

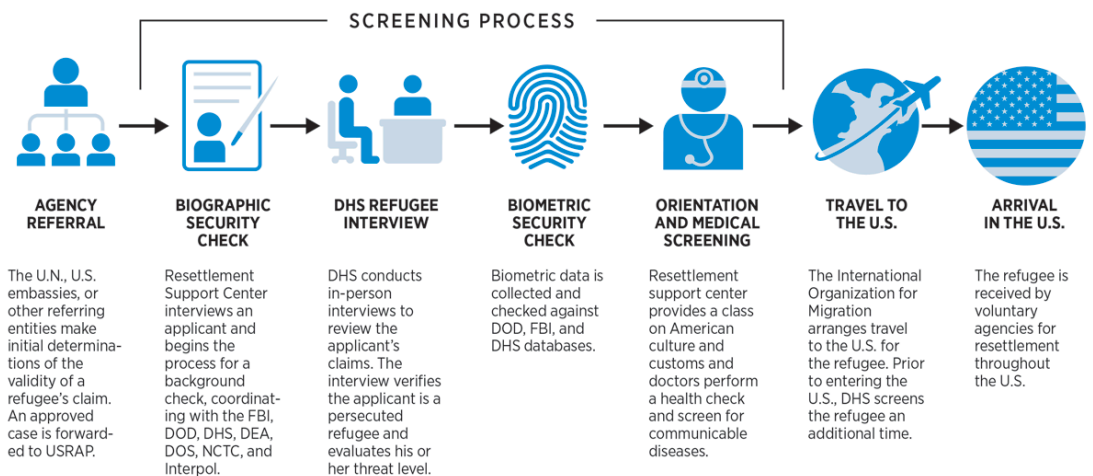
# Chippewa Valley FAQs

## Q: WHO ARE REFUGEES?

Under U.S. and international law, refugees are individuals who are outside of their country of origin who have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of their race, religion, political opinion, national origin or particular social group. Those selected by the U.S. State Department for resettlement are vetted overseas, lawfully admitted to the United States and then welcomed and provided initial resettlement support by faith-based or other non-profit organizations such as World Relief that partner with the U.S. State Department (<https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends>)

## Q: HOW ARE REFUGEES VETTED?

Refugees come at the invitation of the U.S. government only after being thoroughly vetted overseas by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in a process that also involves several other federal agencies and often takes multiple years to



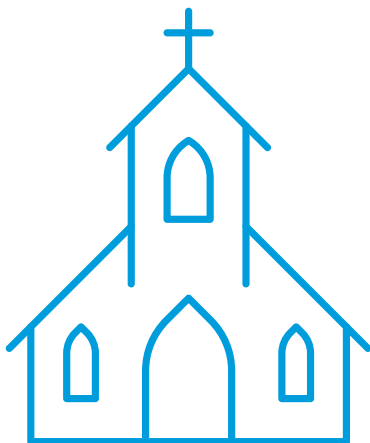
SOURCE: Heritage Foundation research.

BG3212 heritage.org

complete. The Heritage Foundation analyzed the refugee vetting process and concluded that "It is a fact that refugees undergo more vetting than any other immigrants to the U.S." Since the Refugee Act of 1980 established the current process for refugee resettlement, not a single American life has been lost in an Islamist terrorist attack perpetrated by someone who entered the United States as a refugee, and resettled refugees have a far lower incarceration rate within the United States than native-born U.S. citizens (<https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/BG3212.pdf>)

## Q: WHAT SERVICES/SUPPORT WILL WORLD RELIEF PROVIDE?

World Relief will coordinate with volunteers, churches, and other community partners to ensure that refugees have adequate housing, furniture and basic household goods and support in cultural adjustment, then ensure that they have the support that they need to enroll children in school, to learn English and to find employment. Our most intensive services are for the first 90 days after a refugee has arrived, but we also provide longer-term integration support through employment and health services and in partnership with volunteers and other community partners. Our goal is to guide our new neighbors toward self-sufficiency quickly.



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### Q: HOW DO REFUGEES IMPACT THE LOCAL ECONOMY?

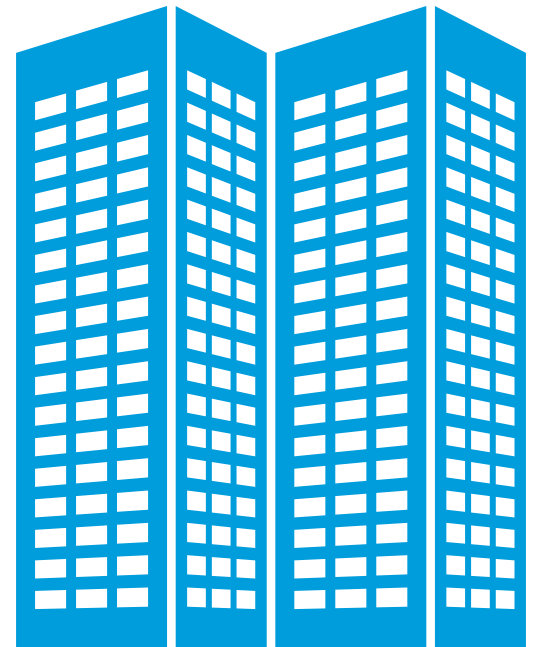
Historically, immigrants have been instrumental in building the United States economy. 45% of Fortune 500 Companies were founded or co-founded by a refugee, other immigrant, or their children. Aside from starting and growing businesses, a longitudinal study has shown that refugees contribute more money in taxes than they receive in benefits over time. The average refugee adult contributed approximately \$21,000 more in taxes than they have received in governmental assistance and services at all levels over 20 years

(<https://news.nd.edu/news/economic-benefits-of-admitting-refugees-outweigh-costs/>)



- An extensive study by The National Academies of the Sciences, Engineering and Medicine “concludes that immigration has an overall positive impact on the long-run economic growth in the U.S.” (<https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/economic-and-fiscal-impact-of-immigration>)
  - 96% of economist surveyed by the Wall Street Journal affirmed that the net economic impact of illegal immigration is positive for the United States (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB114477669441223067>)

- Refugees are authorized to work upon their arrival in the U.S. They pay taxes and social security, as well as contribute to their local economies as demonstrated by a recent study published by Health and Human Services on the net fiscal impact of refugees over the last 15 years
- Refugees had a positive net fiscal impact on the U.S. government over the 15-year period, totaling \$123.8 billion. The net fiscal benefit to the federal government was estimated at \$31.5 billion and approximately \$92.3 billion to state and local governments. When compared with the total U.S. population on a per capita basis, refugees and asylees had a comparable net fiscal impact. (<https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2024/02/15/new-hhs-study-finds-nearly-124-billion-positive-fiscal-impact-refugees-and-asylees-on-american-economy-15-year-period.html>)
- In our current economic cycle as a country, there is a lingering labor shortage – immigration is an opportunity for businesses to fill in gaps in their workforce.



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### Q: HOW WILL THIS IMPACT MY COMMUNITY?

Refugee resettlement will have a similar impact on a community as anyone moving to a new home. They will start or join businesses, partake in community events, and run everyday errands. While refugees may eat different food or wear different clothes than other groups in Eau Claire, their desires to contribute to a community, make friendships, and care for their families are the same as native Wisconsinites.

For those motivated – like us at World Relief – by the Christian faith and the teachings of the Bible, there are several important effects from refugee arrivals: Christians are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, and Jesus made clear in his parable of the Good Samaritan that our “neighbor” could include a vulnerable traveler of a different ethnicity or religious tradition (Luke 10:25-37). The Old Testament includes repeated commands to show love and seek justice for foreigners, who are mentioned repeatedly alongside orphans and widows as being uniquely vulnerable (Deuteronomy 10:18-19, Psalm 146:9). The New Testament includes commands to practice hospitality, which literally means the love of strangers (Romans 12:13), and Jesus said that by welcoming a stranger, we actually could be welcoming him (Matthew 25:35).

Of course, we recognize that not everyone in our community shares our faith – but all Americans can recognize the central role of immigration in our national story, a commitment to affirming the dignity of each human life and a desire to ensure we remain a place of opportunity and refuge for those “yearning to breathe.”

### Q: WHAT CAN I DO TO PARTNER WITH WORLD RELIEF?

There are several opportunities to partner! Use our website to see details and connect with our team: <https://worldrelief.org/wisconsin/about-us-chippewa-valley/>

- **Volunteer**
  - Be a Friendship Partner, drive to job interviews or medical appointments, or form a Good Neighbor Team
- **Donate**
  - New or Like-New furniture or other Household Items
- **Give**
  - Locally raised funds account for several service areas not covered by grants
- **Advocate**
  - Consider adding your name to the Evangelical Immigration Table Statement of Principles <https://evangelicalimmigrationtable.com/sign-the-principles/>



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### FROM 1987 TO NOW

World Relief is grateful to partner with other local community organizations that have been in Chippewa Valley from before our office opened in 2023. True Vue, the Executive Director of The Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc. (ECAHMAA), shares about her family's story:



"After the United States withdrew from the Vietnam War, my parents were notified that my family was going to face imminent danger due to our involvement in the Secret War. To escape the advancing communist, my parents decided to flee to Thailand. Not knowing who to trust, they only told their immediate family. My parents took my two older sisters, who were toddlers at the time, and fled to my paternal grandparents' village to take his family to flee with them. Without a map or a secure route, my family's journey to Thailand was risky. Stories of deceitful Laotian, promising to take people across the Mekong River to Thailand only to murder them in the end added to the peril. To secure my family's passage, my father tore his payment in half, handing it over only to pay in full after everyone safely crossed.

In Thai refugee camps, we lived in cramped conditions with limited resources, leading to health issues for my sisters and mother. Despite these challenges, my mother gave birth to me, a nine-pound baby, struggling to produce enough milk due to malnourishment. After enduring another year in the refugee camps, we were sponsored by my aunt to come to the United States in January 1987. Despite financial constraints, my parents prioritized instilling strong values and ethics, emphasizing success while maintaining our heritage and language. My parents' sacrifices and determination to protect us from political persecution have profoundly shaped my journey. Today, I acknowledge that my achievements would not have been possible without their resilience and courage in leaving a country where our lives were at stake."

### THE EAU CLAIRE AREA HMONG MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION, INC.

"The Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc. was founded by Hmong refugees with a passionate commitment to supporting and empowering fellow Hmong refugee families. Since its establishment in 1987, our association has been a source of assistance, resource, and connection to the Hmong community." (*We Support World Relief!* Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc)