

Appendix D: Early Benefits Available to Refugees

Eligible for TANF¹⁾, Medicaid, FAMIS, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, Energy Assistance Program, General Relief Program, Foster Care Services, and any other program of Department of Social Service **pending financial and non-financial requirements**

-This document will discuss the programs particular to refugees who fail to meet specific criteria for TANF/Medicaid

To apply for ANY public assistance...

- 1) Apply for benefits at local Department of Social Service (DSS) via completing *Application for Benefits*
- 2) Failure to qualify leaves refugees still eligible for Chapter 3 and 4 programs (RMA, RCA)
- 3) Obtaining LPR does not change eligibility status

A) Refugee Cash Assistance Program: time limited (<8months from arrival date) cash assistance to eligible populations that meet financial TANF criteria but not non-financial criteria

- Coverage/payments begin first day of the month in which the refugee submits application
- NO retroactive payments back to US entry day
- Available in EVERY VIRGINIA LOCALITY

Same as TANF	Different than TANF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Amount in cash payments -Right to appeals process -Collection of overpayment/repayment of underpayment -Case transfers process (mail case file to receiving agency) -Work requirement -Once employed, MUST report income (termination/reduction in benefits same) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -RCA only counts income on date of application (not mean income over application processing period) -RCA is time limited (<8months) -RCA first month's payment is NOT prorated based on application date -RCA does NOT require SSN -RSSEP qualifies for RCA, but NOT TANF, and only applies in areas where RSSEP exists

Eligibility/application includes

- 1) Complete VDSS *Application of Benefits* as above (applicant screened for TANF vs. RCA)
 - a. Only one required per household
 - b. If some eligible for TANF and others for RCA only, application will be automatically divided
- 2) Meets TANF financial but fails non-financial requirements
- 3) Proven documentation of Refugee status
- 4) Meets RSSEP work requirements
- 5) Application must be made within 8 months of arrival
- 6) Applicant CANNOT be full-time student in higher education

Financial Notes

- Home country assets are not considered against limits of TANF/RCA
- DSRP (Department of State Reception and Placement Program) payments are not counted as income/assets

*If fail to obtain SSN or achieve school attendance, refugee receives RCA until TANF approval

Payment Amount determined by income and geographic location, but equivalent to TANF

www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/bp/tanf/manual/300.pdf

B) Refugee Social Services Employment Program: administered via VDSS Office of Newcomer Services

- available up to 5 years after arrival and serves as requirement for RCA
- tailored to linguistic and cultural needs of population

-Programs focus on employment/employability services; job training/preparation; assistance with job search, placement, and retention; English language/vocational training; skills recertification; job-related day care; job-related transportation; translation/interpretation services; case management

- >Goal is to find work within one year of enrollment
- >Priority to new arrivals in first year, those on cash assistance, unemployed, employed but dependent refugees still requiring services

...NON-PARTICIPATION/LOSS OF BENEFITS...

- when an RCA recipient does not meet RSSEP requirements without good cause, written notification sent to local DSS
- Local DSS will then send this letter and *Advance Notice of Proposed Action Form* to RCA refugee
 - 10 day period to file appeal; often use local legal aid office to help with legal advice
 - If Appeal filed, RCA benefits will still be given until hearing occurs (and repayment occur if receiver found negligent)
- Termination of benefits occurs on the first of the following month of issuance
- First Sanction: lose benefits for one month Second Sanction: Lose benefits for 3 months

...EXEMPTION...

- a) Geographic if applicant does not live in RSSEP region
- b) Age: >65yo; <16yo for entire 8month benefit period; is 16-18yo but is a full time student
- c) Disability is NOT an exemption and will be addressed on case-by-case basis

¹⁾ Refugee must still participate in TANF work requirements via **Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW)** program. Participation in **Refugee Social Services Employment program (RSSEP)** is not an exemption. RSSEP provided by local non-profit agencies under contract with Office of Newcomer Services (ONS)

..AVAILABLE...	...UNAVAILABLE...
<p><u>Central Region</u> Amelia, Caroline, Chesterfield, Fluvanna, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Hopewell, New Kent, Petersburg, Powhatan, Richmond City</p> <p><u>Eastern Region</u> Chesapeake, Hampton, Isle of Wight, James City, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Surry, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, York-Poquoson</p> <p><u>Northern Region</u> Alexandria, Arlington, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fredericksburg, Harrisonburg-Rockingham, Loudoun, Manassas City, Manassas Park, Orange, Prince William, Rappahannock, Shenandoah County, Spotsylvania, Stafford</p> <p><u>Piedmont Region</u> Albemarle, Botetourt, Charlottesville, Franklin County, Roanoke City, Roanoke County</p> <p><u>Western Region</u> None</p>	<p><u>Central Region:</u> Buckingham, Charles City, Cumberland, Essex, King & Queen, King William, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Middlesex, Northumberland, Nottoway, Prince Edward, Richmond County, Westmoreland</p> <p><u>Eastern Region:</u> Accomack, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Franklin City, Gloucester, Greenville-Emporia, Matthews, Northampton, Prince George, Southampton, Sussex</p> <p><u>Northern Region:</u> Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick, Greene, King George, Louisa, Madison, Page, Warren, Winchester</p> <p><u>Piedmont Region:</u> Alleghany-Covington, Amherst, Appomattox, Bath, Bedford, Campbell, Charlotte, Craig, Danville, Halifax, Henry-Martinsville, Highland, Lynchburg, Mecklenburg, Nelson, Pittsylvania, Rockbridge-Buena Vista-Lexington, Shenandoah Valley</p> <p><u>Western Region:</u> All</p>

C) **Refugee Medical Assistance:** time limited (<8months from arrival date) cash assistance to eligible populations that meet financial Medicaid criteria but not non-financial criteria

- Virginia receives full federal funding with no state matching funds for the medical assistance provided to these individuals during the first 8 months they are in the U.S. though these are distributed at the state's discretion

Same as Medicaid	Different from Medicaid
<p>-Types of services received</p> <p>-Matching Grant Program payments NOT counted as income</p> <p>-Right to appeal</p> <p>-Spend down rules</p> <p>-Virginia's Health Insurance Premium Program (HIPP) rules</p> <p>-Case Transfer process</p>	<p>-Only income on date of application counted (not mean over application process time)</p> <p>-Time limit on assistance received (8months from arrival)</p> <p>-Wages from employment AFTER case approval are NOT counted</p> <p>-NO requirement for SSN</p>

Eligibility/application includes

- 1) Complete VDSS *Application of Benefits* as above (applicant screened for Medicaid vs. RMA
 - a. Only one required per household
 - b. If some eligible for Medicaid and others for RMA only, application will be automatically divided
- 2) Meets Medicaid financial but fails non-financial requirements
- 3) Proven documentation of Refugee status
- 4) Meets RSSEP work requirements
- 5) Application must be made within 8months of arrival
- 6) Applicant CANNOT be full-time student in higher education

Financial Notes

- Home country assets are not considered against limits of RMA
- Department of State Reception and Placement Program (DSRP) payments are not counted as income/assets
- Wages earned from employment after receipt of RMA and before end of 8-month eligibility do NOT affect eligibility
- If originally on Medicaid but becomes ineligible due to employment earnings-->automatically transferred to RMA for remainder of 8-month period
- If applicant receives employer sponsored health insurance during 8-months, this becomes primary and RMA secondary (RMA will pick up costs that employer-sponsored insurance will not)

...NON-PARTICIPATION/LOSS OF BENEFITS...

- when an RMA recipient is later determined to be ineligible
- Local DSS will then send this letter and *Advance Notice of Proposed Action Form* to RMA refugee
 - 10 day period to file appeal; often use local legal aid office to help with legal advice
 - If Appeal filed, RMA benefits will still be given until hearing occurs (and repayment occur if receiver found negligent)
- Termination of benefits occurs on the first of the following month of issuance

D) **Refugee School Impact Program:** helps students aged 5-18 become integrated/educated through ESL, tutorials, clubs/activities, counseling, interpretation services

E) **Refugees under the Affordable Care Act**

- Insurance Protections: No lifetime benefits limits or rescissions; No denying coverage to children <19 year's old based on pre-existing conditions
- Health Insurance Exchanges: incomes 133-400% federal poverty level will receive tax credits to assist purchasing insurance
- Medicaid coverage will be available to young adults up to age 26 who have aged out of the foster care or Unaccompanied Refugee Minors programs