

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

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 refugee individual or family 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 refugee 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 does not plan to work, it is recommended to apply for an SSN.

Health Services and Benefits

Apply for Medicaid

Ukrainians, Cuban and Haitian humanitarian parolees, as well as some other refugees who are in the private sponsorship program, are eligible for health insurance through the State of Vermont. If the individual 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. Please help individuals and/or families to fill out a **PAPER application or to apply by phone:**

- Download and complete the [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) (For faster processing, include a copy of immigration documents with the application)
- Mail the application to:
 - Vermont Health Connect, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671-8100

If the individual needs additional support: call 1-855-899-9600 Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM -4:30 PM. If possible, the sponsor should call with the applicant to help navigate the process.

Important: Specify that the applicant is a refugee/parolee/humanitarian parolee and identify needed language access support if needed (specify primary language). If the individual is on the phone and would like interpretation services, select this option when you call or indicate this to the call center representative.

Connection to primary care

Prioritize connecting newly arriving refugees with a primary care provider in your local community soon as possible. Check with health clinics, family practices, and Federally Qualified Health Centers in your area. 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 (Refugee Medical Screening)

Office of Refugee Resettlement eligible populations (including Ukrainian, Cuban and Haitian humanitarian parolees) are eligible for the Vermont Domestic Health Assessment (DHA).

The domestic medical screening program was established as part of the Refugee Act of 1980. All refugees should receive this comprehensive medical examination that screens for a wide range of infectious diseases and non-communicable conditions. Screening should be completed within 30 days of arrival but can be completed within a 90-day timeframe when scheduling and access to the screening is extremely challenging.

Purpose

The Office of Refugee Resettlement holds that the purposes for medical screening are as follows:

1. To ensure follow-up with medical issues identified in an overseas medical screening;
2. To identify persons with communicable diseases of potential public health importance;
3. To enable a refugee to successfully resettle by identifying personal health conditions that, if left unidentified, could adversely impact his or her ability to resettle; and
4. To refer refugees to primary care providers for ongoing health care.

How to complete the Vermont Domestic Health Assessment (Medical Screening):

- The DHA can be completed by any licensed health care provider, such as a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.
- If a provider does not have previous experience conducting the DHA, reach out to the Refugee Health Coordinator for assistance (Allie Perline, Allison.Perline@Vermont.gov).
- The DHA should be conducted in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. Contact the Vermont Refugee Health Coordinator for assistance and resources related to translation and interpretation services and guidance on cultural and health considerations.
- [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. [See Dynamic PDF Forms and Web Browser Incompatibility](#) for more information).

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.

IMPORTANT

If the health care provider conducting the DHA is not the refugee's assigned primary care provider (PCP), be sure to bring the PCP contact information with you to the DHA appointment. At the time of the appointment, the refugee should sign a Release of Information form to have all DHA results and information forwarded on to their PCP in case there is need for follow up treatment or care.

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 refugees 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. Refugees 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 can not 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 refugee’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.

Barre: 5 Perry Street, Suite 250, Barre, VT 05601 Tel: 888-253-8786 or 802-479-4200	Bennington: 324 Main Street, Suite 2, Bennington, VT 05201 Tel: 800-637-7347 or 802-447-3531
Brattleboro: 232 Main Street. Suite 3 Brattleboro, VT 05301 Tel: 888-253-8805 or 802-257-2880	Burlington: 108 Cherry Street, Suite 102, Burlington, VT 05402 Tel: 888-253-8803 or 802-863-7323

Middlebury: 156 So. Village Green, Suite 102 Middlebury, VT 05753 Tel: 888-253-8804 or 802-388-4644	Morrisville: 63 Professional Drive, Suite #1 Morrisville, VT 05661 Tel: 888-253-8798 or 802-888-7447
Newport: 100 Main Street, Suite 220 Newport, VT 05855 Tel: 800-952-2945 or 802-334-6707	Rutland: 300 Asa Bloomer State Office Bldg. 88 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT 05701 Tel: 888-253-8802 or 802-786-5811
Springfield: 100 Mineral Street, Suite 104 Springfield, VT 05156 Tel: 888-296-8151 or 802-289-0600	St. Albans: 27 Federal Street, Suite 201 St. Albans, VT 05478 Tel: 888-253-8801 or 802-524-7970
St. Johnsbury: 107 Eastern Avenue, Suite 9 St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 Tel: 800-952-2936 or 802-748-5151	White River Junction: 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: Through the State of Vermont, Department of Children and Families, Ukrainian, Cuban, and Haitian humanitarian parolees (HP) can apply for the following benefits (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 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 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 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). To apply for Refugee Cash Assistance, contact Matt Thompson at USCRI mthompson@uscrivt.org

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 parolees/refugees 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 including 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 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 you provide 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:

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