

Virginia Department of Social Services-  
Office of New Americans

---

*Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program Manual*

OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS



# Table of Contents

<b>Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program Manual .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Index of Tables .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.0 Legal Base and Framework .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.1 Federal Service Delivery Flow.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.2 Virginia Refugee Services Delivery.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.0 Eligible Populations .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.1 Virginia Refugee Program Services Model .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1.1 Comprehensive Resettlement Plan .....	10
2.1.2 Case Management.....	10
2.1.3 Virginia Community Capacity Initiative .....	10
<b>2.2 Special Federal and State Requirements .....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.2.1 Access to Services by Persons with Limited English Proficiency.....	11
2.2.2 Religion and Proselytization.....	11
2.2.3 Confidentiality.....	11
2.2.4 Freedom of Information .....	12
2.2.5 Privacy Protection .....	12
2.2.6 Reporting Suspected Abuse & Neglect.....	12
<b>3.0 Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.1 Eligibility for Benefit Programs .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.2 SNAP Work Requirements.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.3 TANF Work Requirements .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.4 TANF Mandatory School Attendance and Immunization Requirements.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.5 Counting Special Payments to Refugee-Eligible Populations .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.6 Eligibility for Foster Care Services.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.0 Refugee Cash Assistance Program.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.1 Program Purpose.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.2 RCA/TANF Relationship .....</b>	<b>16</b>
4.2.1 Similarities.....	16
4.2.2 Differences.....	17
<b>4.3 Time Limits .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4.4 Period of Coverage .....</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>4.5</b>	<b>Application Rules.....</b>	<b>18</b>
4.5.1	Special Data Entry Reporting Rules.....	19
<b>4.6</b>	<b>Eligibility Rules.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4.7</b>	<b>RCA Work Requirement.....</b>	<b>22</b>
4.7.1	Background.....	22
4.7.2	RSSEP Registration Requirement.....	23
4.7.3	Exemption Criteria.....	24
4.7.4	RSSEP Participation Requirements.....	24
4.7.5	Notification of Non-Participation.....	24
<b>4.8</b>	<b>Case Transfers.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>4.9</b>	<b>Cash Payment Amount.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>4.10</b>	<b>Payment and Reimbursement Process.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>4.11</b>	<b>Check Handling Procedures.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>4.12</b>	<b>Overpayments and Underpayments.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>4.13</b>	<b>RCA Fraud Reporting.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>4.14</b>	<b>Notices and Appeals.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Refugee Medical Assistance Program (RMA).....</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1	Program Purpose.....	29
5.2	Eligibility Rules.....	29
5.3	RMA/Cardinal Care Comparison.....	30
5.4	Time Limits.....	30
5.5	Period of Coverage.....	31
5.6	Application Rules.....	31
5.7	Case Establishment Process.....	32
5.8	Case Transfers.....	32
5.9	Notices and Appeals.....	32
5.10	RMA Fraud Reporting.....	33
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Refugee Social Services Employment Program.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Program Overview and Policies.....</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1.1	Program Objective.....	34
6.1.2	Eligibility for Services.....	34
6.1.3	Priority in Provision of Services.....	34
6.1.4	Registration Process.....	35
6.1.5	Participation Requirements.....	35
6.1.6	Good Cause Reasons for Non-Participation.....	36
6.1.7	Consequences of Non-Participation.....	37
6.1.8	Closure and re-opening of cases.....	38

6.1.9	Cash Assistance Work Requirement and Coordination with LDSS.....	38
6.1.10	RCA Work Requirements .....	38
6.1.11	TANF Work Requirement and Coordination with Local DSSs.....	39
6.1.12	Sanctions for Non-Participation .....	40
6.1.13	Documentation (VNIS).....	41
6.1.14	Remote Placement Services.....	41
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Service Delivery Components .....</b>	<b>42</b>
6.2.1	Comprehensive Resettlement Plan .....	42
6.2.2	Case Management.....	42
6.2.3	Employment Services .....	43
6.2.3.1	RSSEP Initial Interview.....	43
6.2.3.2	On-going RSSEP Case Management Requirements .....	43
6.2.3.3	English Language Training .....	44
6.2.3.4	Employment Support Services.....	45
6.2.3.5	Skills Training for Enhanced Earnings Potential (STEP) .....	45
6.2.3.6	Required Forms.....	46
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program.....</b>	<b>47</b>
7.1	Introduction.....	47
7.2	Eligibility .....	47
7.3	Placement Options .....	48
7.4	Program Goals and Case Plans.....	49
7.4.1	Independent Living.....	50
7.4.2	Education and Training Vouchers.....	50
7.4.3	Medical Care .....	51
7.5	Administration.....	51
7.5.1	Obtaining Legal Custody.....	52
7.6	Interstate Movement .....	52
<b>Appendix A: Acronyms, Terms and Links .....</b>		<b>53</b>
<b>Appendix B: Table of Attachments .....</b>		<b>59</b>

## Index of Tables

Table 1: VRRP Manual Acronyms.....	53
Table 2: VRRP Manual Terms .....	57
Table 3: Table of Links .....	58
Table 4: VRRP Manual Attachments.....	59

# 1.0 Legal Base and Framework

1. Legal Base – The U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program (USRRP) is a humanitarian program. The USRRP legislative basis is the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Act and the Refugee Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-212). The regulatory basis for the program is 45 CFR, Part 400, Refugee Resettlement Program.
2. State Plan – The Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program (VRRP) State Plan certifies that the Commonwealth of Virginia refugee service delivery follows the requirements in 45 CFR, Part 400.5 (I) (4).
3. Program Funding – The VRRP is federally funded. Funding authority is 45 CFR, Part 400 Subpart J, Federal Funding.
4. Program Goal – The goal is to assist new refugee-eligible populations with the opportunity to achieve their full potential in the United States by providing critical resources to assist them in becoming integrated members of American society. This includes client-centered case management, health and mental health services, and data-informed decision making.

## 1.1 Federal Service Delivery Flow

1. The U.S. Department of State (DOS) contracts with national voluntary agencies (VOLAG) to provide initial services under the Refugee Reception and Placement Program. The program funding flow is directly between the VOLAG and their affiliate offices in each state. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), Office of New Americans (ONA-RS) does not administer this funding.
2. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) provides funding and guidance for service delivery during and beyond the reception and placement period for refugees and other eligible refugee populations.
3. ORR awards some grant funding directly to states, some directly to VOLAGs, and some directly to local VOLAG affiliate offices.
  - a. ORR grants awarded to VDSS fund employment services, English language training, time limited cash and medical assistance, refugee medical screenings, assessment of family needs and referral to services, and foster care services to unaccompanied refugee minors. ONA-RS administers these programs.
  - b. One of the ORR grants awarded to VOLAGs fund a separate employment and cash assistance program called the Matching Grant Program (MGP). VOLAG affiliate offices in Virginia provide MGP services. ONA-RS does not administer this program; however, VOLAGs are required to coordinate with the State Refugee Coordinator on the number of planned MGP enrollments and to share MGP client outcome data with ONA-RS.

## 1.2 Virginia Refugee Services Delivery

1. ONA-RS administers the VRRP. The ONA-RS Director is the Virginia State Refugee Coordinator (SRC).
2. The Virginia State Refugee Coordinator conducts the following activities:
  - a. Administers federal refugee services grants.
  - b. Monitors expenditures of funds and delivery of services.
  - c. Represents the refugee program on behalf of the state.
  - d. Serves as the liaison between the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement and the local service providers to ensure coordination of public and private resources for the benefit of refugees.
  - e. Consults with the DOS on the capacity of Virginia's communities to resettle the DOS proposed number of arrivals each year.

**Federal Grants administered by ONA-RS include the following:**

- a. The Refugee Social Services grant funds employment services, English language training, and employment support services.
- b. Four Refugee Social Services Set-aside grants fund services for school assistance, youth mentoring, older refugees, and health education services.
- c. The Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance Program grant funds the Refugee Cash Assistance Program, the Refugee Medical Assistance Program, Refugee Medical Screenings, and the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program.
- d. Afghan Supplemental Appropriation (ASA) funds provides Afghan humanitarian parolees with both traditional refugee support services and additional resources, including housing needs.

**Refugee Service Providers include:**

- a. Local departments of social services process Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance applications.
- b. The Virginia Department of Health, Newcomer Health Program manages initial refugee medical screenings.
- c. The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services provides mental health education and training resources.
- d. Non-profit private agencies provide case management and direct services and facilitate access to community services.
- e. Two non-profit agencies provide foster care services to unaccompanied refugee minors.

## 2.0 Eligible Populations

To be eligible to receive VRRP benefits and services an individual must provide documentation that he or she has one of the legal immigration statuses listed below. Attachment 1 - VRRP Eligibility Documentation defines acceptable documentation for eligible VRRP statuses. When

used in this manual, unless noted otherwise, the term refugee refers to anyone who falls into any of these statuses.

1. A refugee is a person outside his/her country of origin because of a well-founded fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in particular social group. Refugee status is granted before the person's arrival in the United States.
2. An asylee is a person who, after arrival in the U.S., applies for asylum and demonstrates that he/she qualifies under the "refugee" definition. Once granted asylum, the asylee is eligible for all services and support offered by the VRRP.
3. A Cuban/Haitian entrant is a person from Cuba or Haiti who has been admitted (or paroled) into the United States under P.L. 96-422 or obtains that immigration status after arrival.
4. An Amerasian is a person of American and Asian descent, especially one whose mother is Asian and whose father is American. Certain Amerasians from Vietnam are admitted to the United States as immigrants under the provisions of specific federal laws. These individuals were born in Vietnam after January 1, 1962, and before January 1, 1976, and were fathered by U.S. citizens. Eligible spouses, children, and parents or guardians also qualify for the program.
5. An Afghan or Iraqi national with special immigrant visa (SIV) status whose SIV status was granted under Section 8120 of Pub. L. No. 111-118, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2010.
6. Citizens or nationals of Afghanistan (including unaccompanied minors) paroled in the U. S. under section 292(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act between July 31, 2021, and September 30, 2022.
7. A spouse of child of an individual described in item f, who is paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2022. These individuals are eligible for services until March 31, 2023.
8. A parent or legal guardian of an individual described in item f, who is determined to be an unaccompanied child as defined by 6 U.S.C. § 279(g)(2) who is paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2022.



***Note: Individuals defined in items 6, 7, and 8 are eligible for benefits and services from their eligibility date until March 31, 2023, or until the end of the individuals parole term, whichever is later.***

9. Citizens and nationals of Afghanistan for whom refugee and entrant assistance is authorized (for example, Special Immigrant Visa holders, Special Immigrants with Conditional Permanent Resident status, SI/SQ parolees, refugees, and asylees, whose eligibility date is on or after July 31, 2021.) These individuals are eligible for services for the traditional ORR eligibility timeframe.
10. A Victim of Trafficking is a non-citizen who has been certified by the federal office of Refugee Resettlement as a victim of a severe form of human trafficking. [Public Law, No. 106-386, Div. A, 114 Stat.1464 (2000).] Victims of trafficking are eligible for benefits and services to the same extent as refugees. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act defines trafficking as:
11. Certain Lawful Permanent Residents are persons who previously held one of the statuses listed above and currently hold the immigration status of legal permanent resident (LPR).
12. An Unaccompanied Refugee Minor is a child under 18 who lawfully enters the country unaccompanied by a parent or an immediate adult relative, or who has no known immediate adult relative in the U.S. and has been classified by USCIS as a refugee unaccompanied minor.

***Note: The federal Office of Refugee Resettlement may admit into the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program youth with special immigrant juvenile (SIJ) status or other eligible statuses.***

Groups that are not eligible for refugee services include but are not limited to the following:

1. Persons who formerly held refugee status and have become naturalized citizens of the U.S.
2. Persons who were admitted to the U.S. as immigrants and do not have one of the U.S. immigration statuses listed above.

## 2.1 Virginia Refugee Program Services Model

In accordance with the Virginia State Plan, the framework for the Virginia Refugee Program Services Model in Virginia is that clients are best served by a community-based system of care that is comprehensive, coordinated, and responsive to the strengths and needs of clients and their families. Comprehensive case management connects clients with service agencies, organizations, and volunteers in the communities in which clients live and work. There are three key components of the Virginia Resettlement Model.

### 2.1.1 Comprehensive Resettlement Plan

Comprehensive resettlement is a continuum of service delivery that leads to full participation in the community and eventually becoming a U.S. citizen. Comprehensive resettlement planning is the method by which each client's initial and on-going service needs are identified and tracked until the client's case is closed. Service providers link clients to community resources.

### 2.1.2 Case Management

Case Management includes initial and on-going assessment of client need; linking clients to available resources; communicating with clients and services providers on coordination of needed services; and monitoring the client's progress.

### 2.1.3 Virginia Community Capacity Initiative

The Virginia Community Capacity Initiative (VCCI) involves key community stakeholders and keep members informed of refugee arrivals and service delivery issues, provide opportunities for input on issues that impact community service delivery and identify gaps in community capacity and resources. The three primary goals of the VCCI are to:

1. Ensure that VDSS/ONA has accurate & relevant information for its annual reviews and for its input into the U.S. Department of State decision-making process regarding resettlement in Virginia.
2. Determine a capacity baseline for each receiving community's short and long-term ability to resettle refugees using ONA's capacity indicators, which are supported by the community dialogue group.

3. Promote successful refugee integration as a long-term strategy toward durable economic self-sufficiency and social and civic adjustment; and create welcoming receiving communities for refugee groups resettled throughout Virginia.

## 2.2 Special Federal and State Requirements

### 2.2.1 Access to Services by Persons with Limited English Proficiency

All state, local, and community agencies receiving funding directly and indirectly through the Office of New Americans-Refugee Services are to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which requires that persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) have access to benefits and services for which they may be eligible. As they apply to refugee service delivery, these requirements include:

1. Having a procedure for identifying the language needs of the refugee.
2. Providing proficient interpreters in a timely manner during hours of operation.
3. Having written guidance regarding interpreter and translation services.
4. Disseminating agency LEP guidance to staff.

### 2.2.2 Religion and Proselytization

1. Refugees may not be discriminated against because of their religious preference.
2. No staff person or volunteer may apply pressure upon a refugee to convert to a specific religion.

### 2.2.3 Confidentiality

Disclosure of certain information about a refugee between the local resettlement agency and the local department of social services is allowed when it is directly necessary for the administration of and delivery of refugee services and entitlement services (benefit programs).

1. The individual's name, address, and phone number as well as whether or not he or she has applied for or is receiving cash assistance may be disclosed without written consent of the refugee.
2. Other information may be shared with the written consent of the refugee, or in the case of a minor, the refugee's parent or guardian. Attachment 7 - Release of Information Form provides permission to release case information other than the information listed above.

## 2.2.4 Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act does not apply to case records. Case information, except medical records addressing mental health issues, can be released to the refugee or to a guardian, 'guardian ad litem', and authorized representative who has proper identification and a release of information document.

*\*Exception: The refugee or his representative may not review the client's personal mental health records, including psychiatric and psychological examination reports if the treating physician has made a written statement that a review of such records would be injurious to the refugee's physical or mental health or well-being.*

## 2.2.5 Privacy Protection

The Virginia Privacy Protection Act of 1976 (Title 2.1, Chapter 26, Code of Virginia) ensures that agencies maintaining records on individuals safeguard the privacy of that information. The Principles for Disclosure intended to safeguard individual privacy include:

1. Not sharing data in Virginia Department of Social Services data base systems that contain personal information in an automated case file.
2. Only collecting case information that is required or authorized by federal and state governmental agencies.
3. Entering accurate and current information into case files and electronic records.
4. Allowing an individual to correct, erase, or amend inaccurate, obsolete, or irrelevant information.
5. Using client data only for the purposes related to the delivery of refugee services.

## 2.2.6 Reporting Suspected Abuse & Neglect

Any refugee service provider is required to immediately report to the local department of social services any suspicion that a child, elderly person, or a disabled person they are serving is being abused or neglected.

## 3.0 Eligibility for Public Assistance Programs

Refugees are qualified immigrants who are exempt from the five-year wait on eligibility for receipt of public benefits. The term refugee-eligible populations refers to refugees, asylees, Iraqis and Afghans with special immigrant visas, Afghan humanitarian parolees, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, victims of human trafficking, certain Amerasians, and unaccompanied refugee minors.

### 3.1 Eligibility for Benefit Programs

1. Refugees are entitled to apply for the same benefits and services that are available to U.S. citizens. If they meet the financial and non-financial requirements of those programs, they are eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medical Assistance Programs, the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Energy Assistance Program, General Relief Program, and any other benefit program administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS).
2. Refugees, who meet TANF or Medicaid income requirements, but do not meet a categorical requirement, may be eligible for time limited refugee cash assistance (RCA) and refugee medical assistance (RMA). The rules for these programs are contained in Chapters 3 and 4 of this manual.
3. The process to determine a refugee's eligibility for any of the public assistance programs, including RCA and RMA, begins with the Application for Benefits, which is completed on-line; in person at a local department of social services (LDSS); or by phone. Refugees and agencies assisting refugees to apply for benefits are encouraged to use the on-line application.
4. Refugees may apply for legal permanent residency (LPR) status after being in the U.S for one year. Afghan and Iraqis with special immigrant visa status arrive in the U.S. with LPR status. Individuals with conditional permanent residence status are granted LPR status for a limited period of time. Whether obtained before or after U.S. arrival, refugee-eligible populations with LPR status are categorically eligible for SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, RCA, and RMA.

### 3.2 SNAP Work Requirements

Refugees who are able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) are required to meet the ABAWD SNAP work requirement unless the refugee is participating in the Refugee Social Services Employment Program.

### 3.3 TANF Work Requirements

A refugee must participate in the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) if the refugee is not exempt from the TANF work requirements. Participation in the Refugee Social Services Employment Program is not a TANF work requirement exemption.

### 3.4 TANF Mandatory School Attendance and Immunization Requirements

1. Newly arrived refugee children may not be in school at the time of TANF application due to situations over which the family has no control. For example, there may be a delay in obtaining the required school medical examination or the child may arrive with medical conditions that prevent immediate school enrollment. In these instances, develop a plan as described in the TANF Manual, Section 201.3 D.
2. If a school-aged refugee child is not enrolled in school at the time of the initial TANF application, the reason is normally not truancy but due to a situation over which the applicant has no control. If the application is made in the summer, there may be no record of school attendance if the family recently arrived in Virginia. Follow the TANF guidance at 201.3 regarding applications made during the summer months. If the household is otherwise eligible, approve the case. Set an alert in VaCMS for the month school is scheduled to begin.
3. If the TANF school enrollment requirements cannot be met following the TANF rules above, approve the case for Refugee Cash Assistance until the child meets the requirement. When the child meets the school enrollment requirements, move the case to TANF if the family continues to meet other TANF eligibility requirements.
4. If the household is otherwise eligible, the TANF application can be approved without verification of immunization. Verification of the completed immunization must be provided at the time of TANF redetermination.

### 3.5 Counting Special Payments to Refugee-Eligible Populations

1. The Reception and Placement (R&P) Program and the Afghan Placement and Assistance (APA) Program are Department of State (DOS) funded programs that provides initial resettlement services to newly arrived refugees. Local affiliates of national voluntary agencies, under contract with DOS, provide R&P and APA Program services. The services include assistance with shelter, clothing, food, and transportation. These services are delivered in a variety of ways. Some are direct services, some are vendor payments, and some are minimal cash payments. These payments are generally for 30 days from the date of arrival in the U.S. Direct (non-cash) services may be for 30 to 180 days.

- a. For TANF, RMA, and RCA, the R&P and APA cash payments are not counted in determining eligibility.
  - b. For Medicaid, cash payments made to the assistance unit are counted as unearned income. Payments provided directly to vendors on behalf of the assistance unit or in-kind contributions (food, clothing supplies, etc.) are not counted as income.
  - c. For SNAP, a one-time only R&P payment is excluded because it meets the definition of “an infrequent/irregular stream of money; a lump sum payment...” Whether other payments are counted as income is dependent upon (i) when the payments are issued and (ii) if the payments are provided directly to the individual household members. Payments provided directly to vendors on behalf of SNAP household members or provided as an in-kind benefit generally are not counted as income. Payments may be excluded as income if they are an infrequent/irregular stream of money; a lump sum payment; or a payment from a charitable group that is less than \$300 in a calendar quarter. Income provisions are addressed in Part 11 of the SNAP Certification Manual
2. Local non-profit organizations provide Matching Grant Program (MGP) services. MGP services include initial employment and cash assistance to newly arrived refugees determined to be immediately employable. The MGP is an alternative to TANF and RCA. The goal is the attainment of economic self-sufficiency without accessing TANF and RCA. MGP services are available to the refugee up to eight months from date of arrival into the U.S.

The MGP cash payment

- a. Is not counted for RMA
- b. Is counted for Medicaid, TANF, and RCA.
- c. Is counted for SNAP if made as a direct payment to the client.
- d. Is not counted for SNAP if made directly to a vendor on behalf of a SNAP household member

*Note: LDSSs are to notify the local refugee service provider when a refugee is determined eligible for TANF or RCA. If the person is receiving MGP assistance, the resettlement agency is required to remove the person from the MGP.*

3. Special Considerations
- a. If an RMA recipient is ineligible for Medicaid solely due to R&P and MGP payments, when the R&P or MGP payments end, the case is re-assessed for Medicaid eligibility. A new application is not required.
  - b. If TANF or RCA is denied due to MGP Program payments, when the MGP payments end, a new TANF or RCA application is required.

- c. In rare situations, a refugee-eligible person may apply for TANF or RCA prior to learning of their eligibility for the MG Program. In these situations, the person may request that his or her application be withdrawn or the TANF or RCA case be closed. If a RCA payment has been made, the LDSS and resettlement office may coordinate the return of the RCA payment.
- d. In situations where a client is receiving both MGP payments and RCA or TANF payments, an assessment is made to determine whether a fraud investigation should be made.

## 3.6 Eligibility for Foster Care Services

Children in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program (URM) receive, through the Commonwealth Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services Foster Care Programs, the full range of services and benefits for which all Virginia's Foster children are entitled. The Medicaid eligibility determination process and procedures for children in the URM program are the same as for all other foster youth. URM youth who age-out of foster care are eligible for Medicaid under the Former Foster Care category until they reach the age of 26.

## 4.0 Refugee Cash Assistance Program

### 4.1 Program Purpose

The Refugee Cash Assistance Program (RCA) provides time limited cash assistance to eligible populations that meet the financial criteria of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF), but do not meet non-financial requirements. For example, adults with no dependent children may receive RCA.

### 4.2 RCA/TANF Relationship

#### 4.2.1 Similarities

Some RCA rules mirror the TANF rules. For example, the cash payment amount is the same, the right to appeal is the same, the collection of overpayments, repayment of underpayment is the same, and case transfers are the same.



## 4.2.2 Differences

Some RCA rules do not mirror TANF. For example, only income on the date of application is counted. Also, if an applicant applies for RCA on June 10th, and became unemployed on June 1st, the client has no income on the date of application. The first month of assistance is not prorated from the date of application. A person who quits a job or refuses employment without good cause within 30 days prior to applying for RCA is ineligible for RCA. There is a 12-month time limit on receipt of assistance from the date of eligibility. There is no requirement for a social security number at time of application or during the period of eligibility. RCA and TANF have different work requirements. RCA applicants and recipients meet the RCA work requirement through registration and participation in the Refugee Social Services Employment Program (RSSEP). The Office of New Americans-Refugee Services (ONA-RS) administers RSSEP and contracts with local non-profit agencies to provide RSSEP services.

## 4.3 Time Limits

There is a 12-month time limit on the receipt of RCA. RCA recipients, who continue to meet TANF financial requirements, are eligible for RCA for up to 12 months from their date of arrival or date of receiving a refugee-eligible status. The date the 12-month eligibility period begins is not the same for each refugee-eligible status.

For refugees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Afghans and Iraqis with special immigrant visas, Ukrainians who enter the U.S. with that status, it begins the month of arrival. Some of these individuals receive a refugee eligible status after arrival in the U.S. For these individuals, eligibility begins the month the refugee-eligible status is given.

For asylees, eligibility begins the month asylum is granted.

For victims of human trafficking, it begins the month the certification letter is issued.

For Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees the date of eligibility is May 21, 2022, or the individual's date of humanitarian parole, whichever is later. If an individual from either of these populations was paroled and entered the United States between February 24, 2022, and May 21, 2022, their date of eligibility is May 21, 2022. If they entered the United States after May 21, 2022, their date of eligibility is their date of humanitarian parole.

For Afghanistan Humanitarian Parolees who entered via Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) the eligibility period is from October 1, 2021 (if the individual entered the community between July 31, 2021 and September 30, 2021), or their date of entry into the community (for example, the date on which an Afghan SIV holder or parolee departed an Operation Allies Refuge/Operation Allies Welcome (OAR/OAW) Safe Haven), whichever is later until March 31, 2023, or the end of the individual's parole term, whichever is later, unless otherwise amended by law or the individual gains another ORR-eligible category or status.

## 4.4 Period of Coverage

The period of coverage begins on the first day of the month in which the refugee submits the Application for Benefits. The eligibility period and the period of coverage may vary depending on when the individual applies for benefits. For example, if an individual is granted asylum on April 1 and applies for benefits on April 10, their coverage period is twelve months. If the individual does not apply for benefits until July, the coverage period is nine months. There are no retroactive payments back to the date of entry into the U.S.

## 4.5 Application Rules

The Application for Benefits serves as the application for RCA, whether made on-line via the Virginia [CommonHelp Application](#), in-person, or by phone.

Applications from non-citizens with a refugee-eligible status that have TANF checked are assessed for RCA eligibility even if RCA is not checked on the paper or on-line application or is not referenced in a phone application.

A separate Benefit Programs Application is not required if more than one person within the same household is named on the application and some of the applicants are eligible for TANF and some are eligible for RCA.

When one application covers multiple RCA cases, the signature of either an authorized refugee resettlement staff or the head of the refugee family household is sufficient. Multiple signatures are not required.

### 4.5.1 Special Data Entry Reporting Rules

The reporting of RCA enrollment data is a federal reporting requirement. Local departments of social services (LDSS) are required to enter RCA case approvals and case closure dates into the [Virginia Newcomer Information System \(VNIS\)](#) for federal reporting purposes.

The LDSS security officer grants VNIS access. The LDSS staff requesting access would complete the following steps:

1. Complete a SAMS Request Form.
2. In the VNIS Access Level section, select VIEW Cases (LDSS Caseworker).
3. Leave the VNIS location fields blank.

Detailed steps for entering RCA data into VNIS Include:

1. Use Microsoft Internet Explorer.
2. Log onto VNIS using LDAP ID.
3. Search using either the client's name or alien number. (If the client is in the VNIS system, skip next step)
4. If the client is not in VNIS, click on New Family Case. Enter demographic information. The Intake Date is the date of intake at the LDSS office. Save the record. If there is more than one client on the RCA case, add additional clients to the same case by clicking on Add Client.
5. To enter the start and end dates, click on the RCA tab.
  - a. The RCA Start Date is the date the Application for Benefits was approved. Select FIPS. Click Add
  - b. The RCA End Date is the date the RCA case is closed. Select a termination reason. Click Add to save.

## 4.6 Eligibility Rules

1. Screen the application for TANF eligibility before screening for RCA. If an applicant(s) does not have dependent children a TANF application does not have to be processed, the case can automatically be screened for RCA.
2. An applicant is eligible for RCA if the person meets the TANF financial requirements, does not meet one of the non-financial requirements, has documentation showing one of the refugee eligible groups, and meets the RCA work requirements.

*Note: The RCA work requirement applies in all geographic areas of the state. The RCA work requirement is met by participation in the Refugee Social Services Employment Program (RSSEP). by Non-profit service providers under contract with ONA provides RSSEP services. For some localities, RSSEP services are provided in person. For some localities, RSSEP services are*

*provided remotely. Section G explains the RCA work requirement rules as they apply to clients who live in each geographic area of the state.*

3. In most instances, RCA recipients are adults without dependent children. A family with children would receive RCA when:
  - a. there is a delay in approving the application due to TANF application system processing issues or
  - b. the TANF denial reason is no social security number.
4. A new application is not required when a RCA recipient becomes eligible for TANF unless the initial TANF application was denied and it has been over 30 calendar days from the application date, and a denial notice as was sent to the applicant.
5. After RCA approval, recipients must follow TANF reporting requirements for income changes.
6. A new application is not required when a TANF case closes and the recipient is eligible for RCA. For example, during the 12-month eligibility period a youth turns 18 and will not graduate before his 19th birthday. Close the TANF case and open a RCA case. A new application is not required.
7. Financial requirements unique to RCA.
  - a. Income on the date of application, not the average income over the application-processing period, is the criteria for financial eligibility for RCA.

*Note: This rule applies both when the applicant applies in the month of arrival or during the twelve-month period after arrival. For example, a refugee arrives in April, obtains employment, and does not apply for cash assistance. In August, the refugee becomes unemployed prior to the end of the twelve-month period of eligibility. The refugee applies for cash assistance. Count only income on the date of application. If the applicant is unemployed on the date of application, they do not have income.*

- b. Do not count cash payments made to the refugee under the Department of State Reception and Placement program or any equivalent programs including but not limited to Welcome Corps as income or assets.
- c. ORR permits and encourages states to disregard cash grants that a refugee receives from a federal resettlement initiative that is not R&P or an R&P

equivalent, in the same amount as they would disregard R&P cash grants. If another initiative provides a larger cash grant than the traditional R&P program, the state or PPP may only disregard the amount that the client would receive under traditional R&P, to maintain equity between refugees being served under different resettlement initiatives.

- d. Do not count the income of a volunteer assisting a refugee. Refugee populations are not 'sponsored' as that term is defined for other non-citizen applicants.
- e. Do not count cash payments made to the refugee through the Department of Health and Human Services Matching Grant Program. For example, a husband arrives on April 1 and requests MG Program services. He does not apply for cash assistance. Do not count cash payments made to the refugee under the Department of State Reception and Placement program as income or assets. His wife arrives in June and applies for cash assistance. Count the husband's MG Program payments in determining the wife's eligibility for RCA. [See the TANF Manual, TANF Grant Calculations, Appendix 3, Page 1, Step 1 and Step 2 (e)]

#### 8. Special Considerations

- a. There is no federal requirement that RCA recipients have a social security number or show proof of application for a social security number at the time of application.
- b. If there is a situation which causes delays in the approval of a TANF application for more than 30 days, RCA payments are approved until the TANF eligibility can be determined.
- c. For applicants who have applied for Supplemental Security Income, RCA payments continue, within the twelve-month maximum period, until the client begins receiving SSI benefits. For example, a refugee is receiving a monthly RCA payment. The person receives an SSI approval notice. Send an RCA closure notice. The SSI payment amount will increase upon notice that RCA payments have ended.

## 4.7 RCA Work Requirement

### 4.7.1 Background

Virginia's RCA Program follows TANF application and payment rules; however, it does not follow the TANF work requirements rules. Federal RCA regulations prohibit states from applying TANF work requirements to RCA applicants and recipients. There are separate regulations that define the RCA work requirement. In Virginia, the RCA work requirement is met by registering for and participating in RSSEP. RSSEP is a federally regulated program that provides job counseling, job application assistance, job development, job placement, job orientation, job retention, and English language instruction tailored to the linguistic and cultural needs of refugee populations. ONA administers the federal grant that funds RSSEP service delivery. Non-profit agencies under contract with ONA provide RSSEP services available in all geographic locations in the state. RSSEP services are provided directly in some geographic areas and remotely in other geographic areas.

Areas where RSSEP services are provided directly or remotely are:

1. Central Region
  - a. Direct Services –Chesterfield/Colonial Heights, Hanover, Henrico, Richmond City
  - b. Remote Services – Amelia, Buckingham, Caroline, Charles City, Cumberland, Essex, Fluvanna, Goochland, Hopewell, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Nottoway, Petersburg, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Richmond County, Westmoreland
2. Eastern Region
  - a. Direct Services -- Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg
  - b. Remote Services – Accomack, Brunswick, Chesapeake, Dinwiddie, Franklin, Gloucester, Greenville/Emporia, Isle of Wight, James City, Mathews, Northampton, Portsmouth, Prince George, Southampton, Surry, Sussex, York/Poquoson

3. Northern Region

- a. Direct Services --Alexandria, Arlington, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fredericksburg, Harrisonburg-Rockingham, Loudoun, Manassas City, Manassas Park, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Winchester
- b. Remote Services – Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Greene, King George, Louisa, Madison, Orange, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Warren

4. Piedmont Region

- a. Direct Services -- Albemarle, Charlottesville, Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Shenandoah Valley (Staunton, Augusta, Waynesboro)
- b. Remote Services -- Alleghany-Covington, Amherst, Appomattox, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Charlotte, Craig, Danville, Franklin, Halifax, Henry-Martinsville, Highland, Lynchburg, Mecklenburg, Nelson, Pittsylvania, Rockbridge-Buena Vista

5. Western Region

- a. Direct Services – none
- b. Remote Services – Bland, Bristol City, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Galax City, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Norton City, Patrick, Pulaski, Radford City, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, Wythe

### 4.7.2 RSSEP Registration Requirement

RCA applicants, who do not meet an exemption requirement defined below, must either be registered for RSSEP or sign an RSSEP Registration form at the time of RCA application.

Proof that the applicant is currently receiving RSSEP service is provided either:

- 1. By the applicant providing a copy of the RSSEP Registration at the time of application or
- 2. If the client does not have a copy of the RSSEP Registration Form, the eligibility worker verifies RSSEP participation by accessing VNIS and viewing the applicant's VNIS case information.

If there is no proof the applicant registered for RSSEP, have the applicants sign the RSSEP Registration Form. See Attachment 2 - Statewide RSSEP Registration form.

*Note: If the RCA applicant signs the RSSEP Registration Form at the time of application, the LDSS gives the original to the client; sends a copy to the RSSEP agency within three business days; and maintains a copy for the case file. The contact information for the RSSEP service areas is on the Registration Form.*

### 4.7.3 Exemption Criteria

An RCA applicant is exempt from the RCA work requirement if the applicant meets one of the following criteria:

1. Is 65 years of age or over.
2. Will not reach his 16th birthday within the twelve-month RCA eligibility period.
3. Is between the age 16 and 18 and is a full-time student at an elementary or secondary school or is a full-time student at a vocational or technical school. For persons attending a vocational or technical school, full time means the person is taking the number of courses the institution considers full time. The applicant's statement regarding full time school attendance is sufficient. Note this statement in the case record.

### 4.7.4 RSSEP Participation Requirements

As a condition of continued eligibility for RCA, the RCA recipient must meet the RSSEP provider participation requirements. The RSSEP service provider determines whether a recipient is meeting RSSEP participation requirements. The RSSEP rules include good-cause reasons for non-participation, such as pregnancy or disability. An RCA recipient who does not meet RSSEP participation requirements without good cause is ineligible for continued receipt of RCA. An RCA recipient is considered as participating in RSSEP unless the RSSEP provider notifies the LDSS that the client is not meeting participation requirements without good cause.

### 4.7.5 Notification of Non-Participation

The RSSEP service provider has the responsibility to inform the client of the participation requirements and to maintain compliance information in the RSSEP case file. The RSSEP provider will send written notification to the local DSS when a RCA recipient does not meet



RSSEP participation requirements without good cause. Termination of RCA due to Failure to Meet RCA Work Registration Requirements. Upon written notice from the RSSEP provider to the local DSS that an RCA recipient is not meeting RCA work participation requirements, the local DSS will send the Advance Notice of Proposed Action Form (032-03-0018-31-eng) to the client, with a copy to the RSSEP service provider.

The RCA recipient has the right to appeal the RCA closure within 10 days of receipt of the notice. The RSSEP agency has the responsibility to participate in the appeal conferences and hearing and to provide documentation to support the local DSS closure action.

RCA payments will be terminated effective on the first of the month following the issuance of the notice unless the RCA recipient appeals the action within the required timeframe. In situations in which the RCA recipient is receiving benefits during the appeal period and the appeal period goes beyond the twelve-month eligibility period, RCA assistance must be terminated at the end of the twelve-month eligibility period regardless of whether the appeal period has expired.

RCA sanction period mirrors TANF sanction periods. One month for the first sanction, three months for the second sanction, and six months for the third sanction.

## 4.8 Case Transfers

Transfer the RCA case when an RCA recipient moves from one locality to another. A reapplication is not required. RCA cases are not in VaCMS. The sending locality is to mail the case file to the receiving agency. The receiving agency conducts a desk review to verify there are no changes in the case that would affect continued receipt of RCA.

## 4.9 Cash Payment Amount

The RCA cash payment amounts are the same as TANF Program cash payment amounts. See the TANF Manual, Need and Amount of Payment Chapter.

An adult married couple receives the amount that a TANF assistance unit of two receives.

An unmarried adult would receive the amount that a TANF assistance unit of one would receive.

In those rare situations in which a family receives RCA, the assistance unit would receive the amount that a TANF assistance unit of the same size would receive.

If one spouse arrives in the U.S. before the other spouse, add the newly arrived spouse to existing RCA case and increase the benefit level. For example, a husband arrived in U.S. in February, applied for RCA, and began receiving payments. Wife arrived in the U.S. in April and applied for RCA. Add the wife to the husband's case and increase the payment amount for an assistance unit of two. Remove the husband from the assistance unit at the end of January. Reduce the wife's payment amount to a unit of one and continue that payment for February and March, as the wife is eligible for RCA for twelve months from the month of arrival. If either becomes employed, the income is counted in determining the household's eligibility for RCA.

## 4.10 Payment and Reimbursement Process

There is no VaCMS code or Aid Category for RCA. Make RCA payments through the LDSS local check writing system. Follow local procedures for writing the check. LDSS RCA allocations are in LASER, budget line 819. If the local agency does not have a budget line 819 allocation, estimate the amount of funds needed to cover the RCA eligibility period and make a request through the LASER Budget Request System for the amount needed to cover the RCA eligibility period.

LDSSs make LASER expenditure journal entries each month a RCA payment is made. This journal entry is done the same way other expenditure entries are made. The cost code for RCA is 81901. Reimbursement for the RCA expenditure is not a separate payment. It is part of the monthly LASER reimbursement. An electronic transfer is made on the last working day of the month.

Costs associated with the administration of the RCA are part of the Virginia Cost Allocation Plan and include LDSS staff activities that contribute to both eligibility determination and any changes to RCA eligibility.

## 4.11 Check Handling Procedures

If a check is returned checks, verify that the check was sent to the current address on file with the agency.

1. If the addresses differ, resend to the current address.

2. If the current address is the same as the address on the returned check and the application shows that the applicant was assisted by a refugee resettlement office, contact that office to obtain a current address.
3. If the applicant was not assisted by a refugee resettlement office, cancel the check and update the local payment system according to local internal processes. Follow LASER/BRS procedures for returning payments.

For uncashed checks, follow the local procedures.

## 4.12 Overpayments and Underpayments

If there is an RCA overpayment, the eligibility worker is to contact the client, explain the error, and request that the client repay the agency. If the client is unable or unwilling to repay the money in full, follow the TANF Manual rules regarding collection of overpayments, Chapter 500. When the payment is repaid, enter it into the LASER/BRS system.

For example, a RCA client obtains employment and notifies the local DSS of the earned income. The LDSS inadvertently does not record the notification, and the RCA case is not closed. The client continues to receive RCA payments. This is an overpayment.

If a RCA payment is lower than the maximum amount allowed for the assistance unit size, within 10 days of identifying the error, notify the client and record the error in the case record.

For example, an application was received from two clients with the same last name. The worker thought it was a married couple and set up one case. It was not a couple but a father and adult daughter. Two cases should have been set up. Going forward, remove the daughter from the existing case and set up a separate case for her.

1. Calculate the amount paid.
2. Calculate amount that each should have received if separate checks had been written.
3. Subtract b. from a.
4. Divide by two and write a check for the mother and daughter for that amount.

## 4.13 RCA Fraud Reporting

The LDSS is required to proceed against any individual alleged to have committed an intentional program violation by referring the matter to the appropriate authorities for criminal action in a federal or state court or through an administrative disqualification hearing. Report any potential fraud to your Local Department of Social Services Fraud Unit.

For example, a RCA [or TANF] applicant is participating in the Matching Grant Program (MGP). MGP provides cash assistance; however, the applicant does not include those payments in the application and the payments are not counted in determining RCA [or TANF] eligibility. The LDSS learns of the MGP payments after the applicants has received RCA payments. The Fraud Unit determines whether the non-reporting was intentional.

## 4.14 Notices and Appeals

TANF rules regarding notification of case action apply to RCA cases. Notices or action must include an explanation of the reason for the action and a statement about the refugee's right to appeal the decision. RCA applicants and recipients have a right to appeal any case action, including reduction or termination of benefits.

TANF appeal rules apply to RCA, with the following exceptions:

1. If RCA payments are made during the appeal period, stop the payments when the twelve-month eligibility period is reached.
2. If the appeal is related to an RCA case closure due to the expiration of the twelve-month time limit, do not continue RCA payments during the appeal period. If the hearing officer finds that the twelve-month time period was incorrectly calculated, payments would be made after the decision is rendered.
3. If the Advance Notice of Proposed Action was not sent within the required 10 days period prior to case closure, RCA payments beyond the twelve-month period are not made.

The hearing officer's decision may be appealed to the Administrative Review Panel of the Appeals & Fair Hearings Unit. A decision is made in writing within 60 days of the date that the

refugee requests a hearing. Inform the refugee that free legal advice can be obtained through the local legal aid office and provide instructions on how to access those services.

## 5.0 Refugee Medical Assistance Program (RMA)

### 5.1 Program Purpose

The Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) Program provides short-term health care coverage to newly arrived refugees and other eligible populations who are determined ineligible for the Virginia Cardinal Care Medicaid Program who meet the RMA program requirements. In addition to providing access to healthcare, RMA also enables refugees to receive a [Medical Screening](#) upon arrival in the United States. The goal is to protect the public health of resettling communities and to promote the self-sufficiency and successful resettlement of refugees.

### 5.2 Eligibility Rules

Screen the applicant for Cardinal Care eligibility before screening for RMA. Refugees who meet the Cardinal Care financial requirements, but do not meet a categorical requirement, for example, a social security number is not required for RMA at the time of application or for the program overall is eligible for RMA.

Once a refugee has been determined to be eligible for Cardinal Care or RMA increased earnings from employment do not affect eligibility for RMA. Recipients who become ineligible for Cardinal Care due to an increase in earnings within the RMA 12-month period of eligibility are still eligible to receive RMA for the remaining time of eligibility and should be enrolled.

For example, if a refugee's date of eligibility for RMA is July 1, 2022, and they receive Cardinal Care for 6 months, but become ineligible due to an increase in earnings they are still eligible to receive RMA for the remaining 6 months.

*Note: At this time, VaCMS does not process this move. Cardinal Care/FAMIS eligible refugees who becomes ineligible due to employment earnings during the RMA eligibility period are automatically eligible for RMA for the remainder of the 12-month eligibility period with no further screening for financial information needed. The eligibility worker manually moves the client from Cardinal Care/FAMIS to RMA.*

**Special Considerations** - A refugee receiving RMA enrolls in an employer sponsored health insurance program, then the employer-sponsored insurance becomes the primary coverage and RMA becomes the secondary coverage. RMA may pick up costs that the employer-sponsored insurance will not pay.

## 5.3 RMA/Cardinal Care Comparison

The RMA Program mirrors the Cardinal Care Program in that:

1. Medical services are the same.
2. Right to appeal is the same.
3. Spend-down rules are the same,
4. Case transfer process is the same.

The RMA Program federal regulations differ from the Cardinal Care Program regulations in that:

1. Only income on the date of application is counted. Once the RMA application is approved, subsequent wage changes are not a factor of eligibility. For example, if a Refugee becomes unemployed on June 1, and applies for RMA on June 10th the applicant is unemployed and therefore has no income.
2. Cash payments from the Matching Grant Program and Reception and Placement Program (R & P) are not counted as income.
3. There is a 12-month time limit on receipt of assistance from the date of eligibility.
4. There is no federal requirement for a social security number.

## 5.4 Time Limits

There is a twelve-month time limit on the receipt of RMA. The date the twelve-month eligibility period begins is not the same for each refugee-eligible status.

For refugees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Afghans and Iraqis with special immigrant visa status who enter the U.S. with that status, the date of eligibility begins the month of arrival into the United States.

For Afghans and Iraqis who receive SIV status after arrival in the U.S, eligibility begins the month the status is given.

For asylees, the date of eligibility begins the month asylum is granted.

For victims of human trafficking, the date of eligibility begins the month the certification letter is issued.

For Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees the date of eligibility is May 21, 2022, or the individual's date of humanitarian parole, whichever is later. If an individual from either of these populations was paroled and entered the United States between February 24, 2022, and May 21, 2022, their date of eligibility is May 21, 2022. If they entered the United States after May 21, 2022, their date of eligibility is their date of humanitarian parole.

For Afghanistan Humanitarian Parolees who entered via Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) the eligibility period is from October 1, 2021 (if the individual entered the community between July 31, 2021 and September 30, 2021), or their date of entry into the community (for example, the date on which an Afghan SIV holder or parolee departed an Operation Allies Refuge/Operation Allies Welcome (OAR/OAW) Safe Haven), whichever is later until March 31, 2023, or the end of the individual's parole term, whichever is later, unless otherwise amended by law or the individual gains another ORR-eligible category or status.

## 5.5 Period of Coverage

The period of coverage begins on the first day of the month in which the refugee submits the Application for Benefits. For example, if an individual is granted asylum on April and applies in June, the coverage period, is June through March, if the individual continues to meet the RMA requirements.

## 5.6 Application Rules

The application for Cardinal Care serves as the application for RMA, whether made on-line, in-person, or by phone. Refugees and agencies assisting refugees to apply for benefits are encouraged to use the on-line Virginia [CommonHelp](#) Application.

Applications from non-citizens with a refugee-eligible status, whose Cardinal Care is denied, are assessed for RMA eligibility even if RMA is not checked on the paper or on-line application or is not referenced in a phone application.

A separate application is not required if more than one person is named on the application and some of the applicants are eligible for Cardinal Care and some are eligible for RMA. [Note: VaCMS determines the eligibility of each.]

When one application covers multiple RMA cases, the signature of either the authorized resettlement agency staff or the head of the refugee family household is sufficient. Multiple signatures are not required.

## 5.7 Case Establishment Process

The VaCMS Refugee Aide Category is 78.

For Unaccompanied Refugee Minors the Aid Category is 79.

The eligibility worker makes a notation on the Notice of Action, under comments, that the client was determined eligible for RMA and the date the eligibility period ends.

## 5.8 Case Transfers

Handle RMA case transfers the same as Cardinal Care case transfers. A reapplication is not required. A review is conducted by the receiving agency to verify there are no changes in the case that would affect continued receipt of RMA such as the recipient relocating out of Virginia.

## 5.9 Notices and Appeals

Cardinal Care rules regarding notification of case action apply to RMA cases. Notices of action must include an explanation of the reason for the action and a statement about the refugee's right to appeal the decision. RMA appeal rules apply to RMA, with the following exceptions:

1. Close the RMA case when the 12-month eligibility period is reached.



2. If the appeal is related to an RMA case closure due to the expiration of the 12-month time limit, do not continue RMA payments during the appeal period. If the hearing officer finds that the 12-month period was incorrectly calculated, and health services were provided during that period, arrangement will be made to cover the unpaid costs.
3. If the Advance Notice of Proposed Action was not sent within the required 10 days period prior to case closure, RMA payments beyond the 12-month period are not made.

The hearing officer's decision may be appealed to the Administrative Review Panel of the Appeals & Fair Hearings Unit. A decision is made in writing within 60 days of the date that the refugee requests a hearing.

## 5.10 RMA Fraud Reporting

Fraud is defined as an intentional deception or misrepresentation made by a person with the knowledge that the deception could result in some unauthorized benefit to himself or some other person. It includes any act that constitutes fraud under applicable Federal or State law according to federal regulation. Please complete the [Notice of Medicaid Recipient Fraud/Non-Fraud Form](#) for RMA and send to:

Department of Medical Assistance Services  
Attention: Recipient Audit Unit  
600 E. Broad Street Suite 1300  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

## 6.0 Refugee Social Services Employment Program

This Chapter provides guidance for providers under contract with the Office of New Americans (ONA) to provide services funded through federal, Refugee Social Services Set-Aside grants.

## 6.1 Program Overview and Policies

### 6.1.1 Program Objective

The objective of the program is to assess the needs of eligible families; to provide a continuum of coordinated services that lead to durable self-sufficiency and integration into the community; and to ensure funding is utilized effectively and there is no duplication of services.

### 6.1.2 Eligibility for Services

Services are provided to any person who requests this service and

1. Has documentation from an authorized federal agency verifying that the person is a refugee, asylee, Cuban/Haitian entrant, Afghan or Iraqi with a special immigrant visa, or victim of human trafficking. See Attachment 1 - VRRP Eligibility Documentation.
2. Has had a refugee-eligible status for less than five years from the date of RSSEP registration, with the exception that there is no time limit on when an eligible person may apply for naturalization preparation services.
3. Meets the age requirements for each program areas as defined below.

### 6.1.3 Priority in Provision of Services

RSSEP service providers must plan service delivery so that services are provided in the following order of priority:

1. Clients who arrived in the U.S. within the past year and clients who were granted asylee, victim of human trafficking or another refugee-eligible status within the past year.
2. Recipients of cash assistance, either RCA or TANF
3. Unemployed clients who are not receiving RCA or TANF cash assistance.
4. Employed clients in need of services to retain employment or increase their income to attain economic self-sufficiency.

Exceptions to this priority order are possible if made at the direction of or with the approval of the Virginia State Refugee Coordinator. For example, RSSEP eligible individuals who are homeless or are in situations which may lead to homelessness.

### 6.1.4 Registration Process

The RSSEP Registration Form is the application for RSSEP assistance. The client completes the form either:

1. At an agency under contract with ONA to provide RSSEP services.
2. At a local department of social services (LDSS) when a person applies for Refugee Cash Assistance and does not have a copy of the RSSEP Registration Form or the LDSS cannot confirm RSSEP Registration through the Virginia Newcomer Information System (VNIS).

*Note: When the client signs the RSSEP Registration Form at the LDSS, the original is given to the client and a copy is sent to the RSSEP service provider.*

### 6.1.5 Participation Requirements

RSSEP clients must apply for employment and accept a job if offered unless the job does not meet the definition of suitable employment.

Suitable employment means:

1. The work site is not in violation of federal and state safety standards.
2. It is full time or part time, permanent or temporary, year-round or seasonal.
3. The wage is at or above minimum wage for jobs that are subject to minimum wage standards. For jobs not subject to minimum wage standards, the wage is comparable to labor market wages paid for such employment.
4. The hours of work do not exceed the customary hours of work for the occupation.
5. The position is not vacant due to a labor dispute.

An RSSEP client may not voluntarily quit a job that meets the definition of suitable employment. In rare instances when the client's IEP includes on-the-job training, vocational

training program, or recertification program approved by the RSSEP provider and part of the client's individual employment plan, the employment search may be delayed.

RSSEP clients must

1. Keep all scheduled meetings, appointments, and assignments.
2. Participate in the development of an IEP.
3. Participate in job search, where applicable.
4. Go to job interviews arranged by the RSSEP staff.
5. Accept an offer of employment.
6. Not voluntarily quit a job; and
7. Participate in any available employability service program the RSSEP service provider determines is appropriate.

### 6.1.6 Good Cause Reasons for Non-Participation

The RSSEP provider will determine good cause for non-participation with RSSEP requirements. When the provider determines good cause for non-participation, the client's RSSEP case is closed. Good cause for non-participation is based on the following factors.

8. The job the client refused does not meet the RSSEP's definition of suitable employment.
9. A client is age 16 or 17, is not in school, and is in vocational or technical school as a full-time student.
10. A client is age 18 and is a full-time high school student or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training and is expected to complete this program before reaching age 19.
11. A client has an injury or medical condition that temporarily prevent entry into employment or training.

12. A client has a physical or mental impairment a doctor or psychologist has determined prevents the individual from engaging or participating in employment or training on an on-going basis.
13. A client is caring for a household member who has been determined by a physician or psychologist to have a physical or mental impairment requiring care in the home on a substantially continuous basis and neither the client nor the RSSEP provider has been able to arrange for care for the family member.
14. A client has a child under the age of 12 months.
15. There is a break in full time employment expected to last a minimum of 30 days.
16. A client is working in unsubsidized employment at least 30 hours a week.
17. Transportation is unavailable as determined by the RSSEP staff.
18. The RSSEP provider verifies a client is in an emergency situation.
19. The schedule of the RSSEP activity conflicts with mandatory judicial proceedings.
20. The RSSEP provider accepts a client's documentation of an impediment beyond the client's control.

Inability to communicate in English is not a good-cause reason for nonparticipation and is not a reason for not accepting an offer of employment.

### 6.1.7 Consequences of Non-Participation

A client, who is not meeting work participation requirements and does not have good cause, is not eligible for any of the services offered through RSSEP and may not be eligible for RCA and TANF. The RSSEP must be closed. The RSSEP provider is to send the client a notification of the case closure. The LDSS follows RCA and TANF rules in closing the RCA or TANF cases. One of the reasons for RCA or TANF closure is a client's non-compliance with a work requirement. The case closure rules apply to all RCA and TANF case members.

The RSSEP staff is to notify the LDSS within 24 hours of the date the RSSEP case is closed, send the LDSS VIEW staff notice of a TANF recipient's RSSEP case closure due to non-participation,

and send LDSS TANF staff notice of an RCA recipient's RSSEP case closure due to non-participation.

### 6.1.8 Closure and re-opening of cases

Cases should be closed for any of the following reasons:

1. Client is employed 90 days after date of employment and requests no additional RSSEP services
2. Client has reached five-year RSSEP eligibility period.
3. Client has failed to participate without good cause.
4. Client requests case closure
5. Client has moved from agency service area.
6. The agency is unable to contact client for 30 days after five or more attempts.

Closed cases may be re-opened at any time. In order to re-open a closed case, a new RSSEP Registration Form is signed, and a new CRP/IEP is completed.

### 6.1.9 Cash Assistance Work Requirement and Coordination with LDSS

Unless determined exempt, a person receiving TANF or RCA cash assistance must meet either the TANF or RCA work requirement. The work requirement for each program is different and the RSSEP provider's responsibility in coordinating and communicating with the local DSS is different.

#### 6.1.10 RCA Work Requirements

RCA clients, who are not exempt from the RCA work requirement, are required to register for RSSEP and meet the RSSEP participation requirements as a condition of continued eligibility for RCA. An RCA applicant is exempt from the RCA work requirement if the applicant:

1. Is 65 years of age or over.
2. Will not reach his 16th birthday within the twelve-month RCA eligibility period.

3. Is between the age 16 and 18 and is a full-time student at an elementary or secondary school or is a full-time student at a vocational or technical school. For persons attending a vocational or technical school, full time means the person is taking the number of courses the institution considers full time. The applicant's statement regarding full time school attendance is recorded in case notes.

RCA clients, who do not meet a LDSS RCA work requirement exemption, may meet an RSSEP good cause reason for non-participation. The service provider makes the determination that an RSSEP client has good cause for not meeting RSSEP participation requirements. Section M defines good cause for non-participation, for example pregnancy or disability.

RCA applications are made at the LDSS. At the time of application, the client, must either

1. Present a signed RSSEP Work Registration Form at the time of RCA application, or
2. Sign an RSSEP Work Registration Form at the time of RCA application. See Attachment 2 - Statewide RSSEP Registration Form.

When the RCA applicant signs the RSSEP Work Registration form at the time of application, the local DSS gives the original to the applicant and sends a copy to the RSSEP provider. The RSSEP staff is responsible for contacting the individual and conducting the initial intake interview and completion of the RSSEP CRP and IEP.

The local DSS terminates RCA payments when the 12-month eligibility period ends, or earlier if the individual becomes employed and income exceeds TANF requirements, if the RSSEP contract agency notifies the agency of RSSEP non-compliance without good cause.

### 6.1.11 TANF Work Requirement and Coordination with Local DSSs

A TANF recipient who does not meet one of the TANF work exemption must participate in the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) Program.

Under federal and state TANF regulations, VIEW participation requirements apply to all work mandatory TANF recipients. A client who is both an RSSEP client and a VIEW client must meet the participation requirements of both programs.

The RSSEP caseworker must communicate with the VIEW caseworker to ensure coordination regarding the client's work activities and document those activities.

The TANF application intake process and the VIEW assessment interview occur at different times. The VIEW assessment interview must occur within 10 to 30 days after the TANF application is approved. Work requirements of the two programs must be coordinated by the VIEW and RSSEP case workers to ensure each agency's case record contains required participation documentation.

RSSEP staff are required to coordinate with the VIEW staff in each local DSS where RSSEP participants reside. A face-to-face meeting is recommended to discuss the following:

1. The local DSS VIEW assessment process. While the basic assessment requirements are the same for each local DSS, the implementation and processes vary.
2. What role the RSSEP staff will have in the initial VIEW interview.
3. How the RSSEP provider will provide the local DSS with required RSSEP documentation.

The RSSEP staff must provide the VIEW worker with

1. A copy of the RSSEP client's Comprehensive Resettlement Plan and Individual Employment Plan.
2. A monthly verification of continued participation,
3. Immediate notice of entered employment or non-participation.

### 6.1.12 Sanctions for Non-Participation

When the RSSEP provider notifies the local DSS that the RSSEP case closure due to non-participation, the local DSS will take the action to sanction a TANF or RCA recipient following that agency's case closure procedures.

If the TANF or RCA recipient appeals the action taken by the local DSS, the RSSEP staff is required to assist the local DSS staff with any appeals conferences, hearings, and written arguments. This includes a summary of

1. The reason, if any, given by the client for non-participation.



2. The RSSEP factual basis for the determination that there was not good cause for the non-participation.
3. The dates of contact with the client regarding non-participation.

If the client signs a new RSSEP Registration Form and participates as required, the individual will be eligible for TANF or RCA at the end of the sanctioning period.

### 6.1.13 Documentation (VNIS)

VNIS is Virginia's official system of record for refugee service delivery data. Data collected is used for federal reporting and contract monitoring. Refugee Resettlement Agencies enter client service data including demographic data, training activities, and employment placements. Initial client records must be created within five (5) business days of intake and all subsequent actions, such as employment placements, training or other services being provided, must be entered within five business days of the action.

### 6.1.14 Remote Placement Services

Clients who live more than 50 miles away (by road) from a resettlement site are considered remote placements. These clients must be provided with employment services that consist of the following components.

1. Initial contact made by telephone or other digital means.
2. Provision of employment services as outlined in this chapter or referral to an accessible alternative employment service provider.
3. Documentation of either ongoing in-house employment services or of the access and ongoing employment support provided through the agency's referral.
4. Periodic follow-up to ensure that the client remains active in their employment program whether it be in-house or with an alternative agency.
5. Documentation of ongoing follow up to the self-sufficiency status of the client.
6. Standard post-employment follow-up once the client has been placed in a job.

7. If the client fails to participate in employment services, documentation of actions taken to mitigate or sanction the client.

## 6.2 Service Delivery Components

RSSEP contract agencies that provide Department of State Reception and Placement Program (R&P), and ORR Matching Grant Program (MGP) services must ensure that services are coordinated and that RSSEP services do not duplicate services provided through R&P and MGP. RSSEP service delivery must be culturally and linguistically compatible with the client's language and cultural background. RSSEP providers must provide employment and job placement services equally to both male and female clients. RSSEP services may continue after a client enters employment to assist with job retention and job improvement.

### 6.2.1 Comprehensive Resettlement Plan

Comprehensive resettlement is a continuum of service delivery that leads to full participation in the community and eventually becoming a U.S. citizen. Comprehensive resettlement planning is the method by which each client's initial and on-going service needs are identified and tracked until the client's case is closed. Sub-recipients who assist clients in resettling in Virginia are expected to complete a Comprehensive Resettlement Plan (CRP) jointly with each family member. It is a record of the continuum of service delivery from the date the client entered the U.S.

For Sub-recipients that have clients who were initially served by another agency, inter-agency communication is recommended to ensure a continuum of services is provided.

Applicants are expected to have established linkages with existing community service providers, a strategy for maintaining those linkages, and a mechanism for linking the client to needed resources.

### 6.2.2 Case Management

Refugee Resettlement Agency staff provide services based on the needs identified in the CRP, link clients to available resources, monitors progress, and documents the progress of each client both through case notes and through VNIS. A Comprehensive Resettlement Plan (CRP) is developed with each RSSEP client. The CRP includes an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The IEP is the basis of RSSEP case management activities.

RSSEP case management requires:

1. An assessment of the client's current and future employment needs and the services needed to assist the client in becoming self-sufficient.
2. Coordination and interaction with other community and agency resources.
3. Comprehensive service delivery done in collaboration with the client.
4. Job follow-up to verify job retention and to identify if there is a need for additional job retention services.

## 6.2.3 Employment Services

### 6.2.3.1 RSSEP Initial Interview

An initial intake interview is conducted with each client to explain the importance of immediate employment, services available to support employment activities, participation requirements, and the consequences of non-participation in the program.

### 6.2.3.2 On-going RSSEP Case Management Requirements

Culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery that ensures clients understand the program goals; their IEP; and how their IEP relates to the CRP; and their responsibility to participate in program activities.

On-going assessment to identify when a client is experiencing challenges and linking the person with the appropriate community resource is required.

Updating the IEP section of the CRP as explained in the ONA CRP Standard Operation Procedures.

Updating the client's VNIS record and case notes require the following:

1. All contacts with the client regarding all aspects of RSSEP service delivery.
2. All employment activities including employer contacts, job referrals, entered employment.

3. Issues, concerns, and RSSEP interventions; and
4. Types of instruction, hours in instruction, name of the teacher, and cost.

The development of an IEP includes:

1. specific employment goals.
2. details the tasks and time frames to be taken both by the client and RSSEP staff to meet those goals; and
3. identifies known obstacles to immediate employment and outlines the strategies to remove these obstacles.

Pre-employment and post-employment counseling, coaching, and mentoring to assist the client in obtaining and maintaining employment and obtaining salary increases and job upgrades.

1. A formalized written American workplace orientation, which includes expectations that may differ from a client's work experiences in other countries.
2. Job referral, job search, job placement, and follow-up assistance.
3. Job development, which is direct employer contacts by RSSEP staff for the purpose of finding jobs for clients who need direct assistance in obtaining and maintaining employment consistent with their abilities, skills, and experience in the U.S. labor market.
4. Apprenticeship and skills recertification. [Note RSSEP funding for this is limited to one year.]
5. Aptitude assessment and employment skills testing, when necessary.

### 6.2.3.3 English Language Training

English language training (ELT) both increases employability skills and prepares clients for applying for citizenship.

When ELT is part of the IEP, the RSSEP service provider must provide the ELT training concurrently with employment or employment activities. RSSEP delivery of ELT and vocational

training is not to interfere with employment. To the fullest extent feasible, ELT and other training services are to be provided.

1. outside the client's normal working hours, and
2. concurrently with employment services.
3. ELT is generally curriculum-based instruction taught by certified trainers and is provided individually, in groups, or on-line.

ELT may be provided directly by the RSSEP provider staff or purchased.

#### 6.2.3.4 Employment Support Services

Each RSSEP client's IEP must describe the need for these services.

1. Vocational or career training which does not interfere with employment and does not exceed one year.
2. Childcare related to employment activities, if specified in the contract between ONA and the RSSEP service provider
3. Transportation related to an employment activity, if specified in the contract between ONA and the RSSEP service provider
4. Translation and interpreter services related to employment and case management services, if specified in the contract between ONA and the RSSEP service provider

#### 6.2.3.5 Skills Training for Enhanced Earnings Potential (STEP)

STEP provides RSSEP clients, whose professional skills are specialized and not immediately transferable to U.S. jobs, with opportunities for obtaining comparable employment in the U.S. Clients receive specialized services including professional assessments and testing and assistance in accessing training, certifications, and courses related to their prior careers.

Participation in STEP is assessed during the development of the CRP/IEP.

The CRP/IEP must include short-term and long-term employment and training objectives developed in consultation with the client. The consultation is to include an explanation of types of technical training and other options available.

Whenever possible, arrange for one-stop workforce centers, community colleges, and professional associations and organizations to conduct assessments, training, and skills development services.

As part of the short-term objectives, each client will

1. Be provided job referral services with the expectation that the client will be employed while receiving training leading to long-term employment goals.
2. Be informed of and referred to the appropriate level English Language Training.

Each STEP client will receive training in financial literacy, basic computer skills, and interview skills unless determined proficient in these areas during the CRP/IEP assessment.

Each STEP client must complete the Workforce Development Pre- Employment Training or an equivalent program.

Consistent with available and practicable services, STEP clients are helped in:

1. Procuring and initiating forms required by licensing agencies,
2. Applying for validation of credentials,
3. Researching educational options for recertification in a primary field or affiliated field,
4. Applying for programs at local community colleges and accessing financial aid, if eligible,
5. Identifying work and volunteer opportunities in the professional sector while researching certification and educational options,
6. Re-assessing educational and career goals.

### 6.2.3.6 Required Forms

1. Comprehensive Resettlement Plan
2. RSSEP Registration Form
3. Individual Employment Plan (IEP)
4. Mutual Responsibility Agreement

5. RSSEP Communication Participation Form
6. Release of Information Form

## 7.0 Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program

### 7.1 Introduction

The Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program is a unique foster care program that provides foster care placement and services to unaccompanied refugee minors and other special populations of youth living in the United States. Bridging child welfare experience with expertise in refugee resettlement, the program is uniquely designed to provide trauma-informed services for youth who have experienced forced displacement.

Virginia is one of fifteen states in the nation providing a comprehensive set of services to URM youth to ensure that their individual and diverse needs are met. Through a contract with two Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPAs), the state of Virginia provides eligible youth with access to culturally and linguistically appropriate services including trauma-informed foster families, culturally sensitive caseworkers, comprehensive medical and mental health care, independent living opportunities and a broad range of educational services.

### 7.2 Eligibility

Virginia's URM providers offer comprehensive foster care placement services to eligible URM youth as determined by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). URM-eligible populations include youth under the age of 18 who have one of the immigration statuses listed below:

1. Refugees
2. Asylees
3. Cuban/Haitian entrants
4. Victims of Human Trafficking
5. Certain minors with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

6. U-Status recipients
7. Paroled Unaccompanied Afghan and Ukrainian Minors

URM youth arrive in the United States through the resettlement process as Unaccompanied Refugee Minors or transition into the URM program after receiving notice of eligibility approval from ORR. Notice of Eligibility letters are received and reviewed by the State Refugee Coordinator and state-level URM Program Staff.

In Virginia, legal custody of URM ends on the youth's 18th birthday.

Participation in the URM program between the ages of 18 to 21 is a voluntary decision made by the youth. Youth who decide to remain in the URM program after 18 sign a Voluntary Continuing Services and Support Agreement. Youth emancipate from voluntary placements at age 21 but remain eligible for Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), through the age of 26.

A foster youth who requests release from care after age 18 may voluntarily return to the URM Program within 60 days, in parity with Virginia's state foster care policy

The URM program ceases providing services and benefits to a URM youth in the event the youth loses eligibility for the program for one of the following reasons:

1. No longer has an eligible immigration status or category (e.g., the youth has acquired U.S. citizenship)
2. Has reached the maximum age for all ORR-funded URM services and benefits.
3. Reunites with a parent.
4. Reunites with a non-parental adult through legal custody or guardianship under state law.
5. Adoption.

## 7.3 Placement Options

A continuum of care with culturally sensitive placement options is available to meet the developmental needs of minors and is consistent with those provided to all children in foster care in Virginia. Placement options for youth in Virginia's URM Program include:



**Foster Family Home:** Traditional foster home placement.

**Therapeutic Foster Home:** Therapeutic foster placements for youth who require elevated levels of support.

**Supervised Independent Living:** Community-based placements in which youth live independently but continue to receive a monthly living stipend and regular casework services.

**Group Home:** Placements for youth who require a high level of supervision, support and services. Placement in Group Homes is reserved for youth who require a more restrictive or therapeutic level of care than can be provided in a foster home.

**Residential Treatment:** When determined to be in the child's best interests, URM may be placed into a residential treatment facility for specialized care and stabilization.

## 7.4 Program Goals and Case Plans

URM contract agencies assess each URM's needs and develop a case plan based on that assessment. Case plans must include the following elements:

1. Family tracing and reunification
2. Indirect financial support for housing, food and clothing
3. Intensive case management services by social workers
4. English language training and education
5. Independent living skill development
6. Educational Training Vouchers
7. Health, dental, and mental health care
8. Job training and career development skills
9. Cultural orientation and social integration
10. Preservation of ethnic and religious heritage
11. Safety planning

## 12. Coordination of immigration assistance

Each case is reviewed monthly to ensure compliance with the contractor's internal program policies, Virginia's state foster care regulations, ORR requirements and to ensure continued appropriateness of the living arrangement.

The status of children who are placed in group homes or at therapeutic levels of foster care is reviewed by Supervisors and the URM Program Manager at least every six months to assess services and to determine the youth's readiness for lower levels of care.

The contract agency also completes Quarterly Treatment Plans. These plans address specific needs of the youth, evaluate progress made towards permanency goals, and evaluate the quality of services provided to the youth. The contractor follows the State's Title IV-B Plan in assessing permanency options. In cases where a court finds that adoption is in the best interest of a child and parental rights have been terminated, a URM child may be adopted.

### 7.4.1 Independent Living

Preparation for Independent Living is a critical element of the case plan. Although URM are not eligible for Virginia's Chafee Program, ORR-funded independent living services and benefits operate in parity with those provided to other foster youth by the state. Comparable services and benefits include ETVs, independent living classes, mentorship, tutoring and socio-cultural activities.

### 7.4.2 Education and Training Vouchers

Youth emancipate from voluntary placements at age 21 but remain eligible for Education and Training Vouchers (ETV), through the age of 26. Youth must hold a high school diploma or GED certificate and be enrolled or planning to enroll in a post-secondary education or vocational training program in order to access ETV funds. Eligible youth may receive a maximum of \$5000 in ETV funds per year toward their education or vocational goals for a total of 5 years. ETV funds may be applied toward, but are not limited to: colleges, universities, vocational programs and one-year training institutions and can cover expenses such as tuition and fees; room and board; purchase of required equipment; allowance for supplies and transportation; required residential training; special study projects; child care and other related expenses. There is no requirement in Virginia that youth must access ETV funds before the age of 21.

### 7.4.3 Medical Care

Medical care including physical and dental exams are routinely provided to all children in care. All URM receive a physical health assessment within 30 days of placement into the program. The contract agency applies for Medicaid within 10 days of a youth's arrival and works closely with medical personnel to obtain needed medical services. All children receive a routine physical exam at least once a year. Specialized medical care is provided through local providers and hospitals.

Effective June 1, 2016, URM youth who age out of foster care continue to be eligible for Medicaid until age 26, with one exception: Virginia has categorical requirements that apply to all Medicaid recipients over the age of 19 who have been in the U.S. for more than seven years. For URM youth over the age of 19 who do not meet these categorical requirements, Virginia follows §400.116 and §400.205.

## 7.5 Administration

The Commonwealth of Virginia receives federal funding to operate an Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program in the state, in parity with Virginia's domestic foster care program.

As of 2022, the Office of New Americans has URM contracts with two agencies and provides organizational leadership and administrative support for URM programs in two locations.

In Richmond, ONA contracts with Commonwealth Catholic Charities, a private non-profit 501(c)(3) social service agency, licensed to provide URM foster care program services. CCC's main office is in Richmond, but the agency has placed URM in Roanoke, Williamsburg, Newport News and Charlottesville.

In Northern Virginia, ONA contracts with Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, a private, non-profit 501 (c)(3) agency licensed to provide URM foster care services in the greater Northern Virginia area.

The URM contract requires contractors to operate under the standards and requirements of Virginia's IV-B Plan, as defined in (a) Code of Virginia, Chapter 10, Child Welfare, Homes, Agencies and Institutions and (ii) the VDSS Foster Care Policy Manual. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) licenses both child-placing agencies and ensures that they meet all state licensing standards. State licensing audits of both agencies are conducted in line with

VDSS's state requirements. ONA is responsible for all programmatic and financial monitoring of the URM programs.

### 7.5.1 Obtaining Legal Custody

Contract agencies petition a Virginia Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for custody of the URM within 24 hours of the child's arrival in Virginia. Temporary custody is generally provided to the agency until permanent custody is awarded at a dispositional hearing within 75 days of the preliminary hearing.

Contract agencies are awarded legal custody of URM in Virginia. Care and responsibility must be established with the agency before the child turns 18 years old. Legal custody ends on the youth's 18th birthday, at which point the youth can opt to remain in the program until the age of 21 by signing a Voluntary Placement Agreement.

## 7.6 Interstate Movement

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) is the process by which member states work together to ensure that children who are placed across state lines for foster care or adoption receive adequate protection and support services.

Virginia's Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children laws and regulations meet the federal statutory uniform law requirements for the protection of children who are placed across state lines for foster care and adoption. If a URM child moves to another state after initial placement in Virginia, the same procedures that govern Virginia's domestic foster care cases apply to the movement of URM children.

## Appendix A: Acronyms, Terms and Links

Table 1: VRRP Manual Acronyms

Acronym	Term	Definition
CRP	Comprehensive Resettlement Plan	A plan required for all refugees receiving services from contract service providers that includes an assessment of the refugee's overall needs, interests and aptitudes, present abilities, previous education, work experiences, language ability, and potential barriers to self-sufficiency. In addition, the plan includes service strategies to address needs and overcome barriers to the achievement of self-sufficiency, including employment services, English language training, transitional cash and medical assistance, and other support services. The CRP is prepared with the refugee.
EAD	Employment Authorization Document	A document issued by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services that proves as evidence that the holder is authorized to work in the United States. U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and conditional residents do NOT require an EAD to work in the U.S.
ELT	English language training	Any type of training program or tutoring service which is designed to help the refugee improve his/her English speaking, reading, writing, comprehension, and cultural competency skills. In the Refugee program, the primary goal and focus of ELT is employment and job readiness. ELT is sometimes referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL), however, ELT is broader in scope, including a wider variety of methods for language acquisition, than the typical ESL classroom setting.
FAMIS	Family Access to Medical Insurance Security Plan	Virginia's health care program that replaced the Children's Medical Security Insurance Plan (CMSIP). FAMIS is designed to meet the health care needs of Virginia's uninsured children between the ages of 0 through 18 years, in working families that earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford private health insurance. Some of the components of FAMIS are a simplified eligibility process, a new benefits package with cost sharing, employee sponsored health insurance, and a centralized processing site. The program is administered by the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS).
IEP	Individual Employment Plan	The individual employment plan is an individualized career plan developed jointly by the participant and agency staff. The plan is an ongoing strategy to identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and an appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

Acronym	Term	Definition
LDSS	Local department of social services	Virginia as a state supervised, locally administered social services programs. There are 120 LDSSs that provide services which promote the well-being of children and families. There are approximately 13,000 state and local human services professionals throughout the Social Services System. Together, each day, VDSS, LDSSs, and community services providers work to serve, empower, and create opportunities to ensure Virginia's most vulnerable citizens have access to available services and benefits.
MGP	Matching Grant Program	Funded by Congress since 1979, this program provides an alternative approach to State-administered resettlement assistance. The program's goal is to assist refugees attain self-sufficiency within four months after arrival without accessing public cash assistance. National voluntary resettlement agencies that agree to match the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) grant with of cash and in-kind contributions provide Matching Grant Program services.
MYVA	Virginia Refugee Youth Mentoring Program	The Mentoring Youth in Virginia program promotes positive civic and social engagement and supports educational and vocational advancement for refugee-eligible youth between the ages of 15 and 24 years old. Eligible youth are selected for the mentorship program based on an initial assessment of needs and goals and are matched with trained, adult mentors for a period of six months to one year.
ONA-RS	Office of New Americans – Refugee Services	The office within the Department of Social Services, Division of Community and Volunteer Services that is responsible for the administration and oversight of the Refugee Resettlement Program in the state of Virginia.
ORR	Office of Refugee Resettlement	The agency within the federal Department of Health and Human Services responsible that is responsible for the administration of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program. ORR manages the grants that provide the funding for refugee programs administered by ONA. These include the Refugee Medical Assistance, Program, the Refugee Cash Assistance Program, Refugee Social Services Program, the Targeted Assistance Program, the Refuge Medical Screening Program, the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program, two set-aside grant programs, and one discretionary grant program.
RCA	Refugee Cash Assistance Program	A time-limited cash assistance program for refugees who meet the TANF program income eligibility standards but do not meet a categorical requirement.
RHEO	Refugee Health Education and Outreach Program	The Refugee Health Education and Outreach program provides health education to refugee-eligible populations that helps them navigate the U.S. healthcare system and access health and mental health services that will improve their well-being. The program provides education on navigating the U.S. healthcare system, health resources and evidence-based physical and mental health best practices. The program also is intended to increase healthcare providers' understanding of the unique healthcare needs of diverse refugee populations.

Acronym	Term	Definition
RMA	Refugee Medical Assistance	A time-limited medical assistance program for refugees (it) who meet the income eligibility standards for Medicaid or FAMIS but do not meet a categorical requirement and (ii) who become ineligible for Medicaid due to increased employment income and are with the eight-month RMA eligibility period.
RMS	Refugee Medical Screening	The initial medical health assessment that a refugee receives at a local health department within the first thirty to ninety days of arrival in the United States. It is designed to eliminate health-related barriers to successful resettlement while protecting the health of the U.S. population.
R&P	Reception and Placement	The first phase of the resettlement process after a refugee arrives in the United States. Each refugee is assigned to an American private voluntary agency that, working under a cooperative agreement with the Department of State, provides sponsorship and initial resettlement services during the first three months following the refugee's arrival. These services include housing, essential furnishings, food and other basic necessities, clothing, and additional orientation to life in America.
RSSEP	Refugee Social Services Employment Program	Refugee specific employment services provided to refugees to assist them in becoming self-sufficient. Services include employment counseling, English language training, job placement and vocational training, and limited support services. Services are provided by local non- profit agencies under contract with the Virginia Department of Social Services, Office of New Americans.
SRC	State Refugee Coordinator	The individual designated by the Governor to administer and guide the Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program. The SRC has coordinative and oversight responsibility for all activities related to the delivery of federally funded refugee services in Virginia.
SOR	Services for Older Refugees Program	The Services for Older Refugees (SOR) Program is intended to link eligible clients over the age of 60 to services and to facilitate their integration into the community. Priority for naturalization support is provided to individuals at risk of losing supplemental security income or other federal benefits.
SNAP	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program	SNAP provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budget so they can afford the nutritious food essential to health and well-being.
SSI	Supplemental Security Income	A federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenues that is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people whose income and resources are below a certain level. It provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	A program that provides temporary financial assistance to eligible families with children. The family receives a monthly cash payment to meet their basic needs. To be eligible, a family must be financially needy and must meet certain other requirements.

Acronym	Term	Definition
VIEW	Virginia Initiative for Education and Work	VIEW is the TANF work component. It is designed to support individuals currently receiving TANF benefits who are entering the workforce. TANF recipients are required to participate in the VIEW Program if they do not meet an exemption.
VNIS	Virginia Newcomer Information System	The database that contains refugee demographic data; contractor service delivery data; and program outcome data, such as entered employment.
VOLAG	National Voluntary Agency	A national non-profit organization that enters into a cooperative agreement with the Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to provide initial reception and placement services to refugees. VOLAG affiliate offices in each state are responsible for the resettlement and placement of a certain number of refugees. The affiliate offices must provide a number of services to the refugee (e.g., housing, clothing, furniture, food, cultural orientation, and case management) during the first 90 days following his or her arrival into the United States.
VRRP	Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program	The VRRP supports refugees with social integration and economic empowerment. Services include employment, health, education, youth mentoring, services for older refugees. It also provides foster care for unaccompanied refugee minors. VDSS works in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Office of Refugee Resettlement, which funds its programs. Program services are provided by non-profit agencies under contract with VDSS, ONA-RS.
VRSAP	Virginia Refugee Student Achievement Project	VRSAP strengthens the academic performance of recently arrived refugee youth between the ages of 0 -18 years and aids their social adjustment. Youth between the age of 18 - 21 years may be enrolled in VRSAP if they are still in high school or pursuing a GED.
URM	Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program	A refugee child who arrives in the U.S. unaccompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or other close adult relative. URM children are placed in foster care programs managed by either Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) or the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). URM services mirror states' domestic foster care programs.
VDSS	Virginia Department of Social Services	VDSS partners with 120 local departments of social services and faith-based and non-profit organizations, to promote the well-being of children and families statewide.



**Table 2: VRRP Manual Terms**

Term	Definition
Cardinal Care	Cardinal Care encompasses all Virginia’s Medicaid health coverage programs. Cardinal Care combines Virginia’s two managed care programs [Medallion 4.0 and Commonwealth Coordinated Care Plus (CCC Plus)] into a single program for all members receiving services through Medicaid health plan partners. It also includes fee-for-service Medicaid members. The Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) restructured and renamed the Virginia's Medicaid program to Cardinal Care.
Case Management Services	Provision of needed services including referral to services and tracking of the refugee’s participation in services.
Economic Self Sufficiency	The ability of a refugee or refugee family unit to earn an income that will allow the family unit to support itself without the receipt of a cash assistance grant.
Medicaid	A medical assistance program established under Title XIX of the Federal Social Security Act to enable states to provide medical care to public assistance recipients and medically needy persons: i.e., persons of low income who can meet their maintenance needs but have insufficient income to provide the cost of medical care. The program is financed by state and federal funds. Virginia’s Medicaid Program is named Cardinal Care (see above).
Non-citizen	Any person who is not a citizen of the U.S., regardless of his/her specific immigration status.
Refugee Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-212)	The legislation that created the refugee resettlement program to provide for the effective resettlement of refugees and to assist them to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible after arrival in the United States.
Secondary Migrant	A refugee or entrant who moves into Virginia after initial resettlement in another state in the U.S.
Spend down (Incurred Medical Expense Spend down)	A provision of the Medicaid and RMA programs for those who meet all of the eligibility requirements except for income. Similar to an insurance policy deductible, an applicant can make up for the difference between their countable income and the medically needy income limit by listing any medical bills that they incur during the “spend-down period.” If the entire difference is met, then the individual is determined to be eligible for the remainder of the period.
Undocumented Immigrant	Individuals who have either illegally entered the U.S. without inspection, or legally entered the U.S. with valid nonimmigrant visas but those visas have expired.

**Table 3: Table of Links**

Reference	URL
Virginia CommonHelp	<a href="https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/">https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/</a>
Virginia Newcomer Information System (VNIS)	<a href="https://vnis.dss.virginia.gov/VNISWeb/">https://vnis.dss.virginia.gov/VNISWeb/</a>
Notice of Medicaid Recipient Fraud/Non-Fraud Form	<a href="https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/Portals/[bp]/Files/DBP%20Forms%20Repository/DMAS-751R.pdf?ver=2019-06-12-113724-847">https://fusion.dss.virginia.gov/Portals/[bp]/Files/DBP%20Forms%20Repository/DMAS-751R.pdf?ver=2019-06-12-113724-847</a>

## Appendix B: Table of Attachments

**Table 4: VRRP Manual Attachments**

Attachment Reference	Document File Name
1	Attachment 1 - VRRP Eligibility Documentation
2	Attachment 2 - Statewide RSSEP Registration Form
3	Attachment 3 - Comprehensive Resettlement Plan - IEP
4	Attachment 4 - Comprehensive Resettlement Plan - IEP SOP
5	Attachment 5 - Mutual Responsibility Agreement
6	Attachment 6 - RSSEP Communication Participation Form
7	Attachment 7 - Release of Information Form
8	Attachment 8 - VNIS Case Transfer Form
9	Attachment 9 - VNIS Case Transfer Form SOP