC, maternal and child health support, and immunizations). Additional resources and contact information can be found at [Vermont Department of Health Local Offices](#) web page.

<b>Barre:</b> 5 Perry Street, Suite 250, Barre, VT 05601 Tel: 888-253-8786 or 802-479-4200	<b>Bennington:</b> 324 Main Street, Suite 2, Bennington, VT 05201 Tel: 800-637-7347 or 802-447-3531
<b>Brattleboro:</b> 232 Main Street. Suite 3 Brattleboro, VT 05301 Tel: 888-253-8805 or 802-257-2880	<b>Burlington:</b> 108 Cherry Street, Suite 102, Burlington, VT 05402 Tel: 888-253-8803 or 802-863-7323
<b>Middlebury:</b> 156 So. Village Green, Suite 102 Middlebury, VT 05753 Tel: 888-253-8804 or 802-388-4644	<b>Morrisville:</b> 63 Professional Drive, Suite #1 Morrisville, VT 05661 Tel: 888-253-8798 or 802-888-7447
<b>Newport:</b> 100 Main Street, Suite 220 Newport, VT 05855 Tel: 800-952-2945 or 802-334-6707	<b>Rutland:</b> 300 Asa Bloomer State Office Bldg. 88 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT 05701 Tel: 888-253-8802 or 802-786-5811
<b>Springfield:</b> 100 Mineral Street, Suite 104 Springfield, VT 05156 Tel: 888-296-8151 or 802-289-0600	<b>St. Albans:</b> 27 Federal Street, Suite 201 St. Albans, VT 05478 Tel: 888-253-8801 or 802-524-7970
<b>St. Johnsbury:</b> 107 Eastern Avenue, Suite 9 St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 Tel: 800-952-2936 or 802-748-5151	<b>White River Junction:</b> 118 Prospect Street, Ste 300 White River Jct., VT 05001 Tel: 888-253-8799 or 802-295-8820

### Apply for Cash Assistance and Food Benefits

Cash Assistance: Ukrainian, Cuban, and Haitian humanitarian parolees (HPs), as well as refugees arriving through Welcome Corps, can apply for the following benefits through the State of Vermont, Department of Children and Families (using the temp SSNs generated when applying for Medicaid).

- ✓ A family with children under 18 can apply for TANF (called "Reach Up" in Vermont). If approved, they will receive monthly cash assistance, based upon family size.

- ✓ HPs and refugees can apply for SNAP, also known as food stamps (or 3SquaresVT in Vermont). If approved, they will receive monthly food assistance, based upon family size.
- ✓ HPs and refugees can apply for WIC, a supplemental nutrition program for pregnant women, infants, and small children, if they meet the eligibility criteria. You may apply for WIC through one of the Department of Health Offices listed in the table above.
- ✓ The following links will lead you to applications for these services:  
[Reach Up | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](#)  
[Read Before You Apply | Department for Children and Families \(vermont.gov\)](#)
- ✓ If the HP or refugee does not have children with them, they may be eligible to apply for **refugee cash assistance**. In that case they can receive cash assistance for up to 12 months from their date of arrival in the country depending on their employment status (usually people find work in the first 5-8 months). Refugee Cash Assistance applications and support can be access through USCRI Vermont at 462 Hegeman Ave Ste 101, Colchester, VT 05446. Contact Ramiza Peco, RCA Coordinator at [RPeco@refugees.org](mailto:RPeco@refugees.org) for more information or support with the application process.

## Other Services and Resources

### Interpretation:

For all state provided services, the State of Vermont has a contract with interpretation services and, upon request, can provide interpretation at meetings/appointments. If the sponsor needs interpretation for services that are not provided by the State or by a Health system, they can contact UCSRI or AALV to inquire about hiring interpreters or they may choose to use another service.

### Other Services from Refugee Resettlement agencies and other refugee serving agencies:

While Sponsors are meant to take on the main responsibilities for the humanitarian parolee or refugee they sponsor, there are other services available at local agencies that might be of benefit. For example, Ukrainian, Cuban, and Haitian humanitarian parolees, as well as refugees coming through Welcome Corps, are also eligible for other Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) funded refugee support services. This includes case management, employment services, and English Language Learning. In addition, there may be workforce development programs or other programs that are open to newcomers who have arrived within the past 5 years.

Humanitarian parolees and refugees arriving through Welcome Corps can contact the nearest resettlement agency to enroll in post-arrival services or to be referred to other services in the community. Please see below.

## Register with a refugee resettlement agency

After the Sponsor provides the initial assistance for the first 90 days, new arrivals may then be eligible for other refugee support services that are funded through the State Refugee Office and offered by USCRI, ECDC, AALV and other partners. In order for the State of Vermont and the Refugee Resettlement Agencies to best serve your needs, please contact USCRI or ECDC, or the State Refugee Office to share your contact information and enroll with a local agency.

Questions? Refer to the table below for catchment areas and contact information of the Refugee Resettlement Agencies:

<b><i>Northern Vermont Counties - USCRI</i></b>	<b><i>Southern Vermont Counties - ECDC</i></b>
Addison Chittenden Franklin Lamoille Orleans Rutland Washington	Bennington Orange Windham Windsor
Matt Thompson, Coordinator of Programs, USCRI Vermont Email: <a href="mailto:mthompson@uscrrvt.org">mthompson@uscrrvt.org</a> Direct phone: 802-654-1705.	Mark Clark, Program Manager ECDC Vermont Email: <a href="mailto:Mclark@ecdcus.org">Mclark@ecdcus.org</a> Direct phone: 802-451-8891
<b>State of Vermont:</b> Contact Tracy Dolan, Director of State Refugee Office at <a href="mailto:tracy.dolan@vermont.gov">tracy.dolan@vermont.gov</a>	