

Trainer's Notes

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) Policy, Processes, and Case Management

Purpose:

The purpose of this course is to provide RCA/RMA Case Managers instruction on how to determine eligibility, and information on application processing and cultural awareness resources.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the eligibility criteria for refugee status
- Apply non-financial and financial eligibility requirements for RCA and RMA
- Identify recommended items of verification for RCA and RMA
- Explain the RCA and RMA programs and time limits
- Build cultural awareness of Wisconsin's refugee population
- Use cultural awareness knowledge to provide accommodations
- Create a plan for on-going cultural awareness building

This page is intentionally blank.

Materials

- Laptop /Internet Access/LCD projector/Speakers
- RCA/RMA Handbook (W-2 Manual Chapter 18)
- RCA/RMA Desk Aid
- Trainers Notes (TN)/Participant Guide (PG) & Evaluations
- Flip chart paper & markers/white board markers
- World Map (large for wall, and 4-6 smaller ones for tables)
- Video links
 - What does it mean to be a refugee?
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25bwiSikRSI>
 - What they took with them
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xS-Q2sgNjl8>
 - I Am A Refugee (PBS 3.22 minutes)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3THtcucQfA>
- SAVE: A Guide on Immigration Documents Commonly Used by Benefit Applicants
 - <https://save.uscis.gov/web/media/resourcesContents/SAVEGuideCommonlyUsedImmigrationDocs.pdf>

Suggested Pace

8:30 – 9:00	Sign-In
9:00 – 9:15	Introduction/Welcome
9:15 – 9:30	Video: What does it mean to be a refugee? (TED Talk)
9:30 – 10:10	Activity: 10 minutes to Leave (WTAP)
10:15 – 10:30	Video: What they took with them (UNHCR)
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:15	Who are our Refugees?
11:15 – 11:30	Identification of Refugee Status: SAVE document
11:30 – 11:40	Defining RCA/RMA Programs
11:40 – 11:50	RCA/RMA Program Time Limits
11:50 – 12:00	Verifications items needed for RCA/RMA
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 1:45	RCA Eligibility: Non-financial, Financial, Scenarios
1:45 – 2:15	RCA Assistance Groups
2:15 – 2:30	Determining Eligibility for RCA/RMA Eligibility
2:30 – 2:45	Break
2:45 – 3:00	RMA Eligibility: Non-financial, Financial
3:00 – 3:15	Knowledge check/Review – Fill in the blank
3:15 – 3:30	Resources to Assist Families
3:30 – 3:50	Create a Plan to Build Cultural Awareness
3:50 – 4:00	Evaluations/Wrap-up

Introduction

 PG 3

Welcome learners and review housekeeping items: restrooms, food/drink, electronic devices (these may be used to look up information throughout the training), etc.

Review Learning Objectives and **circle the one** that stands out to them. **Explain** that this training will focus on the policy and processes of the Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance Programs.

 PPT 2

Introductions: Have learners introduce themselves to include their name, agency, job function and how long they have been an RCA/RMA Case Manager.

Ask: what experience working with refugees.

Ask: which objective(s) stood out to them. **Trainer** should keep a tally on either flip chart or white board, of which ones stand out.

Optional questions to ask:

Ask: Were any of your parents born outside of the U.S.? Grandparents? Great-grandparents?

Ask: Who knows someone personally who immigrated to the United States?

Share that refugee resettlement services are especially important components of helping refugees feel supported as they resettle in the United States.

 PG 4

Ask: What does it mean to be a refugee? Have them write down their responses in their participant guide.

 PPT 3

Play TEDtalk video:

What does it mean to be a refugee? Benedetta Berti and Evelien Borgman (5:42)
6/16/16

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25bwiSikRsl>

Ask: Did your response change following the video? How? **Add this response** to their participant guide.

Activity: 10 minutes to Leave

 PG 5

Approximate time for this section including activity, set up, debrief, and video: **40 minutes**

 PPT 4

(10 minutes to leave comes from the *Welcome to America Project* (WTAP) website)

Share the WTAP website (www.wtap.org).

Ask: If you only had 10 minutes to leave your home, what would you take with you? And Why? **Give 10 minutes** for them to independently complete their list and answer the question Why?

 PPT 5

Pair Share: Have the learners partner with someone at their table to share their lists and their whys. **Give 5 minutes to share.**

Four on the Floor: Ask each pair to team with another pair not at their table to share two items on their lists and their whys. **Give 5 minutes to share**

 PPT 6

Large group debrief: Give 10 minutes to debrief

- What surprised you about your own list and why?
- Did hearing other people's lists and whys make you want to make any changes to your list?
- What surprised you about other people's lists and whys? (ask permission before disclosing)

 PPT 7

Show the following video

What they took with them—UNHCR (5:24) 9/12/16

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xS-Q2sgNjI8>

Ask: How does their list compare to yours?

Who are the Refugees?

 PG 6

 PPT 8-9

Review the United Nations (UN) definition of a refugee on the PPT 8-9 .

Highlight anything that surprised them. **Ask** if anything surprised them about the definition

 PPT 10

Share the top 10 origin countries **Where America's Refugees Come From, FFY 2017:** Democratic Republic of Congo; Iraq, Syria, Burma, Ukraine, Bhutan, Iran, Eritrea, Afghanistan

 PPT 11

Identify on a world map where these countries are located. **Use the map** on each table and identify where each of these countries is located.

Ask: What are the top five countries refugees come from to WI? **Provide answers** to complete the left column of the chart on PG 6.

 PPT 12

In Wisconsin, FFY 2017 show PPT Slide

10/1/17 -7/11/18

Total Refugees in WI—309

Burma—221

Democratic Republic of Congo—48

Somalia—17

Afghanistan—7

Eritrea--1

Give them 10 minutes to complete the section regarding the events that led to the refugee crisis in each country. Depending on the size of the group, give one-two countries to each group. They can utilize their own knowledge and their smart phones.

Note to trainer from Refugee Policy Section: None of these conflicts is straightforward or easy to summarize. In some cases, one ethnic group from a particular country may understand the conflict from the perspective of the persecution experienced by their families, while another ethnic group from the same country may have a completely different view of what happened, based on their own persecution experience. These ethnic groups could both reside in Milwaukee and have the same refugee status, and **it is our job to maintain the neutrality** in those circumstances.

Large Group Discussion/debrief

Ask: Which countries they identified and the crisis that caused refugees to flee.

Ask: What were some of the countries that families have come from? Describe your experiences.

 PPT 13

Ask: What do you do or what have you done to prepare yourselves for an appointment with a refugee?

Possible responses: *contact VOLAG representative; identify an interpreter, research crisis in country of origin.*

Identification of Refugee Status

 PG 7

Review the definition of a Refugee. You may choose to go back to PPT 8-9 with the definitions for refugee.

Define the various kinds of Immigration Status given by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. **Explain** that these kinds of Immigration Status often are verified by the I-94 document, but also by other documents. See the Refugee Status Documentation chart, starting on page 27 in the PG, which shows all documents that refugee populations can use to verify immigration status. **Share** that additional information on the I-94 will be covered later when verification is discussed.

Define Asylee (An individual granted asylum): meets the definition of refugee and is already in the US.

Explain that individuals who have been granted asylum are “asylees” and may be eligible for RCA/RMA. Individuals who have applied for but have not been granted asylum are not eligible for RCA/RMA.

Continue to Define the other kinds of immigration status:

- Paroled as a refugee or asylee (it is unlikely workers will encounter this status)
- Cuban and Haitian entrants
- Certain Amerasians
- Foreign-born victims of trafficking (refer to more information in the PG Appendix pages 34 and 38.) (Victims of trafficking that were born in the U.S. are not eligible for RCA/RMA.)
- Iraqis and Afghans with special immigration status (these individuals often are referred to as “SIVs” - “Special Immigrant Visa-holders”)
- Lawful permanent resident who previously held one of the above listed statuses

Emphasize that is very unlikely someone would meet the lawful permanent resident status AND meet the eight-month time limit because most lawful permanent residents have been in the United States for more than eight months. (A refugee can apply for permanent residency only after he or she has been in the United States for one year.)

Note: SIVs enter the US with permanent resident status. The VISA they provide to verify RCA eligibility says on the bottom that it serves as a 'temporary I-551 evidencing of permanent residence'.

☀ PPT 14

Share and review this guide:

SAVE (Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements):

A Guide on Immigration Documents Commonly Used by Benefit Applicants

<https://save.uscis.gov/web/media/resourcesContents/SAVEGuideCommonlyusedImmigrationDocs.pdf>

Defining the RCA/RMA Programs

📄 PG 8

☀ PPT 15

Define that RCA is a cash benefit, federally-funded program, and RMA is also a federally-funded program that provides a level of benefits similar to Medicaid/BadgerCARE Plus. **Explain** how the programs are funded separately from TANF funding, but in Wisconsin, they are modeled after the W-2 program and Medicaid/BadgerCare, with the goal of families becoming self-sufficient. **Explain** that most new refugees arriving to Wisconsin qualify for Medicaid/BadgerCare Plus, which means that they do not qualify for RMA.

RCA/RMA Program Time Limits

📄 PG 8

☀ PPT 16

Explain that refugees may receive RCA and RMA for eight consecutive months after their date of arrival in the U.S.

Emphasize that the eligibility period of victims of trafficking and asylees start at different times than other refugees. See W-2 Manual 18.2.4.2.

- The "date of entry" for asylee(s) is the date they are granted asylum.
- The "date of entry" for victim(s) of trafficking is the certification date found in the certification letter issued by the DHHS Office on Trafficking in Persons.

In the case of a child victim, an interim assistance letter or eligibility letter will be issued. Find more information and a sample certification letter at the Office on Trafficking in Persons website.

Ask: what is your agency's process for tracking the RCA/RMA time limits.

Review that RCA eligibility information must be entered into CWW through interactive interviewing to verify ineligibility for W-2 before RCA/RMA eligibility can be determined.

Payments to RCA individuals are made by the W-2 agency, though payments are not issued through CARES.

Emphasize that RCA workers should leave detailed Case Comments in CWW regarding the RCA application and eligibility determination. The RCA application and eligibility verification documents must be scanned into ECF.

Verification Items Needed for RCA/RMA

 PG 9

Explain that verification is key in providing refugee services.

 PPT 17

Explain that an I-94 probably will be the most common way that refugees prove their refugee status and date of entry to the U.S., but this isn't the only allowable document. The I-94 form is used most commonly because it has the refugee status and date of entry into the U.S. stamped on it.

Direct the learners to review the Refugee Status Documentation in the Appendix, beginning on PG page 27.

Define what a VOLAG is:

The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families website describes a VOLAG as: receiving special funding from the federal government to support the first 90 days of settlement activity—finding adequate housing, getting basic food, clothing and supplies, assessing employability and starting the process of securing employment and registering for any public benefits for which they may be eligible.

Direct the learners to review the listing of VOLAGs is covered in the PG on page 23 Appendix.

Explain that the refugee may need to provide verification for items in addition to the two listed on page 9 in the PG. For example, if the refugee states he/she moved from another state to Wisconsin and received RCA benefits in the other state, the RCA worker should ask the refugee to verify that the RCA benefits ended in the other state (but should assist them if they cannot obtain it). W-2 Manual 18.2.4.3 provides an example of this situation.

Remind the class that applicants have **7 working days** to provide the appropriate verification.

RCA Eligibility

 PG 10

 PPT 18

Review who is typically eligible for RCA, who is part of a RCA group?:

- Single individuals 18 and over;
- Childless couples;
- Teen parents; or
- Two-parent families with no children under 18 years of age.

RCA Non-Financial Eligibility

Direct the learners to review the non-financial eligibility criteria listed on page 10 in the PG (or have the learners take turns reading each criteria).

State that W-2 Manual 18.2.4.6.1 gives details about the employment and training requirements, including examples of typical refugee employment and training activities.

Emphasize that refugees do not need to be enrolled or participating in an employment and training program in order to receive their initial RCA payment. RCA clients must enroll and participate in an employment and training program within 30 days of receiving the first RCA benefit in order to remain eligible for ongoing RCA benefits.

Many refugees participate in FSET in order to meet this requirement, but a refugee could fulfill the requirement through other programs, such as at the VOLAG. The RCA eligibility worker at the W-2 agency should check to make sure the refugee is participating in activities before issuing ongoing payments.

Remind the class that full-time students of secondary/higher education are not eligible for RCA, with the very narrow exception of a professional in need of recertification services in order to practice his or her profession in the U.S. He or she can attend a full-time college or professional training program and qualify for RCA provided that the individual is employed, the training is approved as part of the individual's employability plan, and the training program does not last longer than one year. The individual would not qualify for RCA if his or her employment income was higher than the RCA income limit.

Reinforce: As in W-2 policy, an applicant who does not provide a Social Security number still may be eligible for RCA if he or she applies for one and provides proof of the application. (See *W-2 Manual 2.7.1*)

RCA Financial Eligibility

 PG 11

Introduce financial eligibility and stress there are considerations to keep in mind when determining financial eligibility.

Discuss how the Reception and Placement (R&P) payments are not counted, even though they may be one of the first payments that refugees receive.

Use flip chart paper or a white board and make a blank chart.

Ask: What are some examples of income and assets they have seen?

INCOME	ASSETS
<p>What's Counted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Income • Earned/ Unearned 	<p>What's Counted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking/Savings • Vehicle
<p>What's Disregarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Support • Dependent Child's SSI • Dependent Child's earned income 	<p>What's Disregarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First \$10,000 in vehicle equity value <p><i>**any assets remaining in the refugee's country of origin are considered disregarded for RCA</i></p>

Refer to the W-2 Manual 18.2.5.

Activity: Eligibility Scenarios

 PG 12

Introduce the activity and explain that you are determining non-financial and financial eligibility, and list countable and disregarded income and assets. Let the learners know they will have 5-10 minutes to work in groups on the scenario.

Assign each table group one scenario to work on and give learners about 5-10 minutes in their groups to answer the scenario questions.

Large group debrief have learners to share their responses.

Re-state the importance of verification and documentation.

Answers to the Eligibility Scenarios:

Example 1: Jamila Ahmed - Not eligible. Minor Children, W-2

Example 2: Ram Bahdur Subba - Eligible for 1 month. Count the earned income (Federal Poverty Level), and checking account. Don't count the vehicle, as the first \$10,000 is disregarded.

Explain refugee "sponsorship." If a refugee has a sponsor (other than a VOLAG) from whom they are receiving money, count the amount of the money actually received by the refugee from the sponsor.

RCA Assistance Groups

 PG 13

Have the learners review the RCA assistance group bullets on page 13 in the PG.

Ask: Who would be willing to share an example of an RCA assistance group that they have had.

Activity: Assistance Groups

 PG 14

Introduce the assistance group scenarios.

Small group: Have learners work in groups of two to three to answer the scenario questions.

Large group: Have learners to share their responses. **Record** on flip chart/whiteboard.

Ask: Do you have an example of a “challenging” assistance group situation they may have experienced.

Answers to Eligibility Scenarios:

Example 1: Pheng and his wife Mai (RCA group), Bao (RCA group), Mai’s sister and her husband (RCA group)

Example 2: Aita Devi and her daughter Suk Maya (RCA group), Aita Devi’s mother and her husband (RCA group)

Example 3: Khalid Ali, his wife Layla and their 3 children (W-2), the other minor children (RCA group)

Determining Eligibility for RCA

 PG 15

Ask: What is their step-by-step process and timeline procedure for determining eligibility?

Responses may vary but must meet policy requirements.

Ask: What their agencies do to ensure payments are accurate and reimbursed properly?

Responses may vary but must meet policy requirements.

Ask: What their agency processes are to be sure that timeframes are being met?

Responses may vary but must meet policy requirements.

Ask: What practices they have utilized to ensure policy and processes are followed and met?

Ask: What are your best practices for determining eligibility and providing effective case management services?

RMA Eligibility

 PG 16 PPT 19

Emphasize that most refugees enroll into Medicaid/BadgerCare Plus immediately after they arrive to Wisconsin, and that individuals receiving Medicaid/BadgerCare Plus are not eligible for RMA.

Review the RMA eligibility criteria.

Stress that W-2 agencies must encourage anyone who expresses an interest in applying for RMA to file an application as soon as possible because of the short time frame that participants can be eligible for RCA and RMA.

Stress that agencies know their internal process for IM workers.

Ask: If they know where the corresponding IM office for their agency is located. Is there a specific individual they work with to determine RMA eligibility?

Remind the class that if a refugee doesn't yet have a Social Security Number to enter on the HCF 10110 form, either the space should be left blank, or zeroes should be entered.

RMA Non-Financial Eligibility

 PG 17

Explain the non-financial eligibility criteria.

- Possess a qualifying immigration status;
- Have been in the United States eight months or less (except for those granted asylum and victims of trafficking, for whom the eight month time period begins as of the date they are granted asylum or certified, respectively);
- Be a resident of Wisconsin;
 - Be ineligible for Medicaid/BadgerCare Plus;
 - Not be enrolled as a full-time student in higher education, unless the enrollment is included in the individual's employability plan; and
 - See *W-2 Manual 18.3.4.5*
 - Provide the name of his or her resettlement agency to the worker.

Remind the class that some refugees or other qualifying groups may not have a resettlement agency, and because of this, may not be able to provide this information to the worker.

RMA Financial Eligibility

 PG 18

Explain the financial eligibility criteria:

All RCA recipients who apply for Medical Assistance but who are determined to be ineligible are considered financially eligible for RMA. An RCA recipient who is ineligible for Medicaid or BadgerCare Plus and who applies for RMA does not need to be financially tested for RMA. That recipient is considered automatically financially eligible for RMA based on the fact that he or she met the RCA financial eligibility criteria.

Note that this policy does not apply to RCA recipients who were eligible for Medical Assistance but became ineligible due to increases in earned income.

RMA applicants who are not receiving RCA need to be financially tested. To be financially eligible for RMA, the applicant needs to meet both the income and asset tests of the AFDC-related medically needy financial eligibility criteria. The AFDC-related medically needy financial eligibility chart is in the Appendix on page 36 in the PG.

Review the special considerations to keep in mind:

- R&P assistance payments are not counted.
- RCA payments are disregarded.
- Only the income available on the date of the application should be counted.

Knowledge Check

 PG 19

 PPT 20-22

Note to trainer: Answers to the questions are in bold font. As you proceed in each question in the PPT, you can ask the learners to guess the answer and then reveal.

1. A Volag is a **_Voluntary Agency_** that assists in the resettlement of refugees.
2. On the date the agency received a **_____signed application_____**, the RCA application process begins.
3. Foodshare Employment and Training (FSET) is one of the programs in which an RCA client can participate in order to meet his/her RCA **___employment and training___** requirements.
4. Some refugee assistance groups may and do qualify for **__W-2__**.
5. The **___8 month___** time limit for RCA and RMA applies to each person, not to each case.
6. The initial RCA payment must be made within **__5__** working days of determining eligibility.
7. Changes within an assistance group receiving RCA must be reported within **__10__** calendar days.
8. **Eligibility**___ reviews are not required for RCA.
9. If a refugee received **___money___** from a relative, you count the income from that relative in determining financial eligibility.
10. With limited exceptions, full-time students in higher education **__cannot__** receive RCA.

Resources to Assist Refugees

 PG 20

Review this information and then refer to the resources on PG 24.

Stress the importance of employment and training programs. **Ask** learners if they use other employment and training programs in addition to FSET.

Case Management Tips to Remember

Share the importance of good case management services and **review** the information on PG 20.

Ask: What additional tips and best practice case management techniques they use when working with refugee individuals.

Discuss their responses.

Resources

 PG 21

Ask: What are any additional resources you use besides those listed on PG page 20 and 24?

Write any responses on a flipchart and tell participants that you will email these additional resources to them for use in providing refugee case management services.

Refer the learners to the Helpful Websites on PG page 25.

If time permits and there is internet access the trainer may choose to pull up some of the sites if the learners are not familiar with them.

Action Plan

 PPT 23

Instruct the learners to create an Action Plan to increase their knowledge and awareness of the refugees they serve. Allow 5-10 minutes.

Ask: Let's have two or three of you share an action item on their plan including the what, how and by when.

☀ PPT 24

Introduce video as a final word on working with our refugee population.

Show video:

I Am A Refugee (PBS 3.22 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3THtcucQfA>

☀ PPT 25

Direct learners to complete the evaluation.

Voluntary Resettlement Agencies (VOLAGs)

 PG 23

Share the list of VOLAGS.

Ask learners which of these VOLAGS they have worked with.

Helpful Websites

 PG 25

Show the websites listed if you have internet connectivity.

Ask learners if they have used any of these websites.