



The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

May 2010

USRAP Mission

To offer resettlement opportunities to persons overseas who are of special humanitarian concern and who meet the requirements for refugee status, in accordance with U.S. laws and international obligations.



USRAP Admissions

The President, in consultation with Congress, establishes the number and groups of refugees eligible for resettlement consideration each fiscal year. As a ceiling, this determination sets the maximum numbers of refugees that may be admitted.

	FY 2009 Ceiling	FY 2010 Ceiling
Africa	12,000	15,500
East Asia	19,000	17,000
Europe and Central Asia	2,500	2,500
Latin America/Caribbean	4,500	5,000
Near East/South Asia	37,000	35,000
Unallocated Reserve*	5,000	5,000
TOTAL	80,000	80,000

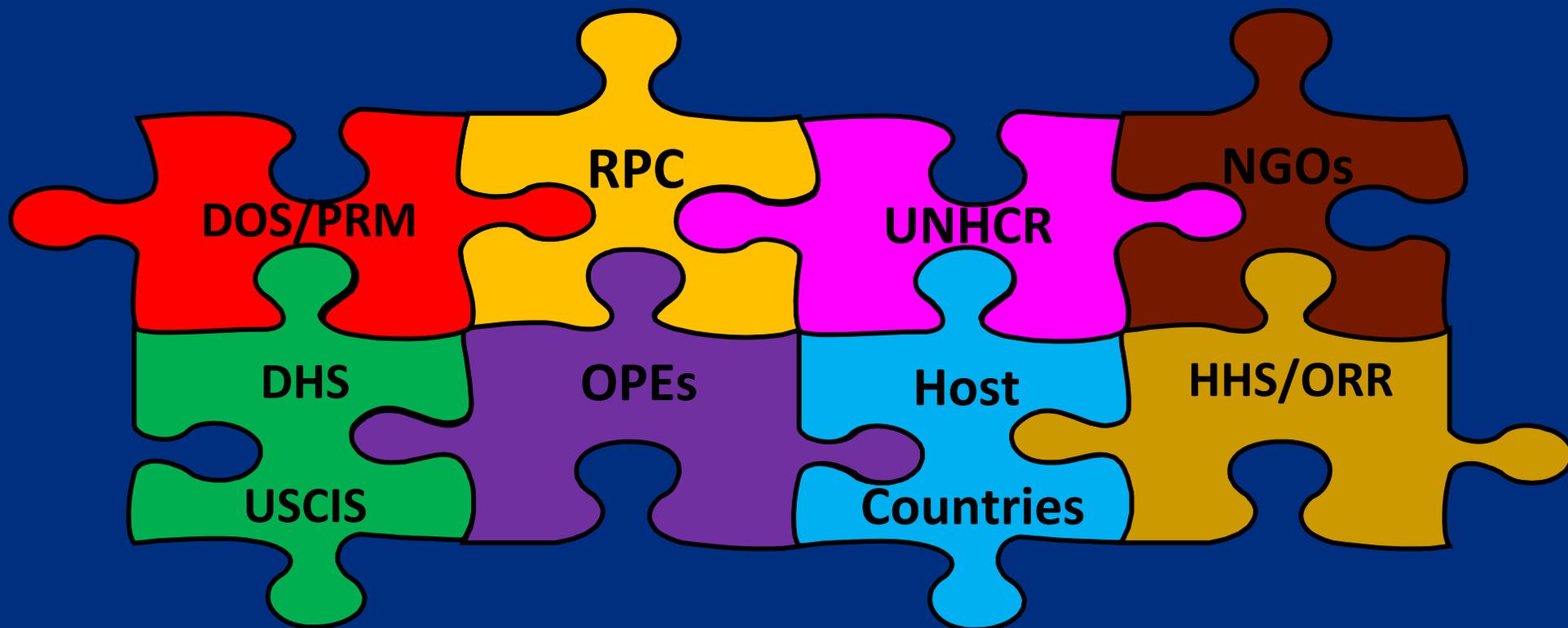


Processing Priorities

- Each year, processing priorities are established to determine which of the world's refugees are of special humanitarian concern to the United States.
- Only those individuals who qualify under one of the processing priorities are eligible for a refugee status interview with USCIS. Fulfilling a processing priority enables a refugee applicant to have the opportunity to interview with a USCIS officer, but does not guarantee refugee status approval.
- FY2009 Processing Priorities include:
 - P-1: Individual referrals by U.S. Embassy, UNHCR or designated NGO.
 - P-2: Specific groups of concern identified by the USRAP, usually specific groups within a certain nationality.
 - P-3: Family reunification cases for designated nationalities. (P-3 currently suspended).



The USRAP is a complex interagency effort involving several governmental and non-governmental partners both overseas and in the United States.



Role of USCIS in the USRAP

USCIS officers conduct personal interviews with applicants to determine eligibility, generally with an interpreter.



Pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA), all refugee adjudicators must complete specialized training.

Refugee Corps established in FY2006; processing demands supplemented by Asylum Corps and other specially-trained USCIS adjudicators.



Refugee Definition

INA 101(a)(42)



*Person outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return because of persecution, or a well-founded fear of persecution, on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.**

* Excludes persecutors or those who have assisted in the persecution of others.



USCIS Eligibility Determination

1. Access - Does the principal applicant qualify under a processing priority (*i.e.*, P-1, P-2 or P-3)?
2. Refugee Definition - Does the principal applicant meet all aspects of the refugee definition under INA 101(a)(42)?
3. Firm Resettlement – Has the principal applicant been permanently resettled in a 3rd country with legal status, and does applicant enjoy rights and privileges afforded other such permanent status members of the 3rd country?
4. Admissibility - Is the principal applicant otherwise admissible or do any of the grounds of inadmissibility under INA Section 212(a) apply?

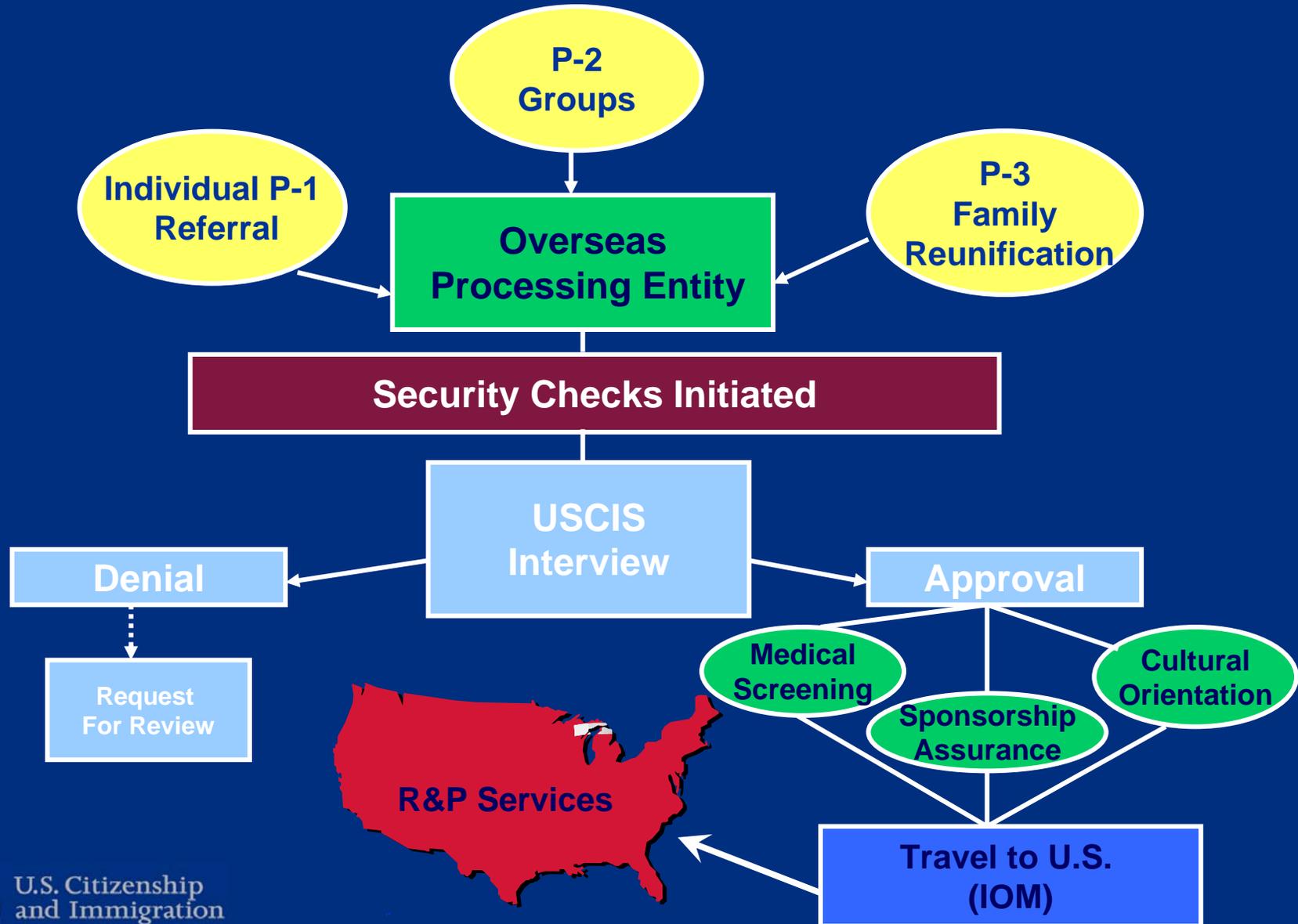


Benefits of Refugee Status

- Indefinite status granted upon admission; work authorized incident to status.
- Derivatives (*i.e.*, spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21) may accompany or follow to join the principal refugee.
- Receive certain social and health service benefits.
- Must apply for adjustment as LPR after one year.
- Eligible to apply for naturalization after five years.



Process Flow



USCIS REFUGEE INTERVIEW LOCATIONS

FISCAL YEAR 2009

79 COUNTRIES TOTAL



Latin America & Caribbean (7)

Bahamas
Brazil
Costa Rica
Cuba
Ecuador
Jamaica

Africa (28)

Benin	Ghana	Rwanda
Botswana	Guinea	Senegal
Cameroon	Ivory Coast	Sierra Leone
Cent. African Rep.	Kenya	South Africa
Chad	Liberia	Tanzania
Egypt	Mali	Togo
Ethiopia	Mauritius	Uganda
Gabon	Morocco	Zambia
Gambia	Mozambique	Zimbabwe
	Nigeria	

Near East & South Asia (12)

Bangladesh
India
Iraq
Israel
Jordan
Kuwait
Lebanon
Nepal
Pakistan
Sri Lanka
Syria
Yemen

Europe & Central Asia (19)

Albania	Latvia	Russia
Austria	Malta	Serbia
France	Moldova	Switzerland
Greece	Netherlands	Turkey
Kazakhstan	Norway	Turkmenistan
Kyrgyzstan	Romania	Ukraine
		Uzbekistan

East Asia (13)

Bangladesh
Cambodia
China
Hong Kong
Indonesia
Laos
Malaysia
Mongolia
Nepal
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam

Worldwide Statistics

	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010*
Allocated Ceiling	50,000	72,000	75,000	75,000
Applicants Interviewed	69,609	99,916	110,000	46,879
Actual Admissions	48,281	60,192	74,654	35,831

*As of 2nd Q FY2010

FY2009 accomplishments:

- Achieved goal to complete 100,000+ interviews to support 75,000 admissions – a 10% increase compared to last fiscal year.
- Supported achievement of highest level of admissions in a decade – a 25% increase over last year.
- Deployed more than 100 officers/quarter on 100 circuit rides.
- Interviewed 30,000 Iraqi refugee applicants and exceeded the USG goal of at least 17,000 Iraqi refugee admissions.



FY2009 Initiatives Update

- **SOPs**: Developed comprehensive refugee processing procedures, including more transparent decision notices.
- **QA Program**: Developed and launched Quality Assurance pilot to assess decisional and procedural quality of refugee adjudications.
- **SRO Training**: Developed formal, one-week training for Supervisory Refugee Officers; training held 1st week in October.
- **Security Screening**: Implemented enhanced checks with the intelligence community.
- **Info Sharing**: Developed confidentiality release to facilitate sharing with resettlement partners.
- **DNA**: Issued new guidelines to officers on when DNA testing may be suggested (as a last resort) and worked closely with DOS to develop new procedures/forms for family-based refugee cases, including possible DNA testing requirement.
- **Intranet**: Improved site to make guidance more accessible, promoting consistency.



FY2010 Initiatives

- Interview 95,000 applicants to support authorized admissions.
- Modify I-590 refugee application to consolidate and streamline existing forms, creating greater efficiency in processing.
- Continue to assess and improve the current security check process.
- Assist UNHCR and other countries in enhancing their use of biometrics, including the development of data sharing exchanges to address fraud.
- Work with DOS to finalize new procedures for P-3 cases so that family-based case processing can resume.
- Work with interagency partners to consider USRAP program improvements overall.



Confidentiality Regulations

- Federal Regulations at 8 CFR 208.6 generally prohibit disclosure of information contained in or pertaining to asylum applications to third parties, without the applicant's consent, except under certain limited circumstances.
- As a matter of policy, refugee case information is treated as confidential in the same way as asylum information.
- Relatives & other U.S. Government agencies are considered 3rd parties, but information may be disclosed to a U.S government agency or contractor having a need to examine the information in connection with adjudication of the application, or if another exception applies.



Confidentiality Compromised

Confidentiality is breached when info contained in or pertaining to a refugee application is disclosed to a third party in violation of the regulations, including:

- the fact that the applicant has applied for refugee status
- specific facts or allegations pertaining to the individual refugee claim
- facts sufficient to give rise to a reasonable inference that the applicant has applied for refugee status



More detailed information on
the U.S. Refugee Admissions
Program is available at
www.uscis.gov under
“Humanitarian” programs.



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