

# REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN Kentucky

## REFUGEES IN KENTUCKY

The United States has been a leader in welcoming [refugees](#) who seek safety from persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Following World War II, the U.S. began welcoming refugees and over time the system has evolved to have a strong infrastructure centered on [public-private partnerships](#). Communities across the U.S. have recognized the important economic and social benefits of resettling refugees. Kentucky residents have played a vital role in the resettlement program and refugees have positively contributed to Kentucky communities. In 2013, organizations and communities across [Kentucky](#) welcomed just under [3% of refugees arriving in the U.S. Of the 2,342 newcomers to Kentucky in 2013](#), 65 were asylees, 635 were Cuban/Haitian entrants, 1,603 were resettled refugees, and 39 were Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients who served alongside U.S. troops.

Where are most refugees in Kentucky from?

Bhutan  
Burma  
Iraq  
Congo

## SERVICES AVAILABLE TO REFUGEES IN KENTUCKY

In addition to [programming](#) to support refugees when they first arrive to the United States, the federal government provides monetary aid through grants to the state, Voluntary Agencies, and other refugee aid organizations for community and short-term refugee support. The [Kentucky Office for Refugees](#), which is run by Catholic Charities, serves as the refugee resettlement office for the state. Primary program services include cash and medical assistance, access to English as a second language classes, vocational and employment assistance. [Discretionary grants](#) are also awarded to private agencies for various other self-sufficiency programs.

FEDERAL FY14 ORR FUNDING TO KENTUCKY FOR REFUGEE PROGRAMS (AS OF DECEMBER 2013)

Total	Wilson Fish RCA	Matching Grant	Refugee Social Services	State Targeted Assistance	School Impact	Targeted Assistance Discretionary	Elderly Services	Preventative Health	Cuban/Haitian	Individual Development Account	Survivors of Torture	Micro-enterprises	Preferred Communities
14,705,379	9,583,420	1,025,200	1,670,296	538,480	408,240	150,000	97,200	145,877	342,658	200,000	325,000	174,008	45,000

Another service available to refugees in Kentucky is the employment [Matching Grant Services](#), administered by Voluntary Agencies in the state. An alternative to public cash assistance, private agencies match federal contributions and provide intensive case management services to help refugees get employed and become self-sufficient within 120 days of arrival.

*"The attitudes of the citizens toward immigrants have been very welcoming..."*

- [Rick Horn](#), Director, Kentucky Small Business Development Center

## REFUGEES MAKE KENTUCKY STRONG

[David Keough-Toyo](#) and his family fled civil strife in Togo eleven years ago, and with the help of a local Episcopal church were resettled in Louisville. David worked 16 hours a day for \$7.65 an hour to support himself, his wife, their five children, and his sister. As part of the Assets for Independence program David was able to take classes on economic independence, budgeting, and saving while learning English at the same time. David truly took the lessons he learned in class to heart and became one of the program's best savers. Just three years later, he now owns a house large enough to fit his family, has helped translate the course for his sister, and sits down with his children to explain the family budget so that they too can learn the importance of budgeting and saving. David's next goal is to save enough so that he and his family can get a secondary education.

## LOCAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT OFFICES AND AFFILIATES IN KENTUCKY

- CWS/EMM, Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Inc., Lexington, Louisville
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Louisville
- USCRI, Western Kentucky Refugee Mutual Assistance, Bowling Green, Owensboro

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees to aid in the resettlement of fellow refugees by providing a variety of direct services, increasing civic participation, and preserve the community's cultural identity and history.