1308.1 OVERVIEW

The Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) programs are separate Federal programs, described in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), but administered by LDSS case managers. A refugee is eligible for RCA only when she or he is not otherwise eligible for Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA). In most cases, such individuals are singles without dependent children under the age of 18 and childless couples.

1308.2 REQUIREMENTS

A. Refugees who live in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area (Baltimore City; and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carol, Harford, and Howard Counties) or the Suburban Washington Area (Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties) apply for RCA at local resettlement agencies. Resettlement agencies are private organizations that have contracts with the U.S. Government to welcome and orient refugees to their new communities. Refugees who reside in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area may access RCA at any of the following organizations:

1. International Rescue Committee-Baltimore
   Baltimore Resettlement Center (BRC)
   3516 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21224
   Phone: 410-327-1885

2. World Relief Anne Arundel
   102-A Sixth Ave NE
   Glen Burnie, MD 21061
   Phone: 410-760-4514

Refugees who live in the Suburban Washington Area may access RCA at any of the following organizations:

3. Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)
   The World Building
   8121 Georgia Avenue Suite 800, Silver Spring, M.D. 20910
   Phone: 301-562-7301

4. International Rescue Committee-Silver Spring
   Suburban Washington Resettlement Center
   8719 Colesville Road, 3rd Floor
   Silver Spring, MD 20910
   Phone: 301-562-8611
B. Refugees living outside of the Baltimore Metropolitan and Suburban Washington Areas must apply for cash assistance, medical assistance, and/or social services, at the local department of social services in the jurisdiction in which they live.

C. The word “refugee” is used here to encompass humanitarian immigrants who are eligible for federal refugee assistance as prescribed in the Refugee Act of 1980. These immigrants include individuals:
   1. Admitted in the U.S. as a refugee under Section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)
   2. Granted asylum under Section 208 of the INA
   3. Cuban or Haitian entrants, in accordance with the requirements of 45 CFR Part 401
   4. Amerasians from Vietnam admitted to the US pursuant to Section 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Appropriations Act, 1988
   5. Victims of a severe form of trafficking certified by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

Iraqi or Afghan Special Immigrant Visa holders (SIVs)

D. For RCA applicants:
   1. Determine eligibility for Temporary Cash Assistance.
      a. At the time of application, determine eligibility for TCA before determining eligibility for RCA.
      b. Refugee families with dependent children living with them, and pregnant women and their spouses, are eligible for TCA if they meet the TCA eligibility requirements.
      c. There is no 8-month limit for refugee families receiving TCA.

E. Issue RCA benefits only if an individual or household is determined ineligible for TCA due to income or household composition.

F. Applicants must be immigrants who:
1. Meet eligibility criteria outlined in section C of this document;

2. Have resided in the US less than the eligibility period for RCA which is 8 months from the date of arrival for refugees and SIVs, 8 months from the date of certification for VOT, or 8 months from the date asylum or parolee status was granted;

3. Are ineligible for any other FIP or federal assistance programs but meet RCA need standards and/or RMA financial eligibility standards;

4. Are awaiting determination of eligibility for SSI or another disability/old age program;

5. Meet income and applicable employment or employability standards;

6. Provide the name of their resettlement agency if they are working with one;

7. Are not full-time students in institutions of higher education, as defined by the Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), unless higher education is part of an individual’s employability plan; and,

1308.3 ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

A. Verify technical eligibility for RCA and/or RMA including eligible immigration status. The correct household composition should be confirmed in the instance that a household contains individuals with different immigration statuses.

B. Determine financial eligibility, which is based on 200% of the current Federal Poverty Level.

C. Determine the RCA payment amount. RCA payments are equal to TCA payment levels.

D. Refugees who apply for RCA between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 14th of each month may receive the full monthly RCA benefit. A refugee who submits an RCA application after the 15<sup>th</sup> is only eligible one half (½) of the monthly allowable benefits.

E. Determine the correct eligibility period based on the date that the client received his or her eligible immigration status.

F. If a refugee is determined ineligible for TCA, refer him or her to a resettlement agency closest to you to be assessed for RCA eligibility.
1308.4 EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES

A. All RCA applicants/customers must register for employment or employability services unless they are exempt.
   1. Local departments may require an individual employed at least 30 hours per week to participate in part-time employability services if it does not interfere with the individual’s job.
   2. Individuals must register for and participate in employment or employability services even if they do not speak English.
   3. Exempt individuals may voluntarily register for employment.

B. All household individuals who are not exempt must develop an individual employability plan as part of their family self-sufficiency plan.

G. All employability services and employment must be appropriate according to RCA standards.

H. Failure or refusal to accept employability services or employment results in one of the following:
1. Deregistration (with no effect on the individual’s cash assistance) of a voluntary registrant from the program, at local department discretion, for up to 90 days from the date of determination of failure or refusal.

2. Termination of assistance when a mandatory registrant voluntarily quits a job or fails or refuses, without good cause, to participate in a program or accept a job offer.

1308.5 MEDICAL SERVICES

1. All refugees must be assessed for eligibility for the Maryland Health Connection (MHC) and other federally funded MA programs.

2. Because income standards for MHC differ from RMA income standards, a refugee who is not eligible for MHC due to income must be assessed for RMA eligibility. A refugee who is not eligible for MHC may access RMA if her household income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL).

3. A refugee may only receive RMA for 8 months from the date of eligibility.

4. RMA services must at least equal services provided under MA.

5. Services in addition to MA, such as those that might be provided by county hospitals, are available to refugees to the extent that funds are available.

6. Refer to medical screening if:
   - The applicant is within 90 days from the date of eligibility for federal refugee assistance. The health screening provides immunizations required for adjustment of immigration status and helps identify/resolve any potential public health concerns.

Note: Medical screening may be provided without prior verification of eligibility for RMA if performed within 90 days of the refugee’s initial entry into the United States. DHR partners with DHMH to administer the Refugee Health Screening Program (IRHS). For more information about IRHS, please contact the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees.