

**LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTH DAKOTA (LSS)
REFUGEE and IMMIGRATION CENTER**

1. What is the difference between a refugee and an immigrant?

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a Refugee as a person who is living outside of his or her country of nationality or habitual residence who is unwilling or unable to return to that country because of a well-founded fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political origin.

Refugees are admitted with refugee status as determined by United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS), a division of the Department of Homeland Security. All refugees must meet the specific refugee criteria as stated in the refugee definition in order to be allowed into the United States under that category. Persons who enter under this category are eligible for Permanent Residency after one year of arrival and are eligible for citizenship within 5 years. All persons with refugee status are also employment authorized from the time of arrival into the U.S. All refugees are immigrants but not all immigrants are refugees.

An immigrant is someone who decides to immigrate to another country of his own free will and is then accepted to that country with one of many immigrant statuses as given out by the USCIS. Such immigrant entrance statuses include work permission, student visas, visitor visas, parolee status, marriage to a US citizen and a variety of other entrance requirements. Any immigrant who is eligible for permanent residency is then also eligible for citizenship.

2. According to the 2009 World Refugee Survey completed by the U. S. Committee for Refugees how many refugees have been identified throughout the world?

There are currently 13.5 Million refugees identified throughout the world. Of that number, 8.1 million refugees have been warehoused in refugee camps for 10 years or more. You are not considered a refugee until you have fled your home country.

3. How many of those individuals were allowed into the United States?

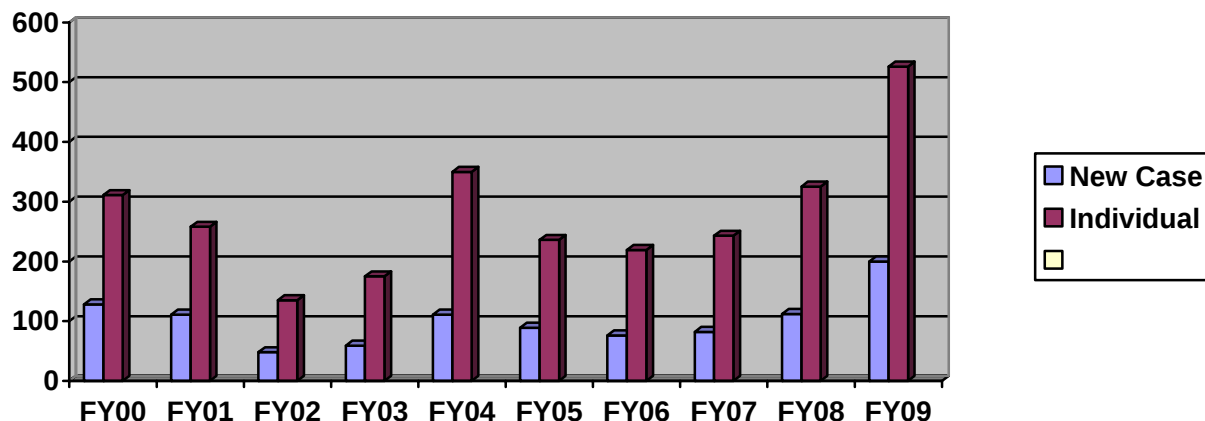
In FY 2009, which ended September 30th, 74,796 refugees were allowed to enter the United States.

4. How many of those people came to South Dakota in FY 2009?

200 families consisting of 546 individuals.

5. How many refugees have come to Sioux Falls over the past ten years?

The following table represents the new arrival numbers from Oct.1/00-Sept.30/09. Total cases equals 827 families involving 2,778 individuals over a 10 year span of time.



6. *Who determines how many refugees will enter the country each year?*

The President. Each year the President signs a Presidential Determination that determines the number of refugee individuals that will be allowed entrance to the United States as well as from what country they will come from. His decision is based upon an extensive report to Congress that describes the World Refugee population.

7. *What do refugees receive in government support upon arrival?*

Each individual entering the United States as a refugee was granted \$425 per person prior to January 1st, 2010 for initial start up expenses such as rent, deposit, initial basic needs. As of January 1st, 2010 the Department of State, Bureau of Population and Refugee Immigration increased that amount to \$900 per person. However, this amount is often not enough to set up a new home. Therefore, LSS-SD relies on the support of the community through in-kind donations of household items, as well small cash donations. All cash donations to the program are utilized to provide basic needs items for newly arriving families.

Refugees are also eligible for an initial 8 months of refugee cash assistance. In order to receive this money employable adults must cooperate with an employment program and with their case managers, attend at least 6 hours a week of English language training (when applicable) and also attend the initial 30 hours of community orientation. As soon as a living wage is earned cash assistance ends. Refugees pay taxes in the same manner as every other resident of the United States.

Refugees also are eligible for a full 8 months of refugee medical assistance. They are eligible for food stamps through the same eligibility process as others in this country. Both refugee cash assistance and refugee medical assistance are federally funded programs through the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

8. *What does LSS receive for its services?*

LSS-SD Refugee and Immigration Program is funded primarily by federal dollars that target service to refugees. Contracts are held with the U.S. Department of State (DOS), Bureau of Population and Refugee Migration and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), division of the Office of Refugee resettlement. The DHHS allocates funding based on a formula that includes a variety of services to refugees for up to five years. These funds are utilized to provide ongoing case management services, employment placement services, and English Language Training services for Refugees.

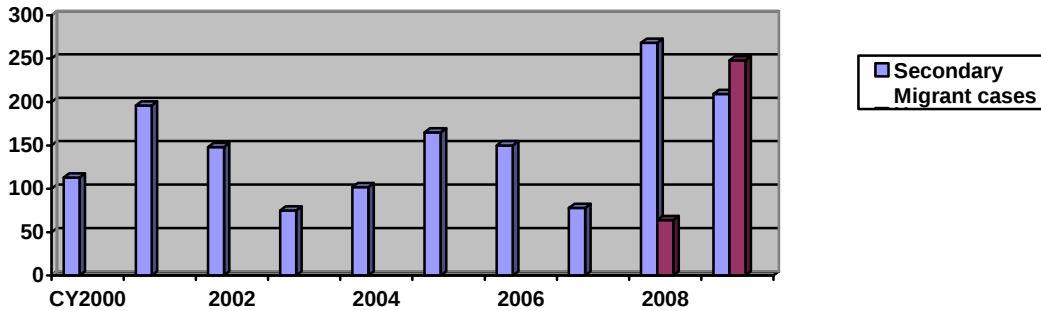
Other sources of funding include State Department of Labor dollars that are utilized to provide English Language Training to immigrants as well as refugees. Fees for service support the program within the Community Interpreter Service and the Immigration Service. Fees are nominal and are utilized to support operations of the particular programs components only.

9. *To what extent does LSS-SD collaborate with other community organizations in its service to refugees?*

Extensively. We work closely with the following community agency in providing service to refugees:

- Sioux Falls Public Schools – The Family Immersion Center
- Falls Community Health Center – health care
- Volunteers of America— Evenstart program and Pre-GED and GED training
- State of South Dakota, Department of Labor – Adult Basic Education funding
- South Dakota Department of Social Services – refugee medical assistance, food stamps, One Stop Career Center – TANF program and employment services
- Children’s Inn – a Women’s Shelter
- Several churches – ongoing support from congregations of a wide variety of denominations
- Multiple volunteers from the a variety of sources including churches, businesses, colleges and the private sector

10. How many refugees have been served by this program that have secondarily migrated to Sioux Falls from other parts of the United States?



Total number of secondary migrants who chose to move to Sioux Falls from other parts of the United States, and who received services from LSS-SD, from January 1st, 2000 to September 30th, 2009 was 1,504 individuals. In addition, another 312 individuals secondarily migrated to Huron, South Dakota during that time.

11. What services does the Refugee & Immigration Center provide to refugees and immigrants?

The following is a list of services currently available through LSS-SD:

- A. Reception and Placement Services** provides pre and post arrival services to refugees through the first 90 days. This program serves all newly arriving refugees who come to South Dakota directly through LSS-SD Refugee & Immigration Center, from Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service.
- B. Match Grant Program** provides a fast track to self-sufficiency involving church sponsorship, donations, and volunteers, resulting in refugees becoming economically self-sufficient within four months.
- C. Interim Cash Assistance** available to all newly arrived refugees during their first eight months in the United States. All eligibility determinations are completed and followed through this program.
- D. Community Orientation classes** consisting of 30 hours of instruction are held monthly. Topics presented include laws in the US, driver's license information, rental agreements, shopping, health care, education and employment. These classes are available to all newcomers.
- E. Case Management Services include:**
 - information and referral
 - assistance with removal of barriers to employment
 - assistance with access to needed education, medical issues and referrals, issues involving housing, transportation or other barriers to self-sufficiency as identified.
 - All services are provided in a manner that is linguistically and culturally appropriate either through the use of bilingual/bicultural staff or interpreters for up to five years post arrival.
 - Presentations to community agencies and organizations regarding refugee resettlement and diversity issues
- F. Employment Services include:**
 - Pre-employment training involving job skills review and planning, workplace expectations, application completion, resume building, and interviewing.
 - Job outreach to employers, employment placement, job upgrades and follow-up services.
 - These services involve job retention and job satisfaction of the employee as well as job placement satisfaction by the employer.
 - Presentations to employers and other community groups regarding working with an ethnically diverse workforce
- G. English Language Training (ELT) Classes** – ELT classes are currently being provided four days a week, twice a day, as well as two evening a week. They consist of four separate ELT levels from beginning literacy, for those with no English ability through intermediate English training. Classes focus both on oral and written skills. All adults are

tested using the Best test prior to enrollment into class to ensure appropriate placement. Other classes include math skills, basic computer and citizenship.

- H. Community Interpreter Services (CIS)** currently employs approximately 50 on-call staff who have the cumulative capability of speaking 35 different languages and dialects. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Currently assists over 350 customers within the area. Receives over 100 calls per day requesting interpreters.
- I. Immigration Services** is an accredited program through the Bureau of Immigration Appeals. This service employs an immigration attorney and an accredited immigration specialists that help clients with immigration issues such as filing appropriate forms for relatives, adjusting status to permanent residency, filing for citizenship, applying for employment authorization documents, and completing applications for travel documents. As an accredited agency this program may only charge nominal fees to clients for service. Therefore, the fees received are much lower than those paid to attorneys in private practice. The fees collected are utilized to pay for program operations only.