



# Iowa Department of Human Services

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## GENERAL LETTER NO. 6-D-35

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial, Health and Work Supports  
Division of Adult, Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 6, Chapter D, *REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE*,  
Title page, revised; Contents (page 1), revised; and pages 3, 4, 5, 6a, 13 through  
18, 18a, and 18b, revised.

### Summary

Chapter 6-D is revised to:

- ◆ Add policy that participants cannot access their FIP benefits with their electronic access card (EAC) at a:
  - Liquor store or any place that mainly sells liquor,
  - Casino or other gambling or gaming establishment, or
  - Business which provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state (such as a strip club).
- ◆ Update the list of local resettlement agencies.

### Effective Date

February 1, 2014

### Material Superseded

This material replaces the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 6, Chapter D:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Title page	October 10, 1995
Contents (page 1)	January 8, 2002
3	March 13, 2001
4	August 21, 2001
5, 6a	January 8, 2002
13-18	September 19, 2000
18a, 18b	January 8, 2002

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.

Revised February 21, 2014

Employees' Manual  
Title 6  
Chapter D

# REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE



Iowa Department  
of Human Services

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## **APPLICATION PROCESSING**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC 60.2(217), 60.3(217), 60.12(217)

Each refugee wishing to do so must have the opportunity to apply for cash assistance without delay, in person or by mail. Follow the policies and procedures in 4-B, [APPLICATION PROCESSING](#), including the completion of the *Financial Support Application*, form 470-0462 or 470-0462(S), and the processing of this application.

Consider all applications submitted by or for a refugee for FIP eligibility **before** considering eligibility for RCA. See the following sections for information about these steps in application processing:

- ◆ [Contacting the Bureau of Refugee Services](#)
- ◆ [Contacting the sponsor](#)
- ◆ [Contacting the local resettlement agency](#)
- ◆ [Determining FIP eligibility](#)

### **Contacting the Bureau of Refugee Services**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212

Notify the Bureau of Refugee Services of applications for cash (or medical) assistance by sending form 470-0481, *Notification to Bureau of Refugee Services*.

### **Contacting the Sponsor**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC 9.10(11)

Contact the sponsor when a refugee applies for RCA. The purpose of the contact is to determine:

- ◆ What assistance is provided to the refugee and
- ◆ Whether the refugee has quit employment or failed to appear for a job or job interview when referred.

A telephone contact with the sponsor is sufficient. You do not need a release of information from the refugee.

Document in the case record the sponsor’s name and address and what contributions the sponsor is providing to the refugee. Also document whether the refugee has quit a job or refused to appear for job interviews when referred. If the sponsor provides a written statement, include this in the case record.

**Contacting the Local Resettlement Agency**

**Legal reference:** 45 CFR 400.27; 441 IAC 9.3(3)“e”

Notify the local resettlement agency when a refugee applies for Refugee Cash Assistance during the first eight months after entry into the United States. You do not need a release of information from the refugee.

Provide the refugee’s address and telephone number to the resettlement agency. When the Bureau of Refugee Services is the local resettlement agency, form 470-0481, *Notification to Bureau of Refugee Services*, constitutes the notice.

This contact makes the local resettlement agency aware of a possible breakdown between the refugee and the sponsor. The resettlement agency must inform you if the refugee has quit a job or failed or refused to appear for a job or a job interview.

The local resettlement agencies are:

USCRI (US Committee on Refugees and Immigrants)  
100 East Euclid Avenue, Suite 105  
Des Moines, IA 50313  
515-528-8087

Catholic Charities  
420 6th St SE, Suite 220  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401  
319-364-7122

Catholic Charities  
601 Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
515-244-3761

World Relief  
1204 4th Avenue  
Moline, IL 61265  
309-764-2279

## Contacting the Trafficking Verification Line

**Legal reference:** Victims of Trafficking & Violence Protection Act of 2000

Aliens who are certified as “victims of trafficking” by the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement are “eligible aliens” for Refugee Cash Assistance benefits for the allowable eight month’s of assistance.

When a victim of trafficking applies for benefits, follow normal procedures for determining eligibility for refugee cash assistance except:

- ◆ Accept the original Office of Refugee Resettlement certification letter for adults or letter for children under 18 years old in place of INS documentation.

Although trafficking victims are not required to provide any documentation of their immigration status for benefit purposes, they may have various documents, such as form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Card*, with a stamp showing parole under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA, an employment authorization document, etc. The documentation may serve to verify identity.

- ◆ Contact the trafficking verification line at (202) 401-5510 to confirm the validity of the certification letter for adults or letter for children under 18 years old and to notify the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the benefits for which the person has applied.

**Note:** Do not contact SAVE concerning victims of trafficking, because SAVE will not have this information.

- ◆ Note the “entry date” for Refugee Cash Assistance benefit purposes. The person’s “entry date” is the certification date, which is in the body of the certification letter or letter for children. The certification is valid for eight months from the date of the initial certification date. (See [Victims of Trafficking](#).)

## **NONFINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC Chapter 60

The following FIP nonfinancial eligibility policies do **not** apply to the RCA program:

- ◆ FIP requirements for “categorical relatedness” are waived for the RCA eligibility determination. RCA eligibility is not based on family composition or presence of a child. This provision is designed to avoid a needy refugee becoming a burden on state or local public or voluntary resources, if the resettlement plan has broken down.
- ◆ PROMISE JOBS program requirements in 4-J do not apply to the RCA program.
- ◆ RCA applicants and participants do not assign support and are not required to assist in contacting an absent parent.
- ◆ Policies in 4-C, [Persons Who Misrepresent Their Place of Residence](#), do not apply to the RCA program.

Aid types for RCA groups are in the 06 series.

The following sections explain the RCA nonfinancial eligibility requirements for:

- ◆ [Age](#)
- ◆ [Alienage](#)
- ◆ [Benefits from SSI and other sources](#)
- ◆ [Contracts for support](#)
- ◆ [Duplicate assistance](#)
- ◆ [Electronic access card usage](#)
- ◆ [Composition of the eligible group](#)
- ◆ [Participation in a strike](#)
- ◆ [Residency](#)
- ◆ [Social security number](#)
- ◆ [Students](#)
- ◆ [Temporary absence from the home](#)
- ◆ [Time since entry to the United States](#)
- ◆ [Work requirements](#)

In addition to FIP and SSI, RCA applicants and participants must apply for and accept all other benefits for which they may qualify. See 4-C, [Benefits From Other Sources](#), for details.

### **Contract for Support**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC 60.10(2)

A person entitled to total support under the terms of an enforceable contract is not eligible to receive RCA when the other party obligated to provide the support is fulfilling that part of the contract.

### **Duplicate Assistance**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC 60.10(1)

A person whose needs are included in an RCA grant cannot concurrently receive a grant under any other public assistance program administered by the Department or from a public assistance program in another state. See 4-C, [Duplicate Assistance](#), for more information.

### **Electronic Access Card Usage**

**Legal reference:** 441 IAC 41.25(11)

A person who receives an RCA grant cannot use an electronic access card to access FIP benefits at:

- ◆ Liquor store or any place that mainly sells liquor,
- ◆ Casino or other gambling or gaming establishment, or
- ◆ Business which provides adult-oriented entertainment in which performers disrobe or perform in an unclothed state (such as a strip club).

See 4-C, [Electronic Access Card Usage](#), for more information.

### Eligible Group

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC 60.5(1)

Each adult refugee is considered as a separate RCA group, with the exceptions that:

- ◆ Married refugees living together are considered members of the same RCA group; and
- ◆ A refugee child is considered a member of the same RCA group as the child's parents when living together.

An unmarried 18-year-old refugee living with parents eligible for RCA must be a member of the parents' RCA group when the refugee is a full-time student expected to complete secondary school before age 19. Secondary school includes an equivalent level of vocational or technical training.

A refugee living alone who is at least age 18 or who is married is a one-member eligible group if otherwise eligible for RCA. (By Iowa law a child becomes an adult when the child marries, unless the marriage is annulled.) A refugee living alone who is under age 18 and unmarried is not eligible for RCA. Refer the refugee to the service unit for assistance.

Nine refugees live together: a mother, father and child under 18, the brother of the mother and his spouse, the adult sister of the mother, two other unrelated adult refugees, and the father's niece (under 18), for whom he is caretaker.

Eligibility for cash assistance is processed as six separate eligible groups:

- ◆ Mother, father and child: one three-member group, either FIP or RCA;
- ◆ Brother of mother and spouse: one two-member RCA group;
- ◆ Sister of mother: one one-member RCA group;
- ◆ Two other unrelated refugees: two separate one-member RCA groups;
- ◆ Niece of father: one one-member FIP group.

### **Participation in a Strike**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 96-212; 441 IAC 60.10(3)

The spouse and children are ineligible for RCA for any month in which the other spouse or parent is participating in a strike on the last day of the month.

Any person who is not a parent or spouse is ineligible for RCA for any month in which the person is participating in a strike on the last day of that month.

Refer to 4-C, [Strikers](#), for details.

### **Residency**

**Legal reference:** 441 IAC 60.5(2)

To be eligible for RCA, a refugee must meet the requirements in 4-C, [Residency](#).

### **Social Security Number**

**Legal reference:** 441 IAC 60.5(3)

To be eligible for RCA, a refugee must meet the requirements in 4-C, [Social Security Number](#).

### **Students**

**Legal reference:** Public Laws 96-212 and 97-363; 441 IAC 60.6(217)

Refugee Cash Assistance is not available to refugees who are full-time students in institutions of higher education unless the program is approved as part of an individual employability plan. (See [Individual Employability Plan](#) for details.)

**Full-Time Student**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 97-363; 34 CFR 690.2; 441 IAC 60.6(2)

A *full-time student* is a student who is carrying a full-time academic workload that equals or exceeds:

- ◆ 12 semester or 12 quarter hours per academic term in those institutions using standard semester, trimester, or quarter hour systems;
- ◆ 24 semester hours or 36 quarter hours per academic year for institutions using credit hours to measure progress, but not using semester, trimester, or quarter systems, or the prorated equivalent for programs of less than one academic year;
- ◆ 24 clock hours per week for institutions using clock hours;
- ◆ A series of courses or seminars which equals 12 semester hours or 12 quarter hours in a maximum of 18 weeks; or
- ◆ The work portion of a cooperative education program in which the amount of work performed is equivalent to the academic workload of a full-time student.

**Institution of Higher Education**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 97-363; 34 CFR 668.2(a)(4), 668.3(a)(5), 668.4(a)(4); 441 IAC 60.6(1)

An “institution of higher education” is an educational institution that provides a program as specified below.

- ◆ A public or private nonprofit institution of higher education that provides:
  - An educational program for which it awards an associate, baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree, or
  - At least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a baccalaureate degree, or
  - At least a one-year training program that leads to a certificate or degree and prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.

- ◆ A proprietary institution of higher education that provides at least a six-month program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.
- ◆ A postsecondary vocational institution is a public or private nonprofit educational institution that provides at least a six-month program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.

### **Temporary Absence From Home**

**Legal reference:** 441 IAC 60.11(217)

Follow the policies and procedures outlined in 4-C, [Temporary Absence](#).

### **Time Since Entry to the U.S.**

**Legal reference:** 45 CFR 400.203; 441 IAC 60.7(217)

Except as described in [Date of Entry for Asylees](#), an eligible refugee may receive Refugee Cash Assistance only during the first eight months the refugee is in the United States, beginning the month the refugee enters the country. This time limit applies to each person, not to each case. The eight-month period begins the month the refugee enters the United States, regardless of which day during the month the refugee enters.

<u>Month of Entry</u>	<u>Last Month of Eligibility for RCA</u>
January	August
February	September
March	October
April	November
May	December
June	January
July	February
August	March
September	April
October	May
November	June
December	July

A nonrefugee child in the home with one or both refugee parents is eligible for RCA until each parent has been in the United States for eight months, or until the child reaches eight months of age, whichever occurs first.

A refugee enters the United States September 27, 1998, and is receiving RCA (aid type 06 series). The eight-month period for RCA ends April 26, 1999. The refugee is removed or canceled from RCA effective May 1, 1999. No RCA is paid after May 1999.

Use the tickler system (ABCT) to enter the date each refugee entered the United States. Under “due date,” enter the date the refugee will be considered as having been in the United States for eight months. Enter the message by entering the date of entry first, then listing the name of each refugee who came into the United States on that date.

The tickler message is sent to you the month before the due date and the month due. Refer to 14-B(4), [TICKLER ON-LINE DISPLAY \(ABCT\)](#), for additional information.

When an individual is being removed from an RCA case after eight months, reduce the grant if only part of the refugees on the case have been in the United States for eight months. Cancel the entire case from RCA if all the refugees on the case have been in the United States for eight months.

Send a timely notice when removing a refugee’s needs from a case or when canceling a case due to the eight-month provision. See 4-A, [Notification](#).

**Date of Entry for Asylees**

**Legal reference:** ORR State Letter No. 00-15; 45 CFR 400.203(b); 400.211

The “date of entry” for asylees is the date they are granted asylum and begins the eight-month eligibility period for RCA.

February 15      Date of entry  
November 6      Date asylum is granted  
November 6 is considered the “date of entry.” The eight-month RCA eligibility period is from November through June.

If an asylee includes his or her spouse and children on the asylum application, the family members have the same “entry” date (i.e., asylum grant date) as the principal asylee.

In some cases, an asylee’s family may not yet be in the U.S. To bring the family to the U.S., the principal asylee must complete form I-730, *Approval Letter*. The family members’ physical date of entry is their “entry” date (i.e., asylum grant date) from which to determine their RCA period. This date will be noted on the I-730 (and I-94 and Visa 92).

If family members live in the United States but are not included on the principal’s asylum application, the principal asylee must complete form I-730. The approval date of the I-730 is considered the family members’ “entry” date (i.e., asylum grant date) from which to determine their RCA period. The I-730 approval date will also be noted on the person’s I-94.

Cuban and Haitian entrants may be eligible for RCA before they are granted asylum. However, people who previously were eligible for RCA in accordance with ORR regulations for Cuban and Haitian entrants cannot receive an additional eight-month RCA period from the date asylum is granted.

### **Victims of Trafficking**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 104-193

The certification for a victim of trafficking is valid for eight months from the date of the initial certification date. The person’s “entry date” is the certification date in the body of the certification letter or letter for children under 18 years old issued by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Once you have verified that the person is a victim of trafficking, you will need to determine if the person meets other eligibility requirements. If so, issue benefits to the same extent as for a refugee.

As with any other refugee, for trafficking victims who present the required certification letters, first determine their eligibility under FIP. Refer to [Determining FIP Eligibility](#) for special instructions. For specific instructions on medical assistance, refer to 6-D(1), [Accepting FMAP-Related or SSI-Related Medicaid](#).

Record the expiration date of the certification letter or the letter for children by using the tickler system, and conduct redeterminations of eligibility at that time. The expiration date is specified in the person's certification letter.

Victims of trafficking may not yet have standard identity documents, such as driver's licenses. Do not automatically deny applications for people who cannot confirm their identity. In these cases, call the trafficking verification line at (202) 401-5510 for assistance.

Some victims of trafficking may not yet have or may not be able to get a social security number for work purposes. Assist these people in obtaining non-work social security numbers. Do so by sending a letter to the Social Security Administration that:

- ◆ Is on letterhead.
- ◆ Includes the applicant's name.
- ◆ Mentions that this person is a trafficking victim.
- ◆ References the non-work reason for which the number is required to receive benefits.
- ◆ States that the applicant meets the requirements to receive benefits except for the social security number.

If you encounter a person you believe may meet the definition of trafficking victim, go through your usual channels to obtain instructions on providing the person with assistance in contacting the Office of Refugee Resettlement for possible certification by that agency.

Trafficking victims are eligible for RCA only for one eight-month period, the same as refugees. Cancel RCA at the end of the specified certification period. You must give timely notice.

**Note:** A victim of trafficking who is issued recertification letter by the Office of Refugee Resettlement may be eligible to receive FIP benefits beyond the eight-month certification period.

If a victim of trafficking gains an eligible alien status, use the new eligible alien status to be used when redetermining eligibility for that person.