

# REFUGEE AFFAIRS DIVISION



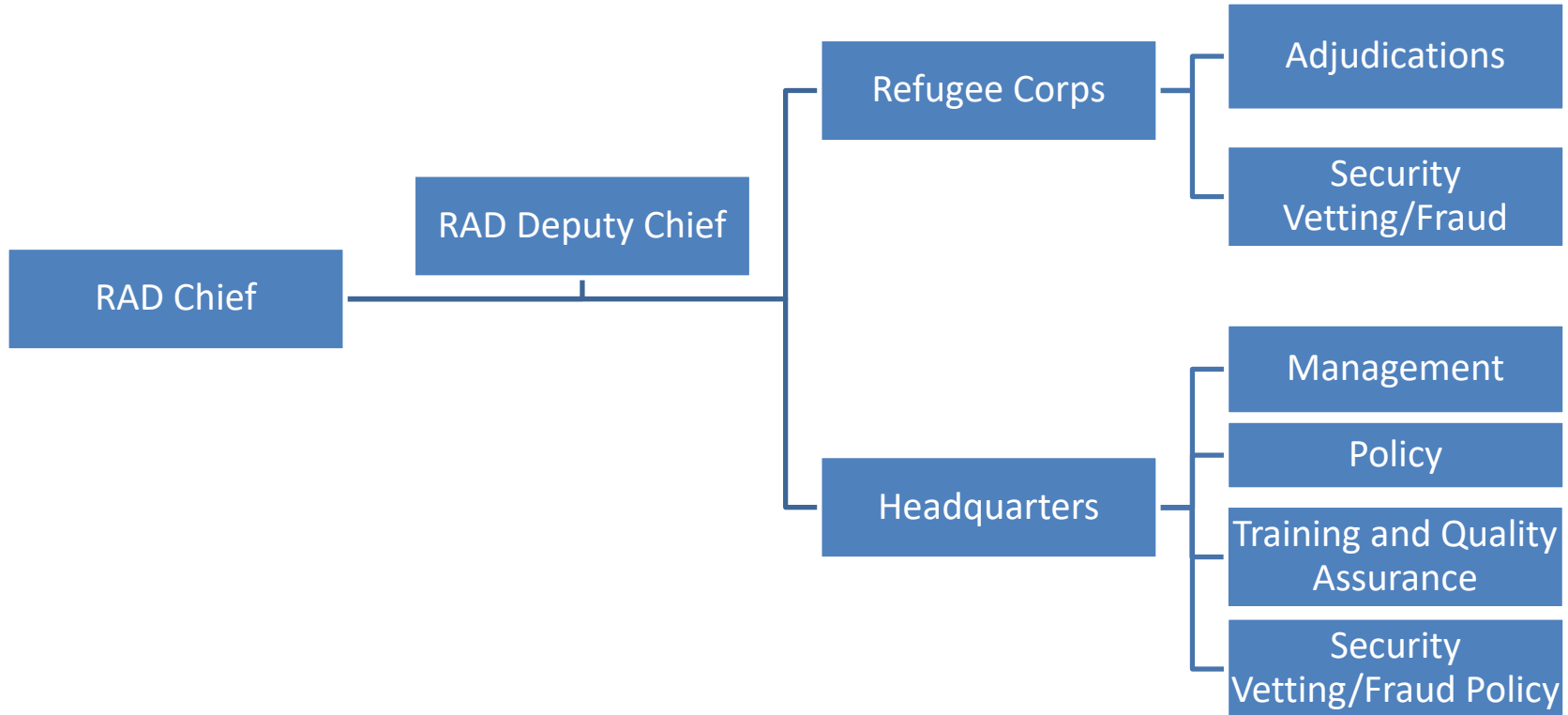
## MISSION

Refugee Affairs Division staff provide resettlement opportunities to qualified refugees from around the globe while ensuring the integrity of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and our national security.

*Courtesy of UNHCR*



# REFUGEE AFFAIRS DIVISION



# U.S. Refugee Admissions Program



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

Every year, immigration law requires that Executive Branch officials review the refugee situation and project possible participation of the United States in resettling refugees. From this review, the President in consultation with Congress, sets the annual refugee admissions ceiling.

## USRAP Partners

**USCIS:** Interviews applicants and determines eligibility for resettlement to the U.S.

**Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM):** Manages U.S. Refugee Admissions Program

**Resettlement Support Centers (RSCs):** Prescreens applicants, collects biographical information, and processes approved cases

**UNHCR:** Refers refugees for resettlement as part of its protection mandate; the majority of referrals to USRAP are made by UNHCR.

**CBP:** Admits refugees to the U.S.

**HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR):** Provides post-admission benefits to refugees

UNHCR Registration and Resettlement Referral

RSC Conducts prescreening interview, initiates biographic checks

USCIS reviews checks, collects biometrics, conducts eligibility interview

USCIS adjudicates form I-590, reviewing admissibility and eligibility for refugee classification

RSC processes approved cases for travel, including medical exams and sponsorship by a domestic resettlement agency

Refugee travel information collected on flight manifests and is screened prior to boarding by TSA/CBP

CBP determines if applicant is admissible to the U.S. and admits applicant as a refugee

# U.S. REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services



U.S. Customs and Border Protection



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

# U.S. REFUGEE STATISTICS



U.S. Citizenship  
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Fiscal Year	Interviews	Admissions
<b>FY 2012</b>	75,751	58,238
<b>FY 2013</b>	70,828	69,926
<b>FY 2014</b>	67,870	69,987
<b>FY 2015</b>	66,652	69,931
<b>FY 2016</b>	120,831	84,995
<b>FY 2017</b>	46,097	53,716
<b>FY 2018</b>	26,170	22,491

## FY 2018 Accomplishments

- USCIS completed two reviews of the USRAP pursuant to Executive Orders and instituted a series of measures, which will make the program more secure.
- USCIS interviewed more than 26,000 refugee applicants in 45 different countries.
- FDNS Forward Deployment Officers joined 13 refugee processing circuit rides to provide real time case review.
- The equivalent of approximately 100 Refugee Affairs Division staff assisted the Asylum Division throughout the year.



# USCIS Refugee Interview Locations

## Fiscal Year 2018



U.S. Citizenship  
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**45** Countries  
Total



**DISTRICTS**

- LACC  
Latin America, Canada & the Caribbean
- EMEA  
Europe, Middle East & Africa
- APAC  
Asia/Pacific
- # NUMBER OF COUNTRIES



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# USCIS Officer Training



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Officers undergo extensive training in:

- Refugee law
- Grounds of inadmissibility
- Fraud detection and prevention
- Security protocols
- Interviewing techniques
- Credibility analysis
- Country conditions research

# Refugee Status Determination



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How are refugees recognized?

- The 1951 Refugee Convention is the foundation of international refugee law.
- Host countries have the primary responsibility for identifying who is a refugee.
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) conducts refugee status determinations in certain countries and is a key partner in the USRAP.



# REFUGEE DEFINITION



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## INA § 101(a)(42)(A)\*

any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country 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.

\*INA § 101(a)(42)(A) also applies to asylum adjudications.

# USCIS Eligibility Determination



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Access - Does the principal applicant qualify under a processing priority (*i.e.*, P-1, P-2 or P-3)?

Refugee Definition - Does the principal applicant meet all aspects of the refugee definition under INA 101(a)(42)?

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 3<sup>rd</sup> country?

Admissibility - Is the principal applicant otherwise admissible or do any of the grounds of inadmissibility under INA Section 212(a) apply?

# Security Checks



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## Biographic Checks

- Consular Lookout and Support System (CLASS)
- Security Advisory Opinion (SAO)
- Interagency Check (IAC)

## Biometric Checks

Fingerprint (10 print) collected by USG officers either at prescreening or interview

- FBI NGI (formerly IAFIS)
- DHS (OBIM) IDENT
- DOD ABIS

Refugees are also subject to checks carried out by TSA and CBP on all travelers to the US.

# Confidentiality



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- 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



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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

# Benefits of Refugee Status



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- Refugees have indefinite status granted upon admission
- Refugees are authorized to work incident to status, and receive certain social and health service benefits for a limited period of time
- Derivatives (*i.e.*, spouse and unmarried children under the age of 21) may accompany or follow to join the principal refugee

Refugees are required to apply for adjustment one year after entering the United States, and may apply for naturalization after five years of residency.







More detailed information on the  
U.S. Refugee Admissions Program  
is available at  
[www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)  
under “Humanitarian” programs.