



"I am very thankful. Without the help of Catholic Charities I would not be able to get a job."

– Peter, Refugee from Burma



Refugee & Immigration Services  
913-621-1504  
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# REFUGEE & IMMIGRATION SERVICES



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Imagine being forced to flee your country due to fear of being tormented or even killed for who you are and what you believe. You must leave the place you call home, the family and friends that you love, your job and familiar surroundings. This is the story for the nearly 400 refugees who are resettled by Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas each year.

### WHO IS A REFUGEE?

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

### WHERE DO REFUGEES WE SERVE COME FROM?



Catholic Charities is the largest of five resettlement sites throughout the state, and the only one in Johnson and Wyandotte counties. It is a "U.S. tie site" meaning that refugees are united with family members or friends who are already settled in the area and can provide some assistance. The majority of refugees that we serve flee from the Southeast Asia nation of Burma. Ethnic groups represented include Chin, Karen and the Karenni. Other refugees travel from Bhutan, Iraq, Somalia, Congo, Eritrea and Iran.



### PROGRAMS

Refugee & Immigration Services offers programs and services designed to welcome and provide social and emotional support to refugees as they adjust to their new surroundings including:

**RECEPTION AND PLACEMENT** – Helps establish a foundation from the refugee's welcome at the airport until 30-90 days after arrival including housing, clothing, food, medical, education, orientation and employment.

**CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES** – Provides a needs assessment; collaborative plan to remove barriers to stability; increase access to community resources; and increase self-sufficiency skills. Case management services are available up to 5 years, based on priority.

**EMPLOYMENT SERVICES** – Assists families with employment by removing barriers, providing job readiness classes, finding and retaining jobs, increasing employability and enhancing the refugee job market.

**LEARNING CENTER** – Offers English language classes and workshops about healthcare, housing maintenance, transportation, U.S. laws and adjusting to a new culture.

**LA LUZ IMMIGRATION CLINIC** – Provides low-cost professional immigration legal services to low-income, foreign-born individuals and their families.



**NEW ROOTS FOR REFUGEES** – Works to strengthen refugee families and build the local food system. Together with Cultivate KC, New Roots staff operates a 9-acre training farm where refugees utilize their agricultural skills to develop their own farm businesses. New Roots also works with refugee communities to develop community gardens.

**CITIZENSHIP PREPARATION PROGRAM** – Offers free, intensive American History and Civics classes based on the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (U.S.C.I.S.) 100 civics questions for the naturalization test; citizenship application assistance; and one-on-one interview preparation for refugees and immigrants pursuing U.S. Citizenship.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Moving to a new country is challenging. Refugees must learn a new language and understand a different culture while striving to establish themselves. Volunteers are needed to:

- Welcome refugees
- Assist with move-in, and set-up new homes
- Teach English
- Tutor

To volunteer, contact Michelle Carlstedt, 913-433-2080 or [mcarlstedt@catholiccharitiesks.org](mailto:mcarlstedt@catholiccharitiesks.org)