

December 3, 2019

Dear county partners,

On September 26, 2019, President Trump issued an executive order requiring state **and** local governments to provide written consent to the federal government before refugees can be resettled in their jurisdictions. Beginning June 1, 2020, the order will generally apply to all arriving refugees including those with family members already living in Minnesota.

Who is being asked to offer consent?

- The governor of a state **AND**
- The “chief executive officer of the local government (county or county equivalent)”

Who will ask for consent?

- Minnesota’s five local resettlement affiliates will contact counties to ask for letters of consent:
 - Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota
 - Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota
 - Arrive Ministries
 - Minnesota Council of Churches
 - International Institute of Minnesota

How do I offer consent?

- Consent must be clearly stated in writing, but there is no required format.
- There are three ways to offer consent:
 1. Letters may be submitted to **any** local resettlement affiliate proactively or in response to their request.
 2. Counties may submit a letter to the Department of Human Services’ Resettlement Programs Office (RPO). From there, it will be routed to local resettlement affiliates and submitted to the U.S. Department of State.
 3. Counties may proactively submit a letter directly to the U.S. Department of State.
 - If you submit consent directly to the U.S. Department of State, please copy the RPO so that we can monitor responses and plan accordingly.

What is the timeline for submitting consent?

- The executive order goes into effect on June 1, 2020. After that date, refugees will not be placed in jurisdictions that have not offered consent.
- Local resettlement agencies must submit next year’s placement strategies to the U.S. Department of State by January 31, 2020. If a jurisdiction does not offer consent before this date, it is possible that refugees may not be resettled there in 2020.

What happens if a county decides not to respond?

- The executive order establishes an “opt-in” consent process, so refugees may not be placed in jurisdictions that have not offered consent.

What happens after a consent letter is submitted?

- After a consent letter is submitted, the U.S Department of State will contact the signatory to verify their intent to welcome refugees.
- All consent letters will be posted publically on the U.S. Department of State's website.

Can refugees live in a community which has not provided consent?

- Consent only relates to the *initial placement* of individuals. After placement, refugees have the right to travel or relocate to any community that they wish. However, the federal funding provided to support their initial resettlement would not follow them to a jurisdiction which has not offered consent.

Does the executive order impact other classifications of immigrants?

- The executive order only applies to individuals arriving through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program.

As State Refugee Coordinator, I am happy to provide further information with regard to the president's executive order. Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions or concerns.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter,



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