



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Applicant:

Our records indicate that you have applied for a Special Immigrant Visa. If you are issued such a visa, you have the option, but are not required, to receive certain benefits under the U.S. Department of State's resettlement program that are available to refugees who are resettling in the United States. More information about the program appears below. You should indicate your decision to receive or decline these benefits by returning the attached Refugee Benefits Election Form with your signature to the National Visa Center (NVC) as ***soon as possible but no later than 10 days after your visa issuance date***, as indicated on your visa. Failure to do so will result in the denial of any future request for Department of State-funded refugee benefits. Please see below for more details on this policy.

The following is information that will help you decide if you want to participate in the U.S. Department of State's resettlement program. Additional information on refugee benefits, including detailed answers to frequently asked questions, can be found on the U.S. Department of State's Refugee Processing Center (RPC) website, at <http://www.wrapsnet.org/RPCWRAPS/FAQs/tabid/75/language/en-US/Default.aspx>:

- Resettlement is a multi-step process. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to provide additional information about yourself and your family. This information will be given to the RPC, which will share the information you provide with a resettlement agency in the United States. If your visa application is approved, that resettlement agency will provide certain services intended to help you adjust to life in the United States.
- The information sent to the resettlement agency will include information about you: your education, occupation, ethnicity, religion, family members who will be resettling with you, medical problems that need attention and location of your friends or relatives who already live in the United States. The resettlement agency will use this information to determine the resettlement site that is best for you and to prepare for your arrival. Before your departure, the RPC will provide you with a sponsorship assurance document indicating where in the United States you will be resettled. While you can express a view about where you might be resettled, if you elect to participate, we cannot guarantee that you will be given your preference.
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) will contact you to arrange your travel and give you a departure date. If you choose to receive benefits, IOM will make all of your travel arrangements. You and your family members are eligible to receive transportation to the United States funded through a travel loan. Before you travel, you will sign a promissory note committing to repay the loan over a three-year period. You may also choose to pre-pay the cost of your travel arranged by IOM. IOM will provide

information about your travel itinerary. In the United States, IOM representatives will assist you at the port of entry and help you with immigration and customs procedures.

- When you reach your final destination, a representative from the resettlement agency will meet you at the airport, take you to your initial housing and assist you in settling in to your new community.

The U. S. Government has established guidelines and provides funding for the resettlement services that you will receive once in the United States. Your resettlement agency will have a local office in or near the town where you will be resettled and will provide basic living assistance and support for the first 30 days after you arrive. With the help of their staff, during your first 90 days in the U.S. you will do the following things:

- Apply for a social security card (you must have one to get a job)
- Learn about and be referred to employment services
- Enroll your children in school
- Learn to use public transportation
- Be referred to English language classes, if necessary
- Begin to learn about U.S customs and law
- Learn about and be referred to community services that can help you, including social services, cash and medical assistance, and food stamps, if necessary
- Find out about other government services and programs and how to apply.

It is important and in your interest to return the attached Refugee Benefits Election Form to the NVC along with your visa application as early in the process as possible but no later than 10 days after your visa has been issued. We will be expecting it as a part of your application package. If you wish to receive benefits from the U.S. Department of State's resettlement program, we will need to make important arrangements in advance of your departure, which can take anywhere from 60 to 90 days. The RPC will be unable to accommodate requests for refugee benefits submitted more than 10 days after the visa issuance date, as indicated on the visa itself. ***Should the RPC receive a request for benefits more than 10 days after visa issuance, the request will be denied.*** In order to administer the program efficiently, we therefore ask that you submit a scanned copy of the attached form to the NVC along with all of the other documentation that you have been requested to send to NVC.

If you choose not to participate in the U.S. Department of State's resettlement program, please indicate this decision on the Refugee Benefits Election Form and submit a scanned copy to the NVC along with all of the other documentation related to your Special Immigrant Visa application. Please consider your decision carefully. If you decide not to request Department of State-funded benefits, however, you will likely continue to be eligible for benefits funded by the Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). These federally-funded programs provide a variety of services and have strict time limits and guidelines for participation. You can find additional information about these benefits by visiting the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement web site at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr>.

Refugee Benefits Election Form

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR ELECTION BELOW:

If approved to receive a Special Immigrant Visa,

_____ I wish to participate in the U.S. Department of State's resettlement program and receive the associated refugee benefits including IOM-arranged travel. If there are any changes in my intention to participate, or if my family composition changes (e.g., the birth of a baby), I will notify the National Visa Center or the Embassy's consular staff immediately.

_____ I have read this information letter and DO NOT wish to participate in the U.S. Department of State's resettlement program. I understand that I will be unable to reverse my decision beyond ten days after the date on which my SIV is issued.

Petitioner's Case Number: _____

_____ Date of Birth: _____
Name (block letters)

_____ Email Address

_____ Date: _____
Signature

Please return a scanned copy of ***this page only*** to the National Visa Center via email at NVCSIV@state.gov along with all other documentation that you have been requested to send to NVC, as soon as possible but ***no later than 10 days after your visa has been issued.***