October 30, 2026

GENERAL LETTER NO. 6-D-46

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial, Food, and Work Supports
Division of Community Access and Eligibility

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 6, Chapter D, **Refugee Cash Assistance**, 4 and 5, 10-12, 26-29, 32, 38-44, 48 and 49, 58-61, revised.

Summary

This chapter is revised to change the program time limits from eight to twelve months for individuals whose date of entry is on or after January 1, 2026.

Effective Date

Immediately.

Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 6, Chapter D, and destroy them:

Page	Date
4 and 5, 10-12, 26-29	August 14, 2026
32	May 2, 2025
38-44, 48 and 49, 58-61	August 14, 2026

Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your eligibility determinations manager.

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 9.10(11)

Procedure: Notify the local resettlement agency when a refugee applies for RCA during the first 12 months after entry into the United States. You do not need a release of information from the refugee.

Provide the refugee's address and phone number to the resettlement agency. 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)
1200 University Ave, Suite 205
Des Moines, IA 50314
(515) 528-7525

USCC (US Catholic Charities)
601 Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 237-5045

Lutheran Services of Iowa
3200 University Ave
Des Moines, IA 50311
(515) 271-7411

USCRI Affiliate Office
Catherine McCauley Center
866 4th Ave SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
(319) 363 4993

Lutheran Services of Iowa
1308 S. Cleveland St
Sioux City, IA 51106
(712) 255-2505

International Rescue Committee
(IRC)
108 3rd St, Suite 200
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 216-3619

Contacting the Trafficking Verification Line

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

Policy: Aliens who are certified as "victims of trafficking" by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement are "eligible aliens" for RCA benefits for the allowable 12 months of assistance.

Procedure: 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 United States Citizenship and Immigrations Services (USCIS) 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 (866) 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 RCA 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 12 months from the date of the initial certification date. (See **Victims of Trafficking**.)

Determining FIP Eligibility

Legal reference: P.L. 96-212; 441 IAC 60.4(1)

Policy: Consider eligibility for FIP before determining RCA eligibility. A refugee applicant or participant must accept FIP, rather than RCA, if eligible. Determine FIP eligibility by policies and procedures in **4-B, Application Processing**, including FIP specified relative policies.

Procedure: When a refugee applicant is

- Eligible for FIP, issue an NOD approving FIP. No further action is required. Do not issue a notice denying RCA.
- Ineligible for FIP for any reason, issue a manual **Notice of Decision, form 470-0486** or **470-0486(S)**, to the refugee informing the refugee of ineligibility for FIP. This notice is in addition to the manual or automated *Notice of Decision* for RCA and must be adequate. (See **4-A, Notification**.)

For **asylees** whose status was granted under Section 208 of the INA, acceptable documentation includes:

Documents/Codes	Explanation
I-94, Arrival/Departure Card, referencing Section 208 of the INA	Notations may include references to employment authorization, indefinite status, and the requirement to obtain permission before leaving the U.S.
AS-1 admission code on the I-94	Approved asylee principal
AS-2 admission code on the I-94	Approved spouse of an asylee principal
AS-3 admission code on the I-94	Approved child of an asylee principal
USCIS Form I-571	**United States Refugee Travel Document** [1]
I-766, Employment Authorization Document, with the code A05	
Order of an immigration judge granting asylum under Section 208 of the INA	Determine the 12-month RCA period from the date on the order (the date asylum was granted). An order of an immigration judge serves as proof of asylee status if the USCIS has waived the right to appeal the case. See Note 2 following this chart for information about cases for which the USCIS reserves the right to appeal.[2]
Asylum Approval Letter from an USCIS Asylum Office "**Recommended** Asylum Approval" letters are **not** proof of asylee status.	The letter will note that the person has been granted asylum pursuant to Section 208 of the INA and may include information concerning refugee and asylee relative petition, work authorization, and the refugee travel document.
Written decision from the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)	The "entry date" (i.e., asylum grant date) will be the date on the BIA decision.

Documents/Codes	Explanation
I-730, Approval Letter	The **I-730 Approval Letter** may be used as proof of asylee status for derivatives.
Visa 92 (or V-92) on the **I-94, Arrival/Departure Card**	May be accompanied by the words "section 208." The person is the spouse or minor child of a previously granted asylee.

NOTES:

[1] U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Form I-571 does not distinguish between refugees and asylees. A person with this document may be a refugee or an asylee. You must request other documentation to confirm whether the person is a refugee or asylee to be able to determine the 12-month RCA period. (See **Time Since Entry to the U.S.**)

[2] If the USCIS has reserved its right to appeal, an immigration judge order will not serve, on its own, as proof of asylee status. If an asylee brings an immigration judge order that shows the USCIS has reserved its right to appeal, wait 30 days from the date on the immigration judge order.

On or after the 31st day, call the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) case status line at (800) 898-7180 to find out whether the USCIS has appealed the case. The EOIR reports that it may take up to five days after the 30-day appeal deadline for the information to be relayed to the case status line. Continue to call the EOIR case status line until the appeal information has been updated. Delay the RCA eligibility determination until then.

If the USCIS has appealed the case, the person is not yet an asylee and is not eligible for RCA benefits. In that instance, deny the application.

If the USCIS has not appealed the case and 30 days have passed since the date on the immigration judge order, the person is an asylee and is eligible for RCA. The date asylum is granted is 30 days after the date on the order.

EXAMPLE:

> An immigration judge order is dated October 1. USCIS reserves the appeal but does not appeal. October 31 is considered as the date asylum is granted. The 12-month RCA period is October through September.

Acceptable documents for **refugees** admitted under Section 207 of the INA:

Documents/Codes	Explanation
I-94, Arrival/Departure Card, noting that the person has been admitted under Section 207 of the INA	Notations may include references to employment authorization, indefinite status, and the requirement to obtain permission before leaving the U.S.
RE-1 admission code on the I-94	Principal refugee
RE-2 admission code on the I-94	Spouse of principal refugee
RE-3 admission code on the I-94	Child of principal refugee
RE-4 admission code on the I-94	Collateral relatives of principal refugee
RE-5 admission code on the I-94	Certain Haitian refugees
I-766, Employment Authorization Document, with the code A03	
USCIS Form I-571	**United States Refugee Travel Document** [1]
Visa 93 (or V-93) on the **I-94, Arrival/Departure Card**	May be accompanied by the words "section 207." Person is the spouse or minor child of a previously admitted refugee.

NOTES:

[1] USCIS Form I-571 does not distinguish between refugees and asylees. A person with this document may be a refugee or an asylee. You must request other documentation to confirm whether the person is a refugee or asylee to be able to determine the 12-month RCA period. (See **Time Since Entry to the U.S.**)

Applicant	Documentation	Special Conditions
Afghan Humanitarian Parolee Arriving in the U.S. Between July 31, 2021 and September 30, 2023 (Cont.)	**Or** Form **I-765 Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** receipt notice with code C11 **Or** **I-765 Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** with code C11 **Or** Form **I-766 Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** with the code C11	See more information on how to verify the date of "entry into the community" below the chart. Afghan Humanitarian Parolees are eligible for a limited period of time, either through March 31, 2023, or until the end of their parole term, whichever is later. Spouses and children of such individuals are eligible to apply for benefits even if they are granted parole after September 30, 2023

EBS can share the following steps with the resettlement agency, working with the client, so the agency can assist the client to verify their documentation and the date of entry into the community:

1. Contact the national resettlement agency for assurance and travel documentation.
2. Check the I-94 website: **https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/#/home**.
3. Check the CBP One Mobile App: see attached email titled "I-94 retrieval for Afghan arrivals"
4. Reach CBP online at **TCC@cbp.dhs.gov** with required information
5. Contact the local CBP deferred inspection site.
6. Seek evidence of travel from the Safe Haven (e.g., plane ticket, bus ticket, etc.)
7. Contact Bureau of Refugee services (BRS) via email at **BRSrefugee@hhs.iowa.gov** with applicant biographic information (Name, DOB, passport number, A-number, etc.) to enable BRS to reach out to ORR so that they can search their database for departure information.

*If the client or resettlement agency requests assistance in getting the verification of the alien's documentation or date of entry into the community the worker should follow the 7 steps above to obtain the information.

NOTE: If the client/resettlement agency is unable to obtain sufficient documentation **to establish the date of entry into the community** to establish the 12-month period after going through steps 1-7 above, eligibility workers may accept verbal/written attestations by the Afghan arrival in order to provide immediate services to the applicant. Case notes should be updated to reflect this occurrence, and **appropriate documentation must be obtained within 60 days or as soon as available – whichever is sooner.**

Workers must get verification of the alien's status; you **cannot** accept verbal/written attestation.

Acceptable Documents For Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (UHP) and Non-Ukrainian Individuals Who Last Habitually Resided In Ukraine and Received Humanitarian Parole Who Arrived in the U.S. Between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023:

Immigration Status or Category of Applicant	Documentation
Ukrainian citizen or national who received humanitarian parole, known as a Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee (UHP)	Form I-94 noting humanitarian parole (per INA section 212(d)(5) or 8 U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)) **Or** Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting "DT" **Or** Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting Uniting for Ukraine or "U4U" **Or** Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee or "UHP" **Or** Form **I-765 Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** receipt notice with code C11 **Or** Form **I-766 Employment Authorization Document (EAD)** with the code C11

Immigration Status or Category of Applicant	Documentation
A non-Ukrainian individual who received humanitarian parole and the U4U or UHP class of admission in response to their displacement from Ukraine	Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting Uniting for Ukraine or "U4U" **Or** Foreign passport with DHS/CBP admission stamp noting Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolee or "UHP"
A non-Ukrainian individual who last habitually resided in Ukraine and received humanitarian parole, but without the U4U or UHP class of admission	Any one of the forms or stamps listed above for UHPs **And** Documentation of last habitual residence in Ukraine, including Crimea. (per U.S. department of State, Crimea is part of Ukraine, see **https://www.state.gov/crimea-is-ukraine-2/**) Acceptable documentation indicating last habitual residency in Ukraine includes an original Ukrainian government-issued document, such as a current driver's license or identification card. For documentation outside of these examples, contact the SPIRS helpdesk for assistance.

Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (UHP) and non-Ukrainian individuals who last habitually resided in Ukraine and received humanitarian parole arriving in the U.S. between February 24, 2022 and September 30, 2023 are eligible to receive RCA without a waiting period and are immediately eligible for benefits as long as they meet all other RCA financial and non-financial eligibility requirements. They are eligible for a limited period of time, until the end of their parole term.

These policies also apply to the following family members of these individuals, even if they are granted parole after September 30, 2023: spouses, children, parents, legal guardians, and primary caregivers of such individuals who were unaccompanied minors.

NOTE: The 12 months of RCA eligibility is calculated differently for UHP and non-Ukrainian individual who last habitually resided in Ukraine and received humanitarian parole that have one of these statuses.

Their 12 months start on 5/21/22, or the individual's date of humanitarian parole, whichever is later. If an individual from either of these populations was paroled and entered the United States between 2/24/22 and 5/21/22, their date of eligibility is 5/21/22. If they entered the United States after 5/21/22 their date of eligibility is their date of humanitarian parole.

UHPs and other non-Ukrainian individuals displaced from Ukraine are eligible for ORR benefits and services until the end of the individual's parole term, unless otherwise amended by law or the individual gains another ORR-eligible category or status.

If a UHP or other non-Ukrainian individual displaced from Ukraine applies for and obtains Temporary Protected Status (TPS), the individual will remain eligible for ORR benefits and services until the end of the individual's parole term, due to their underlying receipt of humanitarian parole per INA section 212(d)(5). Note, however, that an individual with only TPS and no underlying humanitarian parole is not eligible for ORR benefits and services.

Acceptable Documents for Victims of a Severe Form of Trafficking in Persons:

Applicant	Documentation
Victim of a Severe Form of Trafficking in Persons	Certification Letter, Eligibility Letter, or Interim Assistance Letter from ACF Office On Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) Call the trafficking verification line at (866) 401-5510 to confirm the validity of the Certification Letter Certification and Eligibility Letters do not expire

Using SAVE (Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements)

Legal reference: Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), Section 121, as amended by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), and by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) and the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA)

Policy: The USCIS shall provide alien status verification when necessary. SAVE must be checked for every individual claiming to have an eligible alien status at application and at every review.

Procedure: Obtain acceptable documentation of alien status from every person claiming to have an eligible alien status. When a person claims an "eligible alien" status but does not have documentation, tell them to contact the local USCIS office for help getting the documents.

Verify a person's alien status through SAVE at every application and every review. HHS must have acceptable documentation of alien status on file prior to using SAVE to verify the person's current alien status.

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

Contact the trafficking verification line at (866) 401-5510 to confirm the validity of the certification letter for adults or letter for children under age 18 and to notify the HHS ORR of the benefits for which the person has applied.

Do not contact USCIS when the alien claims to be undocumented.

A link to SAVE's website can be found on the HHS Field Intranet. A SAVE Program Tutorial is available in LMS which contains information about SAVE and using the website. Additional information on using SAVE and guides can be found in SAVE under Help>Resources.

Institution of Higher Education

Legal reference: P.L 97-363; 34 CFR 668.2(a)(4), 668.3(a)(5), 668.4(a)(4); 441 IAC 60.6(1)

Policy: 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)

Policy: Follow the policies and procedures outlined in **4-C, Temporary Absence**.

Time Since Entry to the U.S.

Legal reference: 45 CFR 400.203 and 400.211; 441 IAC 60.7(217)

Policy: An eligible refugee may receive RCA only during the first 12 months they're in the United States, beginning the month they enter the U.S. on or after 1/1/26.

This time limit applies to each person, not to each case. The 12-month period begins the month the refugee enters the United States, regardless of which day during the month the refugee enters.

NOTE: See the comments section for the time limit for people who entered the United States prior to 1/1/26.

EXCEPTIONS:

- The "date of entry" for asylees is the date they are **granted** asylum and begins the 12-month eligibility period for RCA.
- The 12 months of RCA eligibility is calculated differently for Afghan Special Immigrant Parolees, Afghan Special Immigrant (SI) Conditional Permanent Resident (CPR), and Afghan Humanitarian Parolees. Please see **Documentation Required** for more information.
- The 12 months of RCA eligibility is calculated differently for UHP and non-Ukrainian individual who last habitually resided in Ukraine and received humanitarian parole that have one of these statuses.

  Their 12 months start on 5/21/22, or the individual's date of humanitarian parole, whichever is later. If an individual from either of these populations was paroled and entered the United States between 2/24/22 and 5/21/22, their date of eligibility is 5/21/22. If they entered the United States after 5/21/22 their date of eligibility is their date of humanitarian parole.

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 12 months, or until the child reaches 8 months of age, whichever occurs first.

A refugee enters the United States,1/4/26 and is receiving RCA (aid type 06 series). The 12-month period for RCA ends December 2026. The refugee is removed or canceled from RCA effective December 2026. No RCA is paid after December 2026.

Procedure: The following chart shows the12-month period of eligibility based on the refugees date of entry month:

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

*The time limit for a refugee with date of entry prior to 10/1/21 is 8 months. Example: For a September 2021 month of entry, the last month of eligibility for RCA is April 2022.

*The time limit for a refugee with date of entry of 10/1/21 or after and eligibility for RCA was determined on 5/4/25, or before is 12 months. Example: For an October 2021 month of entry, the last month of eligibility for RCA is September 2022.

*The time limit for a refugee with date of entry 10/1/21 or after and eligibility for RCA was determined on 5/5/25, or after is 4 months. Example: For a June 2025 month of entry, the last month of eligibility for RCA is September 2025.

Track the date each refugee will be considered as having been in the United States for 12 months so that you can cancel the case or remove the individual from the case.

When an individual is being removed from an RCA case after 12 months, reduce the grant if only part of the refugees on the case have been in the United States for 12 months. Cancel the entire case from RCA if all the refugees on the case have been in the United States for 12 months.

Send a timely notice when removing a refugee's needs from a case or when canceling a case due to the 12-month provision. See **4-A, Notification**.

Comment: For refugees who entered the country prior to 10/1/21, the time limit for RCA, as further defined in this section, was the first 8 months the refugee is in the United States, beginning the month the refugee enters the country.

The eligibility period (time limit) is set by the procedure found in 45 CFR 400.211.

The time limit increased from 8 months to 12 months for refugees that entered the country on or after 10/1/21, on 3/28/22. This 12-month time limit increase was published in the Federal Register on 3/28/22. This change was communicated with states in Dear Colleague Letter 22-12.

The FR notice, available at **https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-03-28/pdf/2022-06356.pdf**, also explains the history of changes to the RCA time limit.

The time limit decreased from 12 to 4 months for refugees that entered the country on or after 10/1/21, and eligibility for RCA was determined on 5/5/25 or after. The 4-month time limit decrease was published in the Federal Register on 3/21/25.

The FR notice, available at **hhtps://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-03-21/pdf/2025-04839.pdf**

The time limit increased from 4 to 8 months for refugees that entered the country on or after 1/1/26, on 7/14/26. The 8-month time limit decrease was published in the Federal Register on 7/14/26. This was revised 10/1/26 announcing a time limit increase from 8 to 12 months.

The FR notice, available at **https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2026-07-14/pdf/2026-14095.pdf** also explains the history of changes to the RCA time limit.

1. A refugee enters the United States 9/27/21 and is receiving RCA (aid type 06 series). The 8-month period for RCA ends 4/26/22. The refugee is removed or canceled from RCA effective 5/1/22. No RCA is paid after May 2022.
2. A refugee enters the United States 10/15/21 and is receiving RCA (aid type 06 series). The 12-month period for RCA ends 9/14/22. The refugee is removed or canceled from RCA effective 10/1/22. No RCA is paid after October 2022.
3. A refugee enters the United States 4/15/25, and the RCA eligibility is approved 5/3/25. The 12-month period for RCA ends 3/14/26. The refugee is removed or canceled from RCA effective 4/1/26. RCA won't be paid effective April 2026.

4. A refugee enters the United States 4/15/25, and the RCA eligibility is approved 5/7/25. The 4-month period for RCA ends 7/14/26. The refugee is removed or canceled from RCA effective 8/1/26. RCA won't be paid effective August 2026.

Date of Entry for Asylees

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

Policy: The "date of entry" for asylees is the date they are **granted** asylum and begins the 12-month eligibility period for RCA.

1. An asylee entered the country on 2/15/20. Asylum is granted 11/6/20, and this is considered the "date of entry". The 8-month RCA eligibility period is from November through June.
2. An asylee entered the country on 10/2/21. Asylum is granted 11/10/21, and this is considered the "date of entry". The 12-month RCA eligibility period is from November through October.
3. An asylee entered the country on 2/11/25. Asylum is granted 5/1/25, and this is considered the "date of entry". RCA eligibility is determined 5/6/25. The 4-month RCA eligibility period is from May through August.
4. An asylee entered the country on 6/1/26. Asylum is granted 8/7/26, and this is considered the "date of entry". RCA eligibility is determined on 8/25/26. The 12-month RCA eligibility period is from August 2026 through July 2027.

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, Asylee Relative Petition**. 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 12 month RCA period from the date asylum is granted.

Victims of Trafficking

Legal reference: P.L. 104-193

Policy: The certification for a victim of trafficking is valid for 12 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.

Procedure: 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, trafficking victims who present the required certification letters, first determine their eligibility under FIP. Refer to **Determining FIP Eligibility** for special instructions.

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 (866) 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:

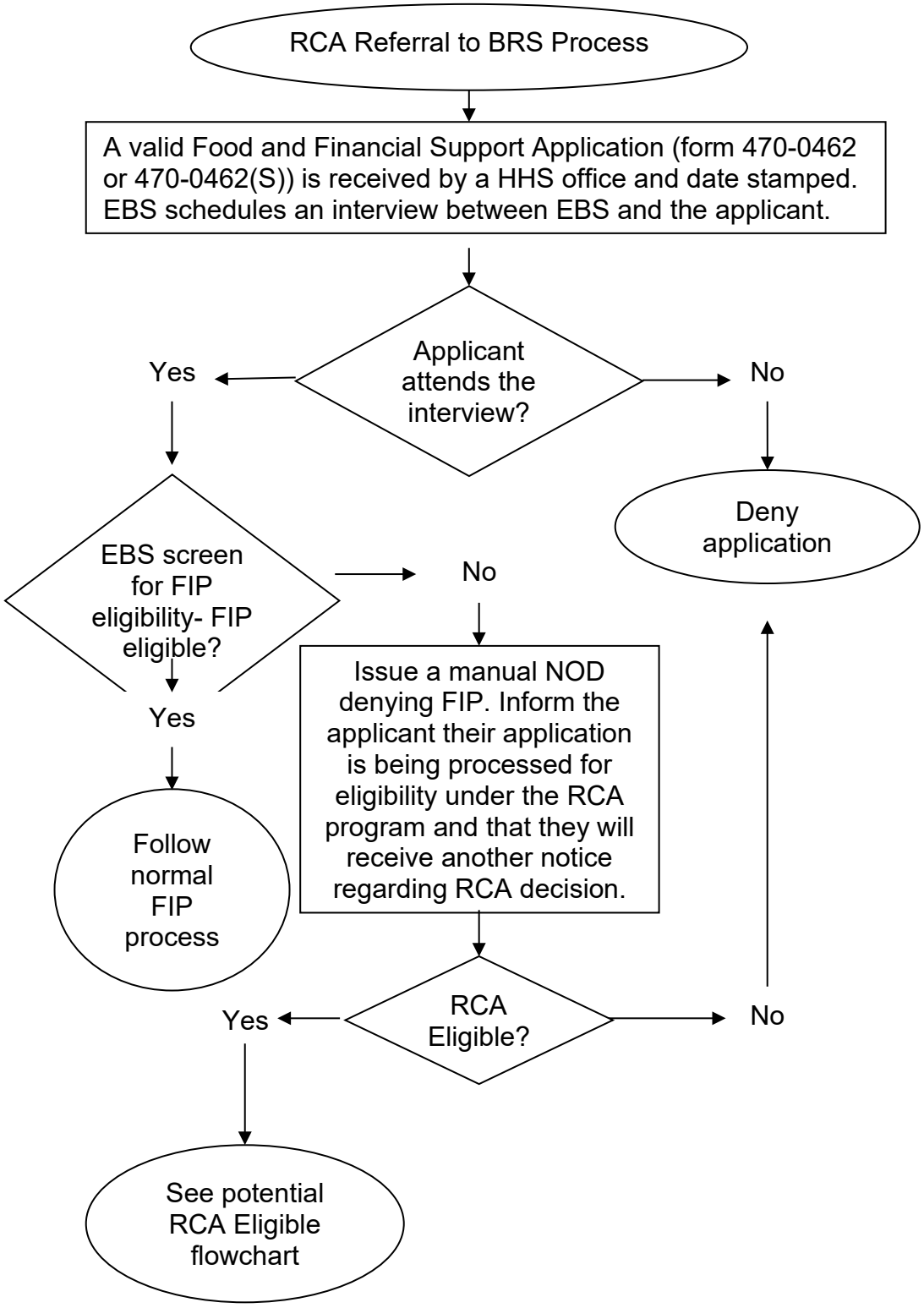
- Is on letterhead.
- Includes the applicant's name.
- Mentions that this person is a trafficking victim.
- References the non-work reason for which the number is required to receive benefits.
- States that the applicant meets the requirements to receive benefits except for the social security number.

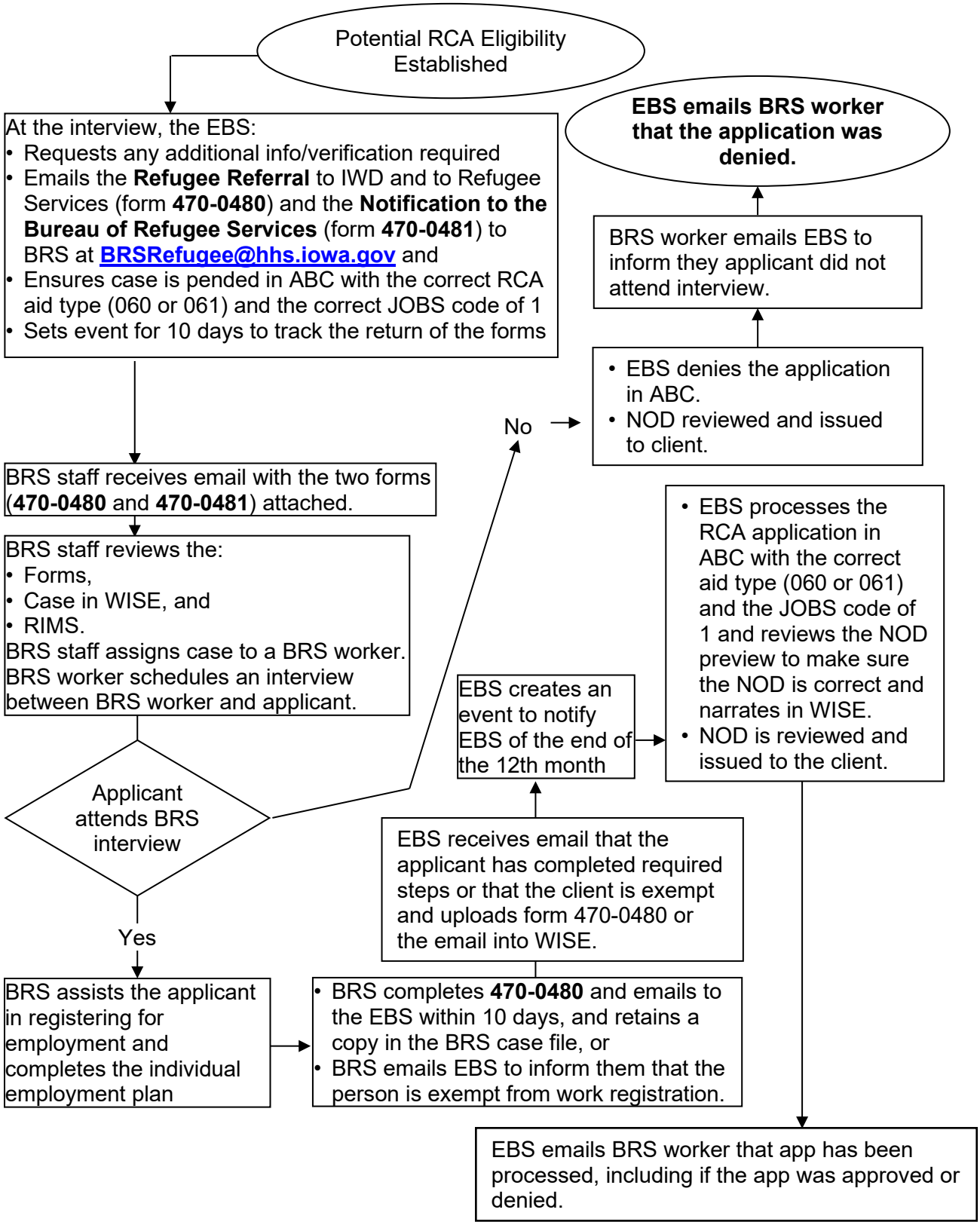
If you encounter a person you believe may meet the definition of trafficking victim, go through your usual channels to obtain instructions on providing the person with assistance in contacting the Office of Refugee Resettlement for possible certification by that agency.

Trafficking victims are eligible for RCA only for one 12-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 12-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.


RCA Referral to BRS Process
A valid Food and Financial Support Application (form 470-0462 or 470-0462(S)) is received by a HHS office and date stamped. EBS schedules an interview between EBS and the applicant.
Applicant attends the interview?
Yes
No
Deny application
EBS screen for FIP eligibility- FIP eligible?
No
Yes
Issue a manual NOD denying FIP. Inform the applicant their application is being processed for eligibility under the RCA program and that they will receive another notice regarding RCA decision.
Follow normal FIP process
RCA Eligible?
Yes
No
See potential RCA Eligible flowchart


Potential RCA Eligibility Established
At the interview, the EBS:
• Requests any additional info/verification required
• Emails the **Refugee Referral** to IWD and to Refugee Services (form **470-0480**) and the **Notification to the Bureau of Refugee Services** (form **470-0481**) to BRS at BRSRefugee@hhs.iowa.gov and
• Ensures case is pended in ABC with the correct RCA aid type (060 or 061) and the correct JOBS code of 1
• Sets event for 10 days to track the return of the forms
BRS staff receives email with the two forms (**470-0480** and **470-0481**) attached.
BRS staff reviews the:
• Forms,
• Case in WISE, and
• RIMS.
BRS staff assigns case to a BRS worker.
BRS worker schedules an interview between BRS worker and applicant.
Applicant attends BRS interview
No
• EBS denies the application in ABC.
• NOD reviewed and issued to client.
BRS worker emails EBS to inform they applicant did not attend interview.
EBS emails BRS worker that the application was denied.
Yes
BRS assists the applicant in registering for employment and completes the individual employment plan
• BRS completes **470-0480** and emails to the EBS within 10 days, and retains a copy in the BRS case file, or
• BRS emails EBS to inform them that the person is exempt from work registration.
EBS receives email that the applicant has completed required steps or that the client is exempt and uploads form 470-0480 or the email into WISE.
EBS creates an event to notify EBS of the end of the 12th month
• EBS processes the RCA application in ABC with the correct aid type (060 or 061) and the JOBS code of 1 and reviews the NOD preview to make sure the NOD is correct and narrates in WISE.
• NOD is reviewed and issued to the client.
EBS emails BRS worker that app has been processed, including if the app was approved or denied.

Procedure: After the required conciliation period has expired, issue a timely notice of the reduction or termination and the reasons for it. Recover excess benefits that are received in the month following the month of refusal or failure. If assistance is continued pending an appeal decision, all overpayments issued pending the final decision are subject to recovery if the Department's action is upheld.

Apply these sanctions whether the employment or training is offered through Iowa Workforce Development, the Bureau of Refugee Services, or another source.

Do not apply the sanctions if a voluntary registrant fails or refuses to participate in appropriate employability services or to accept an appropriate offer of employment. However, the Bureau of Refugee Services may deregister the refugee for up to 90 days from the date the refugee failed or refused to cooperate.

Resources

Legal reference: P.L. 96-212; 45 CFR 400.61; 441 IAC 60.5 (6)

Policy: When determining eligibility for RCA, treat resources the same as for FIP. Do not deem the income and resources of sponsors to determine RCA eligibility. Also, do not consider resources left behind in the refugee's country of origin.

The resource limit for an applicant household is $2,000.

The resource limit for a participant household is $5,000. Allow the $5,000 participant limit for any applicant case containing a member:

- Who received a cash grant in Iowa in the month before the month of application (unless the grant is subject to recoupment).
- Who did not get a grant in the month before the month of application due to the limit on grants for under $10 or due to rounding.

See **4-D, Vehicles**, for the exempt equity amount for motor vehicles.

Exempt up to $10,000 in equity for tools of the trade for households with self-employment members.

Exempt the balance in an individual development account (IDA).

Consider the resources of refugees who are excluded because of the 12-month limit in the same manner as though these refugees were included in the eligible group.

Family P is being examined for RCA eligibility. Mr. P and one child have been in the United States for 12 months. Mrs. P and one child have not been in the United States 12 months. The applicant resource limit for this family is $2,000.

Mr. P has $1,700 in countable resources and Mrs. P has $500 in countable resources. Their combined countable resources equal $2,200. Mrs. P and the child are not eligible for RCA, since the family's resources exceed the $2,000 applicant limit.

See **4-D, Resources**, for more information.

Income

Legal reference: P.L. 96-212; 45 CFR 400.61; 400.66(d); 441 IAC 60.5(5) 60.7(2)

Policy: When determining eligibility for RCA, treat income in the same manner as for FIP except where otherwise stated. See **4-E, Income**, **4-F, Budgeting**, and **4-G, Case Maintenance**.

Resettlement monies, whether in the form of vendor payments (for rent, utilities, etc.) or cash given directly to the refugee, are exempt as income and as a resource.

Exempt interest and dividend income. See **4-E, Interest Income**.

Count child support received as unearned income. The first $50 of monthly support is exempt as income and a resource when payments are made by a legally responsible person.

Exempt deposits into an individual development account (IDA). See **4-E, Individual Development Accounts**.

Earned Income Deductions

Policy: Allow the following deductions from nonexempt gross earnings or the net profit from self-employment for any person whose income must be considered:

1. 20% earned income deduction.
2. Diversion for persons not living in the home.
3. Diversion for ineligible or excluded persons in the home, if appropriate.
4. 58% work incentive deduction. (EXCEPTION: Do not apply the 58% work incentive deduction when determining initial eligibility for a case as described in **4-F, Budgeting**.)

See **4-E, Earned Income Deductions**, for more information.

Income of Refugees Over Time Limit

Legal reference: 45 CFR 400.62; 441 IAC 60.7(1) and (2)

Policy: The total gross income of both the eligible group and the refugees excluded because of the 12-month limit must meet the gross income limit of the eligible group.

When the eligible refugee group has income, divert the income to meet the needs of the refugees ineligible because of the time limit who would otherwise have been included in the refugee assistance group.

First use the income of the refugees ineligible because of the time limit who would otherwise have been included in the assistance group to meet the needs of the ineligible group. Then apply it to the eligible group's needs.

The amount of need for the ineligible group is the difference between the needs of the group including the ineligible refugees and the needs of the group excluding the ineligible refugees. Apply any excess as unearned income to the needs of the eligible group.

This policy differs from FIP policy in that you can divert income from an eligible individual to an ineligible spouse (who is over the time limit).

1. Mr. V has not been in the United States 12 months. He has gross earned income of $700 and no resources. Mrs. V and one child have been in the United States 12 months. Neither Mrs. V nor the child has any income or resources. Mr. V is not eligible for RCA, as $700 gross earned income exceeds the gross income level for one person.

2. Mr. A has been in the United States less than 12 months and has gross income of $300 from part-time employment. His wife has been in the United States more than 12 months and has no income. They have no resources.

   Mr. A's gross income meets the gross income test for one person. To determine the amount to divert from Mr. A's income for Mrs. A's needs, the worker takes $361 (the needs including the ineligible person) and subtracts $183 (the needs excluding the ineligible person). $178 is the amount Mr. A can divert for his wife.

   Mr. A is allowed the following deductions and diversions:

   $ 300.00 Mr. A's gross earnings
   - 60.00 20% earned income deduction
   - 178.00 Diversion for Mrs. A's needs
   $ 62.00
   - 35.96 58% work incentive deduction
   $ 26.04 Mr. A's countable income

   $ 183.00 Mr. A's needs
   - 26.04
   $ 156.00 Mr. A's grant amount (rounded)

3. Mr. B and his two children have not been in the United States 12 months. Mr. B has $200 unearned income. He and the children have no resources. Mrs. B, who has been in the United States 12 months, has $400 unearned income and no resources. The total income, $600, is less than the gross income level for the three-member group that has been in the United States less than 12 months.

   To figure the amount of the grant, the worker first takes $495 (the needs including Mrs. B) and subtracts $426 (the needs excluding Mrs. B). $69 is the amount Mrs. B is allowed to meet her needs. Mrs. B's income of $400 minus her needs of $69 leaves $331 to be applied to the eligible group's needs of $426.

   Mr. B's income of $200 plus $331 from Mrs. B equals $531. Mr. B and the two children have needs of $426 and $531 income to be applied. Mr. B and the two children are not eligible for RCA.