



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

The Refugee's Journey to America

Definition of a Refugee

The U.S. Refugee Act of 1980 adopted the United Nations definition of a refugee as “a person with a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.”



Flees country of origin to a relatively safe neighboring country or refugee camp

Apply to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for protection. Apply for permanent resettlement in a resettlement country where the UNHCR makes sure you qualify as a refugee.

Wait for an overseas Processing Entity (an agency contracted with the Department of State Bureau of Population and Migration) to prepare a case file

Interview with the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration services to demonstrate you qualify as a refugee.

Receives a medical examination and basic cultural orientation to the U.S.

If you qualify your application becomes a “case” and is assigned to a national agency such as Church World Service.

Leave country of asylum and arrive at the airport, being met by staff from the local agency and welcome them to North Carolina.