



Ethiopian Community
Development Council, Inc.
Empowering Refugees and Immigrants since 1983

U.S. Refugee Admissions Program
Central American Minors (CAM)
Program FY 2015

Overview

The United States has established an in-country refugee/parole program in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to provide a safe, legal, and orderly alternative to the dangerous journey that some children are currently undertaking to the United States. This program will allow certain parents who are lawfully present in the United States to request access to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) for their children still in one of these three countries.

Applications for this program are initiated in the United States. Beginning in December 2014, a parent lawfully present in the United States will be able to file Department of State form DS-7699 requesting a refugee resettlement interview for unmarried children under 21 in El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras. Under certain circumstances, if the second parent resides with the child in the home country and is currently married to the lawfully present parent in the United States, the second parent may be added to the child's petition and considered for refugee status.

Form DS-7699 must be filed with the assistance of a designated resettlement agency that works with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to help resettle refugees in the United States. Individuals approved for refugee admission under this program will come to the U.S. through the USRAP and will be eligible for R&P benefits. For all children who are admitted through this program, affiliates will be required to follow all.

Individuals who are found ineligible for refugee admission but still at risk of harm may be considered for parole on a case-by-case basis. The refugee/parole program will not be a pathway for undocumented parents to bring their children to the United States, but instead, the program will provide certain vulnerable, at-risk children an opportunity to be reunited with parents lawfully resident in the United States.

Eligibility and Requirements

A. For the Anchor/Qualifying Parent:

Age

The Anchor/Qualifying Parent must be 18 years or older to file the AOR.

Nationalities

The Anchor/Qualifying Parent can be a national of any country.

Immigration Status

The Anchor/Qualifying Parent must be lawfully present in the United States in one of the following categories:



- a. Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) Status
- b. Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Grantee
- c. Parolee (granted for at least one year duration)
- d. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Recipient
- e. Deferred Action (non-DACA) Recipient
- f. Deferred Enforced Departure Recipient
- g. Withholding of Removal Grantee

B. For the Qualifying Child:

Nationalities

The program is only open to children who are nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras. The children must be currently residing in their country of nationality.



Age

Qualifying Children must be under 21 years of age at time of filing, and must be unmarried at the time of filing and at the time of admission at a U.S. port of entry.

Family Relationship

Biological, legally adopted, or step-children of Qualifying Parents are eligible. The relationship between the Qualifying Parent and Qualifying Child must have existed on the date that the Qualifying Parent received legal status in the United States and must continue to exist at the time of filing.

Step-Children

In order for step-children relationships to be recognized, the marriage creating the step relationship must have occurred before the child's 16th birthday, must have existed at the time that the Qualifying Parent received legal status in the United States, and must continue to exist at the time of filing of the AOR.

Adopted Children

In order for adoptive relationships to be recognized, the adoption must have taken place before the child's 16th birthday and been legal in the country where it occurred. The adoption must have also taken place before the date that the Qualifying Parent received legal status in the United States. Additionally, adopted children must have been in the legal custody of and resided with the Qualifying Parent for at least two years. Copies of adoption papers must be included with the submission of the AOR.

C. For Derivatives/Type B Relatives:

Unmarried children under 21 years of age of the Qualifying Child may be admitted as derivative beneficiaries with the Qualifying Child as refugees if otherwise admissible to the United States.



These individuals would derive their refugee status from the Qualifying Child and do not have to independently establish a persecution claim. These individuals are listed in Section II of the AOR as Type B relatives.

D. For Type C Relatives/Add-on Parent:

On a case-by-case basis, the legal parent of a Qualifying Child may also be considered to apply for admission in connection with a Qualifying Child if:

- 1) He/she is part of the same household and economic unit as the Qualifying Child,
and
 - 2) He/she is legally married to the Qualifying Parent at the time the Qualifying Parent filed the CAM-AOR, **and**
 - 3) He/she continues to be legally married to the Qualifying Parent.
- These individuals are listed in Section II of the AOR as Type C relatives. Explain in detail how the Add-on Parent meets the three requirements in the Comments box in Section II.
 - An Add-on Parent cannot derive his or her refugee status from the Qualifying Child and therefore must independently establish that he or she qualifies as a refugee.
 - If the Add-on Parent has unmarried child(ren) under 21 who are not the biological or adopted child(ren) of the anchor/Qualifying Parent, they may also be added in Section II as Type C relatives.
 - Type C Relatives do not need to be nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala or Honduras to be eligible, but must be living with the Qualifying Child in one of those countries.

E. Photographs

The Qualifying Parent is required to submit a current passport style photograph of each person for whom he or she is filing. The photograph should be a front view of the individual's full face, from the top of the head to the shoulders with eyes open. The photograph should be in .bmp or .tif format.



F. DNA Testing and Estimated Costs

DNA relationship testing will be required to confirm the biological relationship between the anchor/Qualifying Parent in the United States and the in-country child(ren).

- After the International Organization for Migration (IOM) pre-screening interview but before the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) interview, the anchor/ Qualifying Parent will be notified by IOM via the resettlement agency about how to submit DNA evidence of the relationship with their claimed child(ren) in El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras.



- If DNA relationship testing confirms the claimed relationship(s), IOM will schedule the DHS refugee interview.
- The cost of DNA testing will be approximately \$440 to test the first person, and \$220 for each additional test. The Qualifying Parent will pay upfront costs. However, IOM will reimburse the anchor for cases in which all relationships are positively confirmed by DNA tests. If

any of the claimed relationships are not confirmed by the DNA test, the Qualifying Parent will not be reimbursed at all.

G. Parole Option

Applicants found by DHS to be ineligible for refugee status in the United States will be considered on a case-by-case basis for parole, which is a mechanism to allow someone who is otherwise inadmissible to come to the United States for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit. If the parole option is used, the individual will not come through the USRAP and will not receive any R&P benefits. Therefore, the affiliate's role in the individual's case will terminate upon denial of refugee status.

Eligibility

An individual considered for parole may be eligible if DHS finds that the individual is at risk of harm, he/she clears all background vetting, there is no serious derogatory information (i.e. security-related issues), and someone has committed to financially support the individual while he/she is in the United States.

Affidavit of Support Required

In order for the applicant(s) to be considered for parole, the parent in the United States will need to submit a Form I-134, Affidavit of Support, with supporting documentation to DHS.

- The ECDC affiliate is not responsible for assisting anchors with this document, and should refer anchors to legal service providers unless the agency is BIA Accredited, in which case the affiliate may assist the anchor and may charge a nominal fee.

Costs

Those children and any eligible parent considered for parole will be responsible for obtaining and paying for a medical clearance. An individual authorized parole will not be eligible for a travel loan but must book and pay for the flight to the United States.

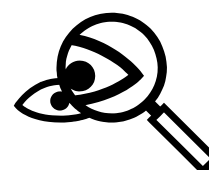
Benefits

Parole is temporary and does not confer any permanent legal immigration status or path to permanent legal immigration status in the United States. Parolees are not eligible for medical and other benefits upon arrival in the United States, but are eligible to attend school and/or apply for employment authorization. Individuals authorized parole under this program generally will be authorized parole for an initial period of two years and may request renewal.

Processing

A. Affiliate-Level

- Intake.
 - Determine the eligibility of the anchor/Qualifying Parent and his or her family for the CAM program.
 - Describe overall application process.
 - Provide counseling about DNA testing. DNA counseling is a very important element of the affiliate processing side of the AOR. There are multiple aspects of the DNA requirement that must be addressed before anchors begin to apply for their relatives' admission to the program. Most importantly, affiliate staff must convey the importance of understanding the definition of valid relationship claims. In addition, staff must explain the possibility that biological relationships that anchors thought were established may be found to be otherwise. Encourage anchors to have straightforward conversations with their family members regarding the consequences of finding unconfirmed relationships. The family should understand and be prepared to address what DNA testing will reveal.
 - Advise the anchor/Qualifying Parent that she or he must not commit fraud, which is generally the false misrepresentation of a fact or deception, for personal or financial gain. Indicate to the Qualifying Parent that she or he must tell the truth and must disclose all requested information. Similarly, the affiliate cannot purport a falsehood. If staff think/know that the anchor is not telling the truth, staff should not sign or submit the application, as it will constitute perjury. Both the anchor relative and the affiliate representative will have to sign the AOR, certifying under penalty under the laws of the United States of America, that all the information giving on the form is true and correct.
 - If anchors/Qualifying Parents are eligible for the program, affiliate staff should provide them a sample AOR for them to complete and set an appointment at a later date to complete the AOR form on the computer. Indicate that they need to bring the completed AOR form, proof of immigration status, state identification card/driver's license, and digital photographs of the family member(s) for whom they are filing.
- AOR Completion Appointment. During the appointment, the affiliate representative should:
 - Review the completed AOR with the anchor to ensure that all the information is correct. Have the anchor sign and date the AOR. The affiliate representative should also sign the form and provide contact information of the affiliate.



- Make a copy of the completed, signed, and dated AOR, which includes uploaded photos of Qualifying Children and any other beneficiaries. Provide a copy to the anchor and retain the original in a case file.
- Make copies of proof of immigration status and photo identification of the anchor/Qualifying Parent and retain copies in the case file.
- Before the affiliate representative submits the AOR to ECDC, the representative and her or his supervisor should review the form, checking for accuracy (ex. spelling, clarity of explanations).



- To submit the AOR to ECDC, save the form as a PDF. Do not print out and scan the AOR. Instead, save directly from the format. Choose “Print” and then PDFCreator as the printer. If you do not have PDFCreator installed on your computer, you can find it free online for download. Send (e-mail) the PDF along with PDF copies of the anchor’s proof of status to ECDC.

B. ECDC Headquarters

- Upon receipt ECDC staff will review the AOR and return to the affiliate with any corrections/clarifications. Affiliate staff should return the corrected version to ECDC and ensure that the Qualifying Parent receives a copy of the final corrected version.
- ECDC will submit the AOR and supplemental documents to RPC.
- Once ECDC receives pre-case I.D. information from RPC, ECDC will send it to the affiliate. As ECDC receives information about the case, including interview and DNA testing notices and other pertinent status updates, ECDC staff will forward the information to the affiliate to notify the anchor.

C. U.S. Government

Once a form DS-7699 has been filed, the child in his/her home country will be assisted through the program by the IOM, which manages the U.S. Resettlement Support Center (RSC) in Latin America. IOM personnel from the RSC will contact each child directly and in the order in which the forms filed by lawfully present parents have been received by the U.S. Department of State.

Pre-screening interviews

IOM will invite the children to attend pre-screening interviews in their country of origin in order to prepare them for a refugee interview with DHS.

DNA testing

After the IOM pre-screening interview but before the DHS interview, the anchor/Qualifying Parent will be notified by IOM via the resettlement agency about how to submit DNA evidence of the relationship with their claimed child(ren) in El Salvador, Guatemala, or Honduras. If DNA

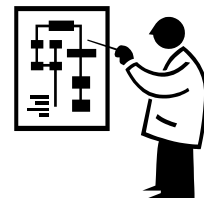
relationship testing confirms the claimed relationship(s), IOM will schedule the DHS refugee interview.

DHS interview and final processing

DHS will conduct interviews with each child to determine whether he or she is eligible for refugee status and admissible to the United States. All applicants must complete all required security checks and obtain a medical clearance before they are approved to travel as a refugee to the United States. IOM will arrange travel for the refugee(s) to the United States. The parent of the child will sign a promissory note agreeing to repay the cost of travel to the United States.

See the CAM Processing Diagram for a mapping of the processing between the following entities:

- RPC
- RSC interview
- DNA testing
- RAVU (check family information and relationships listed in Qualifying Parent's A-file)
- DHS interview
- Security checks
- Medical checks



Affidavit of Relationship (DS-7699)

A. Software



In order to open the AOR form, the affiliate representative must download Cerenade software. This software makes it possible to save the work along the way, so that the form does not need to be completed all at one time. Cerenade can be downloaded here: www.cerenade.com/controls/fillerupdate.

B. General Completion Guidance

The four pages preceding the form itself contain general information about the program, as well as detailed instructions related to how to fill out the form.

- Each Qualifying Child must be listed on separate pages in Section II A.
- Date Filed: date affiliate representative completed the form.
- Case File ID Number: Anchor/Qualifying Parent's A#.
- Name of National Resettlement Agency: choose ECDC from the drop down box.
- Affiliate ID Number: affiliate's RPC code (ex. COECDC01).
- Anchor's Name, Case File ID Number and Date of Birth will auto populate on the top of all subsequent pages of the AOR.

- Capitalization: list only last names in all CAPS. All other words should have normal capitalization.
- Relationship Codes: refer to page 5 of the AOR instructions for codes.
- For Type C Relatives/other legal parent, explain in the Comments field in Section II on that page how that individual meets the three criteria for Type C/Add-on Parents. Also use this section to provide details regarding any other relationships that may need further explanation, such as children of the Add-on Parent that are not also the children of the anchor/Qualifying Parent. Use third-person language in this section.
 - Ex: #1 Jack JOHNSON is the legal parent of the Qualifying Child, John WAYNE. John WAYNE has been living with Jack JOHNSON since June 2009 and Jack JOHNSON has had sole financial responsibility for John WAYNE during that time. Jack JOHNSON legally married the anchor, Anna Belle CHAPMAN, on June 24, 1995 and they remain married to this day.
 - Ex: #2 Jack JOHNSON has two biological children (#3 Diane KEATON and #4 Mark WAHLBERG) that are not the children of the anchor, Anna Belle CHAPMAN, who are also included in Section II as Type C relatives.
- For adopted children, explain in detail in the Comments field in Section II **when** the child was adopted and **how long** the adopted child lived with the anchor/Qualifying Parent. Documentation of the legal adoption must also be provided when filing the AOR.
- Indicate “Unknown” if the anchor/Qualifying Parent does not know the answer to the question. However, there should be no unknowns for sections regarding the anchor, Qualifying Child, and Type B or C relatives, unless otherwise stated. The contact information for the Qualifying Child and Guardian must be as complete as possible.
 - The name of the other parent of the Qualifying Child **MUST** be listed in Section II with as much other information as possible.
 - If the Qualifying Child’s guardian is not their parent, provide an explanation in the Comments of Section II.
- Indicate “N/A” for sections that are not applicable to the case and/or for any boxes that do not contain any data.

A completed form contains:

- All requested information
- Passport-style photos
- Attached proof of anchor/Qualifying Parent’s current legal immigration status
- Proof of legal adoption, if applicable
- Anchor and affiliate representative’s signatures (hard copy for file only)



P-3 Program Materials

- AOR Form (DS-7699), including Instructions
- Central American Minors Processing Diagram (PRM)
- FAQs