



Annual Report on Refugee Resettlement in South Dakota FFY 2024

Introduction

This report provides an overview of information regarding refugee resettlement in South Dakota. Refugees are defined as individuals who are outside their country of origin and unable to return to their home country due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. While all refugees are immigrants, not all immigrants are refugees. Immigrants choose to leave their homes and may come to the United States with temporary visas, allowing them to remain for a certain period of time or under certain conditions (such as students or tourists), or they may have permission allowing them to remain indefinitely as permanent residents of the United States. Refugees arrive with temporary residency and may apply for legal permanent residency after one year. After five years, legal permanent residents, including refugees who have adjusted status, may apply for United States citizenship. All refugees arrive eligible for employment.

Description of Services Provided

At the request of the state, LSS assumed oversight of refugee resettlement in South Dakota in 2000. The primary goals for all services are self-sufficiency and community integration. To assist refugees in achieving those goals, the following services are provided:

- Cultural Orientation & Education
- Case Management
- Youth Mentoring Services (15-25)
- English Language Training
- Immigration Legal Services
- Employment Services
- Services to Older Refugees (60+)
- Community Interpreter Services
- Refugee Cash Assistance
- Medical System Navigation

LSS greets new arrivals at the airport and with the assistance of grant funding and donations, provides initial housing and basic needs items. Through federal funding, refugees are eligible for up to twelve months of cash assistance to cover basic necessities until self-sufficiency is reached. To receive this support, employable adults must cooperate with an employment program and case manager, attend at least three hours a week of English language training, and attend cultural orientation.

A 30-hour cultural orientation is provided to all new arrivals as well as other community members who are interested in participating. Topics presented include laws in the United States, driver's license information, rental agreements, shopping, health care, parenting, immigration, citizenship, K-12 education, and employment. Guest speakers from the community, including law enforcement, school district, medical providers and banking are invited to participate. Interpretation is provided. A proficiency

exam is administered upon completion of orientation. Any individual who does not demonstrate proficiency receives one-to-one follow-up from their case manager.

LSS case management and employment services are available to new arrivals for up to five years. All refugees are legally qualified for employment upon arrival. Employment services assist employable adults in finding their first job as well as job upgrades. Case management includes assisting new arrival refugees with benefits enrollment, school enrollment for children, English Language Training (ELT) enrollment for adults, obtaining various identity documents, transportation system navigation, and assistance with housing issues and assistance arranging and getting to medical appointments.

English language training is available four days and two evenings a week. Classes focus on oral competency level 1-4 and written proficiency level 1-5. Placement testing for level at entry is conducted by LSS staff as soon as possible after arrival in the United States, and clients are assigned to begin instruction at their appropriate level within the first two months in country.

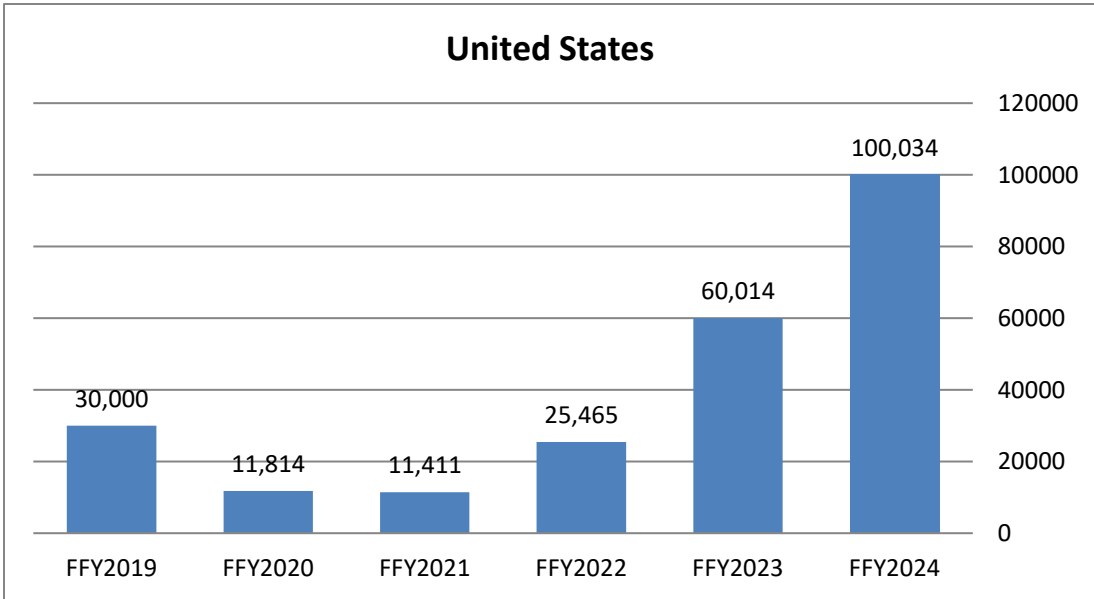
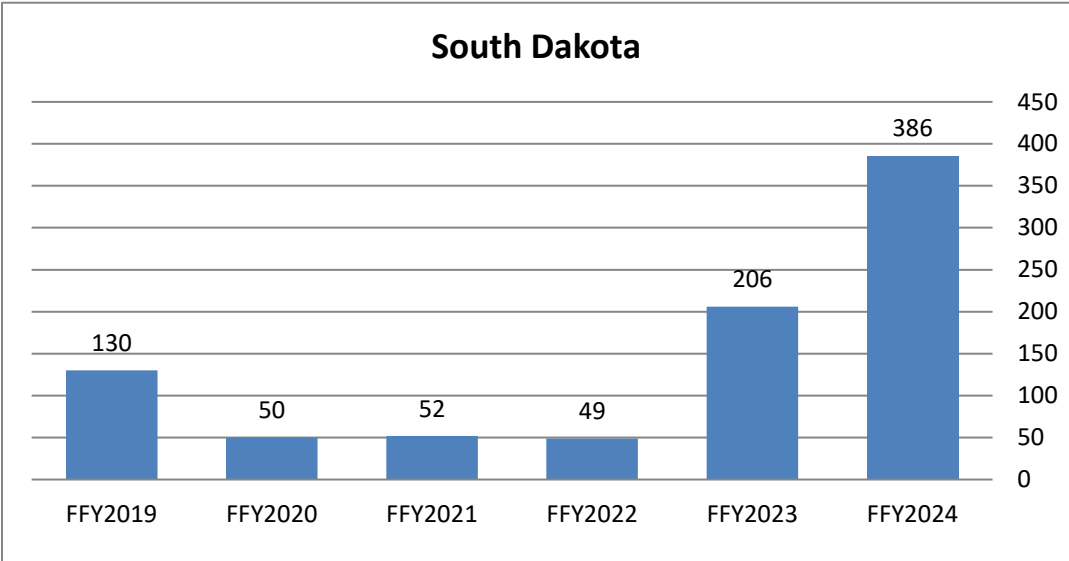
LSS immigration attorneys and Department of Justice (DOJ) Accredited Representatives assist refugees who are pursuing permanent residency or United States citizenship through a fee based program, or various grants, such as the USCIS Citizenship and Integration Grant, when available.

Areas Receiving Refugees

LSS receives direct arrivals in Sioux Falls. During federal fiscal year 2024, LSS also maintained a staff presence in Huron, Rapid City and Yankton to support clients who arrived via secondary migration, through the Cuban Haitian Entrant Program or through the Uniting for Ukraine program (U4U) (see note below). Secondary migration refers to refugees who were initially resettled in other states and later chose to move to South Dakota due to job opportunities or to be closer to friends and family who are in the area.

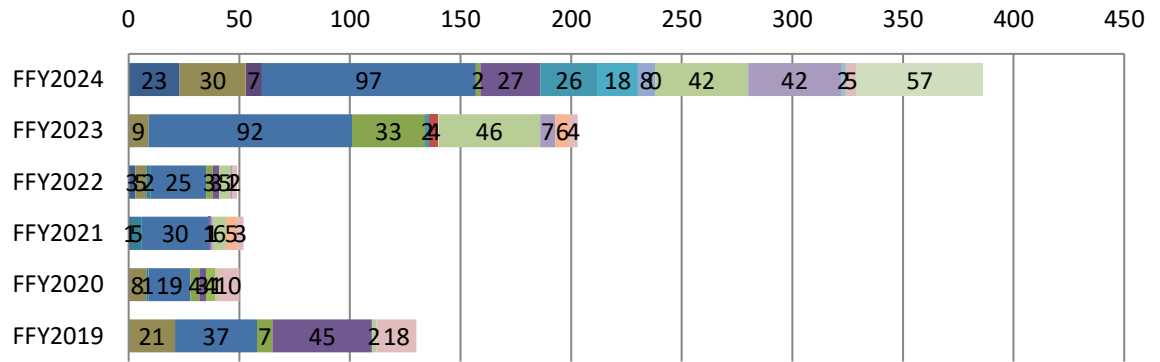
Direct Resettlement Totals

Data on individuals directly resettled in South Dakota during the past five federal fiscal years through the refugee resettlement program is included below. Data on South Dakota arrivals is based on LSS refugee arrival data. Data on national refugee arrivals is based on data available from the Refugee Reprocessing Center, which is operated by the United States State Department. "FFY" indicates the federal fiscal year.



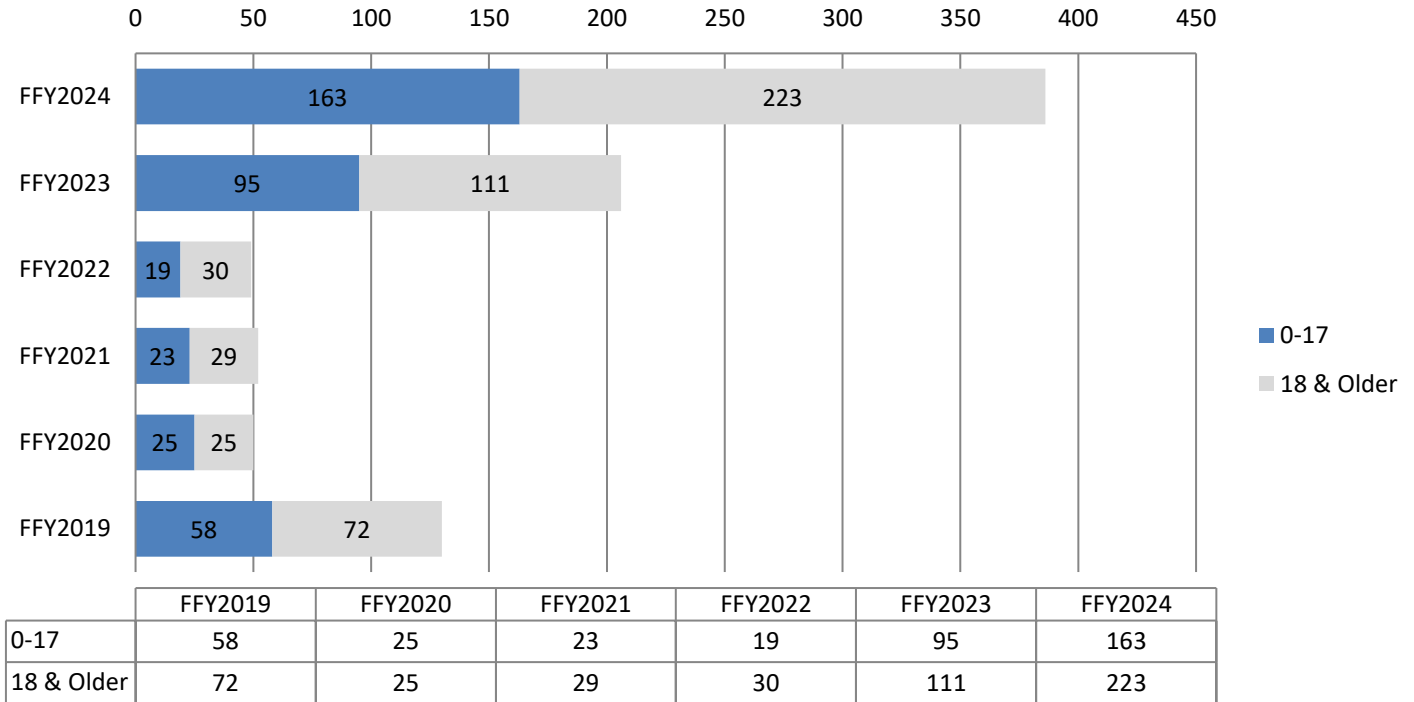
Demographic Overview

Direct Resettlement

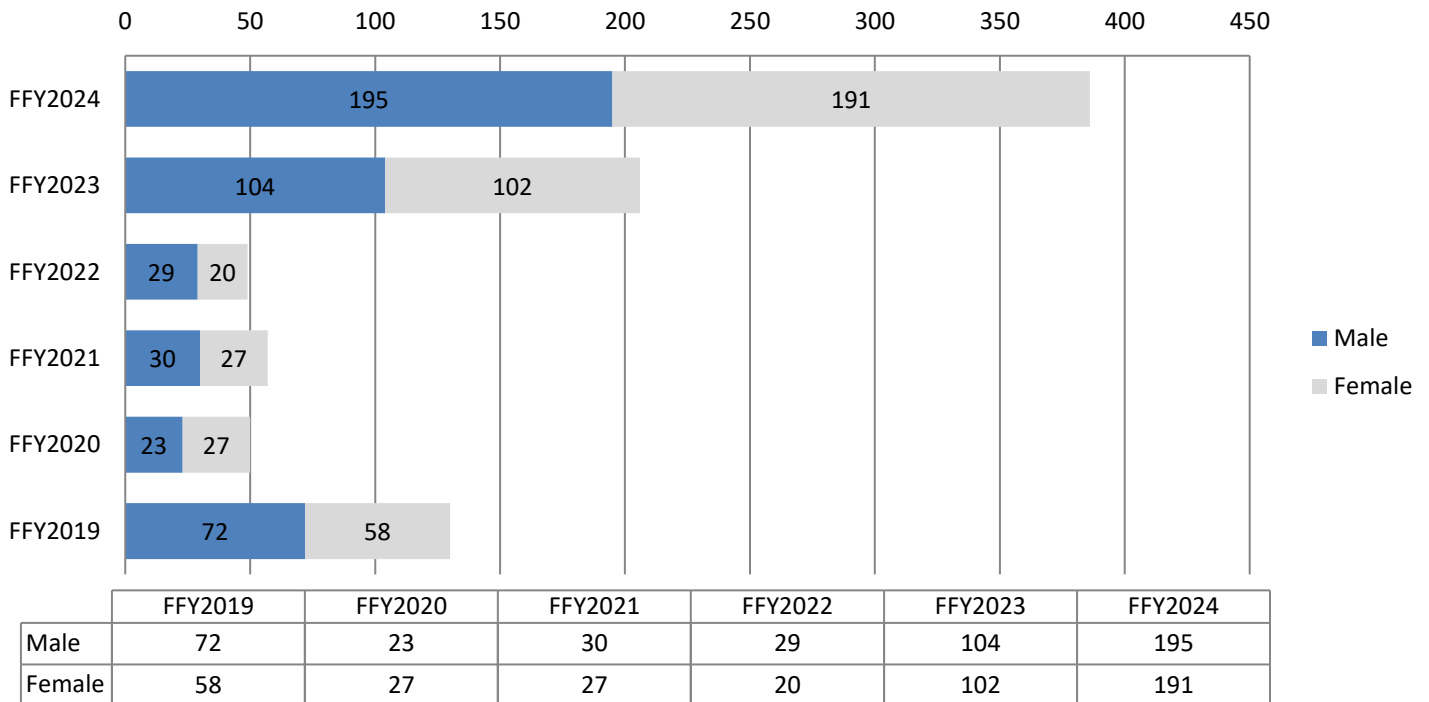


	FFY2019	FFY2020	FFY2021	FFY2022	FFY2023	FFY2024
■ Afghani			1	3		23
■ Burmese	21	8		5	9	30
■ Central African Republic						7
■ Burundi		1	5	2		
■ Congolese	37	19	30	25	92	97
■ Ethiopian	7	4		3	33	2
■ Eritrean	45	3		3		27
■ Guatamalen					2	26
■ Lebanese					4	
■ Liberian		4				
■ Nepali			1			
■ Nicaraguan						18
■ Rwandan			1			8
■ South Sudanese						0
■ Sudanese	2	1	6	5	46	42
■ Somali				1	7	42
■ Tanzania						2
■ Syrian			5		6	
■ Ukrainian	18	10	3	2	4	5
■ Venezuelan						57

New Arrivals by Age



New Arrivals by Gender



Trends in Refugee Resettlement

In October of each year, the President of the United States makes a determination on the maximum number of refugees that will be accepted into the United States during the coming federal fiscal year. For FFY2024, that threshold was set at 125,000.

FFY	Presidential Determination	Actual Arrivals to the United States	Arrivals in SD
2016	85,000	84,994	439
2017	50,000	53,716	316
2018	45,000	22,491	209
2019	30,000	30,000	130
2020	18,000	11,814	50
2021	62,500	11,411	52
2022	125,000	25,465	49
2023	125,000	60,014	206
2024	125,000	100034	386

Other Programs

Uniting for Ukraine

LSS worked with a total of 45 cases totaling 101 Ukrainians in FFY2024 via the United for Ukraine (U4U) program. Supported by the Department of Health and Human Services as well as private sponsors, individuals arriving via the U4U program are eligible for refugee benefits upon arrival and for a period of up to two years. Congress has not yet offered a pathway to legal permanent residency for Ukrainians and at this point the HHS program is not set to continue into FY2025. Data on the Ukraine program is not included in the tables below as it is a separate federal program outside of the refugee resettlement program run by Department of State PRM. While LSS provides support to Ukrainian arrivals, the program is not administered centrally like the refugee resettlement program. Ukrainians must secure the support of local sponsors in order to resettle in the UNITED STATES. Because it is not centrally operated (meaning we do not know who will arrive here or when) there may be Ukrainians in South Dakota who have had no contact with Lutheran Social Services.

Cuban Haitian Entrants

LSS worked with a total of 77 cases of 90 individual Haitians and 143 cases of 169 Cuban individuals in FFY2024. Supported by the Department of Health and Human Services as well as private sponsors, individuals arriving via the Cuban Haitian Entrant program are eligible for refugee benefits upon arrival and for a period of up to two years. Cubans are eligible for adjustment of status after one year in the United States under the Cuban Adjustment act of 1966. Congress has not yet offered a pathway to legal permanent residence for Haitians. Data on the Cuban Haitian Entrant program is not included in the tables below as it is a separate federal program outside of the refugee resettlement program run by Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). While LSS provides support to Cuban Haitian Entrants, the program is not administered centrally like the refugee resettlement program. Cubans and Haitians must secure the support of local sponsors or be self-reliant in or to resettle in the United States. Because it is not centrally operated (meaning we do not know who will arrive here or when) there may be Cubans and Haitians in South Dakota who have had no contact with Lutheran Social Services.