



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

## **Refugee resettlement: health screening**

### **How are refugees screened for health and diseases?**

- Before being allowed to enter the United States, refugees are screened for active, communicable diseases by the International Organization for Migration or another entity contracted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Division of Global Migration and Quarantine. If an active, communicable disease is detected, cases are held back until such time as they are recovered or deemed non-communicable.
- When tested, some individuals may register positive, for example, for tuberculosis, without being active. In such a case, the refugee would not be prevented from entering the United States, but would be flagged for immediate follow-up upon arrival. Local resettlement agencies would be responsible for working in conjunction with the local health department and medical providers to ensure that such individuals receive appropriate treatment.
- In the case of HIV/AIDS, while communicable, individuals have control over passing on the virus that leads to AIDS and are not prevented from migration. For these cases, a waiver must be filed with and approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Division of Global Migration and Quarantine prior to admission to the country. The waiver is generally granted on humanitarian grounds. Upon receipt of information for such cases, local resettlement agencies immediately contact medical providers and arrange for services to meet the needs of these cases.

All agencies involved in refugee resettlement are required to treat individuals who are HIV+ with strict confidentiality, as would be the right of any resident of the United States. In such an occurrence, the local resettlement agency is expected to draw upon local health resources to provide follow-up and case management for the affected persons - with the same patient confidentiality protection.

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