

Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance

Program Description

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.

Culturally responsive: ORIA contracts with more than 100 providers across Washington state to offer culturally specific and linguistically appropriate services. These providers include refugee resettlement agencies, nonprofits, 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 programs and client services in four core areas:

- 1. 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.
- 2. Employment and Training** services are available to help people learn English, gain employment-related skills and get jobs. ORIA offers five 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.
- 3. Immigration Assistance and Naturalization Services** assists refugees and immigrants with federal applications to become lawful permanent residents (green card holders) or United States citizens.



Specialized immigration legal services organizations accredited by the Department of Justice offer this support.

4. Whole Family Services:

- The Promoting Refugee Integration, Mobility and Empowerment program provides case management, education and immigration-related legal services.
- Community Outreach and Education supports people integrating into their local communities.
- Housing Stabilization Services offers short-term, urgent housing aid for newly arrived refugees and humanitarian immigrants.
- The Refugee School Impact program supports children from birth to age 5 as well as school-aged youth and their families. It improves learning outcomes and academic performance and integration.
- Services for Older Refugees supports integration and wellness by offering people 60 and older opportunities to connect with communities and peers.
- The Unaccompanied Refugee Minor, Unaccompanied Children and the Refugee Youth Mentoring programs provide specialized child welfare and youth services.

More information:

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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 public 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.

State Fiscal Year 2024 Highlights¹

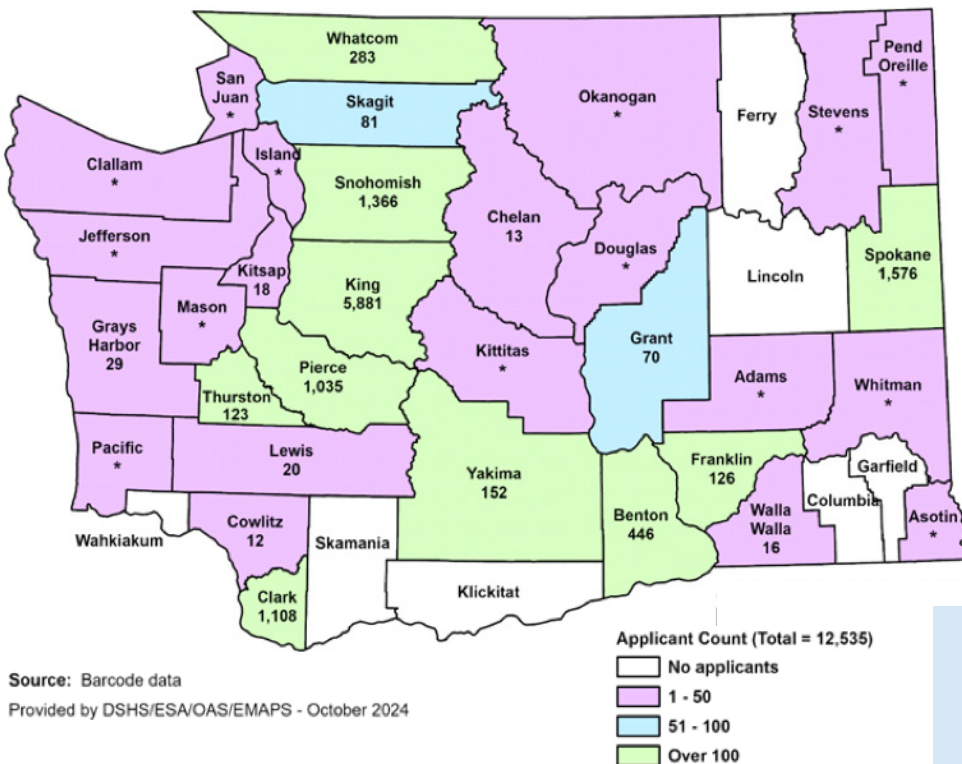
- Over 20,850 refugees and immigrants participated in services through ORIA’s three largest programs.
- 12,369 refugees and immigrants participated in employment and English as a Second Language programs.
- 4,308 people received services through the Naturalization Services Program.
- 1,871 people became naturalized U.S. citizens.
- 4,181 people participated in case-management services, self-sufficiency workshops or immigration assistance.
- 520 people participated in the ORIA BFET Program.

Who is eligible for federal refugee resettlement services?

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

- Refugees.
- People granted asylum.
- Certified Victims of Trafficking.
- Afghan Humanitarian Parolees.
- Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees.
- Amerasians.
- Cuban-Haitian entrants.
- Afghan and Iraqi Special Immigrants.

Newly Arrived Refugee and Humanitarian Immigrant Applicants for DSHS Services by Residential County in Washington State: October 2023 – September 2024



Source: Barcode data
 Provided by DSHS/ESA/OAS/EMAPS - October 2024

¹ ESA Briefing Book SFY 2024.

