

Impact of Federal Changes to SNAP-Special Immigration Visa individuals

Tracy Dolan, Director, State Refugee Office, Agency of Human Services

**Miranda Gray, Deputy Commissioner, Economic Services Division,
Department for Children and Families**

Geographic Overview

- The majority of arrivals are resettled in:
 - Chittenden County (Burlington area)
 - Brattleboro
- Additional resettlement in:
 - Rutland, Bennington, Manchester, Springfield, and Montpelier

Total Arrivals (2020-2025)

Total Individuals Welcomed Through Refugee and Immigration Programs:

- **Total:** *1,654 individuals*
 - Refugees – **1,007**
 - Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Holders (Afghan) – **169**
 - Asylees – **55**
 - Humanitarian Parolees (Afghan) – **259**
 - Humanitarian Parolees (Ukrainian) – **116**
 - Cuban/Haitian Entrants – **47**

Immigration Status and Pathways to Permanent Residence

- Refugees and Asylees: Eligible to apply for Lawful Permanent Residence (LPR / “green card”) after one year.
- Special Immigrant Visa Holders: Arrive with Lawful Permanent Residence status already granted.
- Humanitarian Parolees: Many Afghan and Ukrainian parolees have applied for and received asylum, creating a path to LPR.
- Cuban/Haitian Entrants: Some have received asylum status.

Employment Outcomes and Economic Integration

- Employment is a top priority for refugee households.
- All arrivals are offered employment services through refugee support programs.
- Employment outcomes are strong:
 - 90-day job retention rate: 86% (above national average).
- Challenges:
 - Wages remain below Vermont's average, limiting financial stability.
 - Impacts household income and ability to meet family needs.

3SquaresVT HR1 SNAP Policy Changes

Non-Citizen Eligibility

- Effective July 4, Implemented October 1
- Limits categories of non-citizens eligible for SNAP/3SquaresVT benefits
- Removes eligibility for refugees and asylees
- Eligible categories now are:
 - Lawful Permanent Resident (disabled, under 18, work quarter, 5 yrs, military)
 - Haitian/Cuban Entrant
 - Compacts of Free Association (COFA) Citizen
 - Amerasian Immigrant
 - Canadian Born Native American
 - Hmong or Highland Laotian Tribal Member

Outcomes of the law implementation – Non-Citizenship Eligibility Changes

Non-Citizenship Eligibility Changes

- Federal law changes have required Vermont to review households with non-citizen members to determine whether they will continue to meet eligibility.
- As of October 1, over 500 households with non-citizen members retained eligibility and were not affected.
- 119 households were impacted; 33 households experienced a partial benefit decrease because some members became ineligible. 86 households lost eligibility for 3SquaresVT benefits entirely.
- Vermont's decision to implement these changes beginning October 1, 2025 balances legal compliance with the new federal law, prudence in managing payment accuracy, and the current absence of comprehensive federal implementation guidance.

Supports

- The Administration took steps to support refugees and asylees impacted by HR1 while complying with federal law.
- AHS authorized \$106,000 in existing funds to provide a four-month ramp-down of support for affected households.
- The State Refugee Office is working with trusted partners to ensure assistance is targeted based on vulnerability.
- The first distribution is planned for November, with the final distribution in early January.

Questions about this presentation can be emailed to:

Miranda Gray: Miranda.Gray@vermont.gov

Tracy Dolan: Tracy.Dolan@vermont.gov

To receive this information in an alternative format or for other accessibility requests, please contact:

Monika Madaras: Monika.Madaras@vermont.gov

Media Inquiries related to this presentation can be emailed to:

AHS.DCFCommunications@vermont.gov