

New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees



THE NEW YORK STATE ENHANCED SERVICES TO REFUGEES PROGRAM (NYESERP) began in 2017 as a response to the federal government’s retreat from refugee resettlement. **New York State was first in the nation to provide state funding to support refugee integration**, a valuable investment in the refugees and asylees who call New York home.

New York for Refugees—a coalition of refugee serving agencies, the **Fiscal Policy Institute** and the **New York Immigration Coalition**—seeks **\$5 million** in the 2021 budget to expand NYESERP and grow support for the integration of refugees and asylees into our communities.

New York’s commitment to refugees is critical in light of the Biden-Harris administration’s plans to rebuild the federal refugee resettlement program. Because of the state’s support, New York still has the capacity to welcome more refugees, but the time to plan for growth is now.

Programmatic Outcomes

July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

	Instances of Services Provided
Case Management	4,779
Employment and Training	1,119
English Language Training	617
Assistance with Health and Medical Services	1,029
Post-Employment Services	194
Community Information Sessions and Legal Immigration Services	114
Total	7,852

Source: New York Bureau of Refugee Service BIN data.

In 2021, the state should build on its past. Even if refugee admission levels are raised, it will take time for the infrastructure that identifies and processes them to be rebuilt. And regardless of arrival levels, the federal program is only short term - cases must be closed after 90 days. The NYS Enhanced Services to Refugees Program allows agencies to concentrate on long-term integration and serve the needs of each client, providing legal services, extended case management, employment services, language education programs and more. NYESERP also serves as a lifeline for asylees, who initially do not receive support.

COVID-19 made the need for support even clearer. Even as the pandemic challenged funding and closed offices, refugee agencies rushed to provide essential services: food delivery to quarantined and laid off families, distribution of PPE, remote medical case management, translation of COVID-19 information, support for families suddenly learning remote, and support for laid off refugees who needed to file for unemployment. Without these efforts, many more would have suffered.

Funding NYESERP at \$5 million will expand important services. Agencies provided COVID-related services with no added funding. NYESERP funding was cut by 50% in 2020, when demand for help was increasing. An investment of \$5 million will help many more refugees and asylees by providing intensive case management, increased employment services, access to vaccination sites, and assistance with green card and family reunification applications.

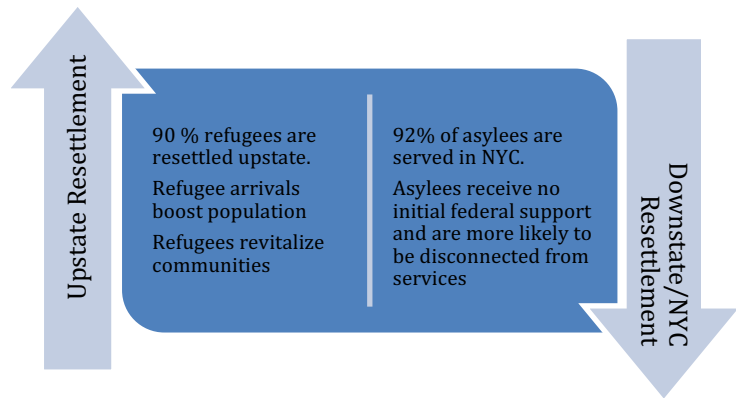
Supporting refugees and asylees strengthens New York's recovery from the pandemic. Refugees and asylees work throughout New York in the health professions, as volunteers in food distribution sites, as contact tracers in their communities, and disseminating critical public health updates.

NYSESRP has positive economic impact.

Successful integration grows economies.

Higher wages mean additional taxes paid, goods and services purchased and homes bought. And strong support for refugees

attracts Burmese, Somalis, Bosnians, and others already in the U.S. to upstate New York, fueling much-needed population growth in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany and Utica.



The Enhanced Services to Refugees Program is a model for other states around the country. New York State was first, in 2017; Oregon followed suit last year. Advocates in California are exploring a similar program. This funding was instrumental in allowing all but one resettlement agency to stay open while the federal administration worked to dismantle support for refugees. New York's reputation for inclusion and the resiliency of this network need to be strengthened by an expanded program funded at \$5 million.

Members of the New York for Refugees Coalition

- CAMBA
- Catholic Charities of Buffalo
- Catholic Charities Community Services, Archdiocese of New York
- Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
- Catholic Charities of Long Island
- Catholic Family Center in Rochester
- HIAS New York
- Interfaith Works of Central New York
- International Institute of Buffalo
- International Rescue Committee in New York
- Jewish Family Services of Western New York
- Journey's End Refugee Services
- The Center (formerly Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees)
- U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

- New York Immigration Coalition
- Fiscal Policy Institute



Enhanced aid to refugees helps our communities grow and thrive.

Coalition for the New York State Enhanced Services to Refugees Program (NYSESRP)

CAMBA Catholic Charities Community Services Catholic Charities of Buffalo Catholic Charities of Onondaga County	Catholic Charities of Long Island Catholic Family Center in Rochester HIAS New York Interfaith Works of Central New York	International Institute of Buffalo International Rescue Committee in New York Jewish Family Service of Buffalo & Erie Counties Journey's End Refugee Services	Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants New York Immigration Coalition Fiscal Policy Institute
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