

# Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Economic Services Administration · Community Services Division

Washington state has a long legacy of welcoming people who are refugees and immigrants. The Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance offers programs and services that help people who are refugees and immigrants reach their full potential and contribute to thriving and diverse communities in Washington state.

## DSHS serves individuals and families by providing client services that meet the needs of our communities

**Culturally responsive:** ORIA contracts with more than 80 providers across Washington state to offer culturally specific and linguistically appropriate services. These providers include refugee resettlement agencies, nonprofit organizations, ethnic-community-based organizations, state agencies, public health departments, federally qualified health centers and colleges.

**Ensuring success in resettlement:** ORIA helps support the resettlement process for people coming to Washington through a variety of different programs and client services in four core areas:

- **Refugee Health and Wellness** supports new arrivals with medical screenings, culturally responsive mental health services and access to immediate medical care and intensive case management through the Refugee Health Promotion and Refugee Medical Screening Programs.
- **Employment and Training** services are available to help people learn English, gain employment-related skills and get jobs. ORIA offers five distinct employment and training programs, including the Limited English Proficiency Pathway Employment and English Language Training Programs, ORIA Basic Food Employment and Training Program, Food Assistance Program Employment and Training and Career Ladder for Educated and Vocationally Experienced Refugees.
- **Immigration Assistance and Naturalization Services** assists refugees and immigrants with federal applications to become lawful permanent residents (green card holders) or United States citizens

## Who is eligible for ORIA services?

- People who are eligible for federal refugee resettlement services.
- People with certain immigration statuses receiving cash, food or medical assistance.
- People who are English language learners receiving cash assistance.

## Who are refugees?

The term “refugee” is a legal immigration status given to people who resettle in the United States as part of a federal Refugee Admissions Program. Refugees have been forced to flee their countries of origin due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular group or political opinion.

and are offered by specialized immigration legal services organizations accredited by the Department of Justice.

- **Whole Family Services** include the Promoting Refugee Integration, Mobility and Empowerment program, which provides case management, education and immigration-related legal services; Community Outreach and Education, which supports people to integrate into their local communities; Housing Stabilization Services, which offers short-term, urgent housing assistance for newly arrived refugees and humanitarian immigrants; the Refugee School Impact program, which supports birth-to-age-5 children, school-aged youth and their families, and improves learning outcomes and academic performance and integration; Services for Older Refugees, which supports integration and wellness by offering elders over 60 opportunities to connect with communities and peers; and specialized child welfare and youth services through the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor, Unaccompanied Children and the Refugee Youth Mentoring programs.

### More information:

Sarah Peterson, MSW - Chief, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance - State Refugee Coordinator

Phone: 360.890.0691 | Email: sarah.peterson@dshs.wa.gov



Transforming lives

8/2024

## State Fiscal Year 2023 Highlights

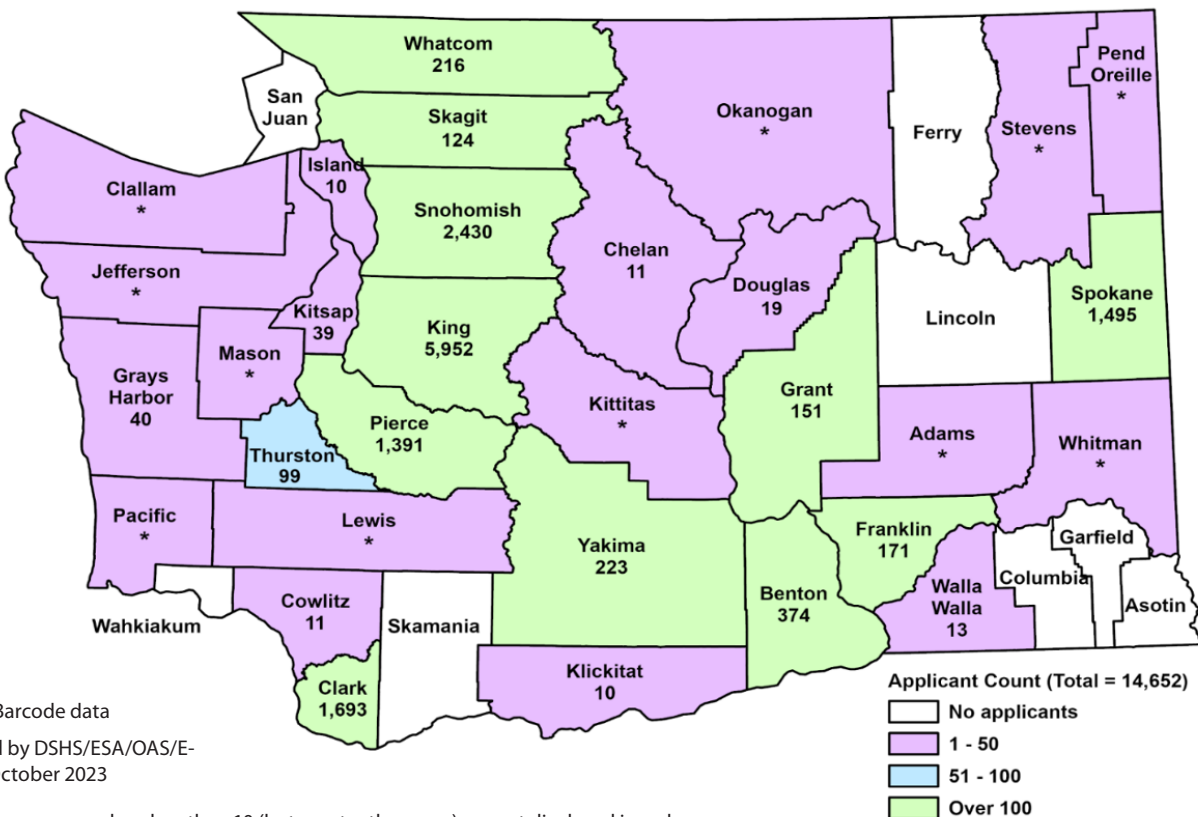
- Over 18,700 refugees and immigrants participate in services through ORIA's three largest programs (LEP Pathway, Naturalization Services and PRIME).
- 10,028 refugees and immigrants participated in employment and English as a Second Language services through the LEP Pathway Program.
- 4,322 people received services through the Naturalization Services Program, and 1,922 people became U.S. citizens through the program.
- 4,397 people participated in case-management services, self-sufficiency workshops or immigration assistance through the PRIME Program.
- 732 people participated in the ORIA BFET Program.

## Who is eligible for federal refugee resettlement services?

U.S. Congress has granted these immigrations statuses as qualified for services:

- Refugees.
- People granted asylum.
- Certified Victims of Trafficking.
- Citizens and nationals of Afghanistan paroled into the United States between July 31, 2021 and Sept. 30, 2023.
- Citizens and nationals of Ukraine paroled into the United States between Feb. 24, 2022 and Sept. 30, 2024.
- Amerasians.
- Cuban-Haitian entrants.
- Special Immigrant Visa holders from Iraq and Afghanistan.

### Newly Arrived Refugee and Humanitarian Immigrant Applicants for DSHS Services by Residential County in Washington State: October 2022 – September 2023



Source: Barcode data

Provided by DSHS/ESA/OAS/E-Maps - October 2023

\* When necessary, values less than 10 (but greater than zero) are not displayed in order to help protect client confidentiality. These counties are denoted with an asterisk (\*).