



Refugees are the most scrutinized group of migrants to enter the United States, undergoing intense background checks, medical screenings and interviews with U.S. government officials.

Fearful statements have been circulating, which state that refugees coming from the Middle East could be terrorists. This is **not** the case. **The U.S. refugee resettlement process is a secure, lengthy, and thorough process.** To be resettled in the U.S., refugees must complete an application, be fingerprinted, pass at least three security checks, complete a medical screening and have an interview with a U.S. government representative.

- These rigorous security screenings start at the beginning of the application process and results are continuously updated.
- Potential refugees are fingerprinted and photographed and their information is checked multiple times against numerous security databases, such as from the FBI and Department of State.
- The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has gathered sophisticated biometric data on refugees that may apply for admission to the U. S.
- The entire process can take 1,000 days for security screenings to be completed.

7.2 million refugees have lived in camps for at least five years, some up to two decades, waiting for resettlement, leaving most refugees in dangerous situations.

The U.S. is responsible for the process of resettling refugees in America. It is sometimes thought that the United Nations overseas this process, but that is **not** the case. The UNHCR, a U.S. embassy, or a designated NGO may refer refugees to the U.S. but the U.S. carries out the security screenings and resettlement entirely on its own.

The U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Health and Human Services all work together to administer the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) within DHS conducts the refugee interviews and determines the eligibility of refugees. If a refugee passes the security process, which can take up to two years, the refugee is matched with a resettlement organization.

It is also commonly thought that communities are not consulted before refugees are resettled in their area. This is also **not** the case. Local resettlement agencies, such as Bethany Christian Services and World Relief, work very closely with local congregations, employers, schools, hospitals, and other community groups to welcome refugees, to assist them in the integration process, and to ensure that more refugees can be supported.