

**ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026

Agenda Item Subject: Refugee Health Update 2025

Attachment(s): Refugee Health Update 2025.pdf

Staff or Board Member Reporting: Chinyere Ekenna, Public Health Nurse II

Purpose: Action
 Information only
 Information with possible action

Summary Information:

Chinyere Ekenna will provide an update on the OCHD Refugee Health Screening Program.

Health Equity Impact:

Refugees and asylees in the United States face numerous challenges to health, including but not limited to cultural differences, language barrier/limited English proficiency, lack of transportation, and limited understanding of the US healthcare system. The Refugee Health Screening Program helps link refugees and asylees with initial healthcare and routine vaccinations upon their arrival to Orange County.

Recommended Action: Approve
 Approve & forward to Board of Commissioners for action
 Approve & forward to _____
 Accept as information
 Revise & schedule for future action
 Other (detail):

Refugee Health Update 2025

Date of report 1/21/2026

By

Chinyere “Chi” Ekenna RN MSN

Agenda

Introduction

New Arrivals in 24/25 fiscal year

| 693 Applications Completed.

Health Screening Updates

Challenges

Questions

Brief Introduction



New Arrivals to Orange County

45 Refugees arrived Orange county in 24/25 fiscal year.

These new arrivals were from;

Burma :	15
Syria :	22
Congo:	4
Venezuela :	4



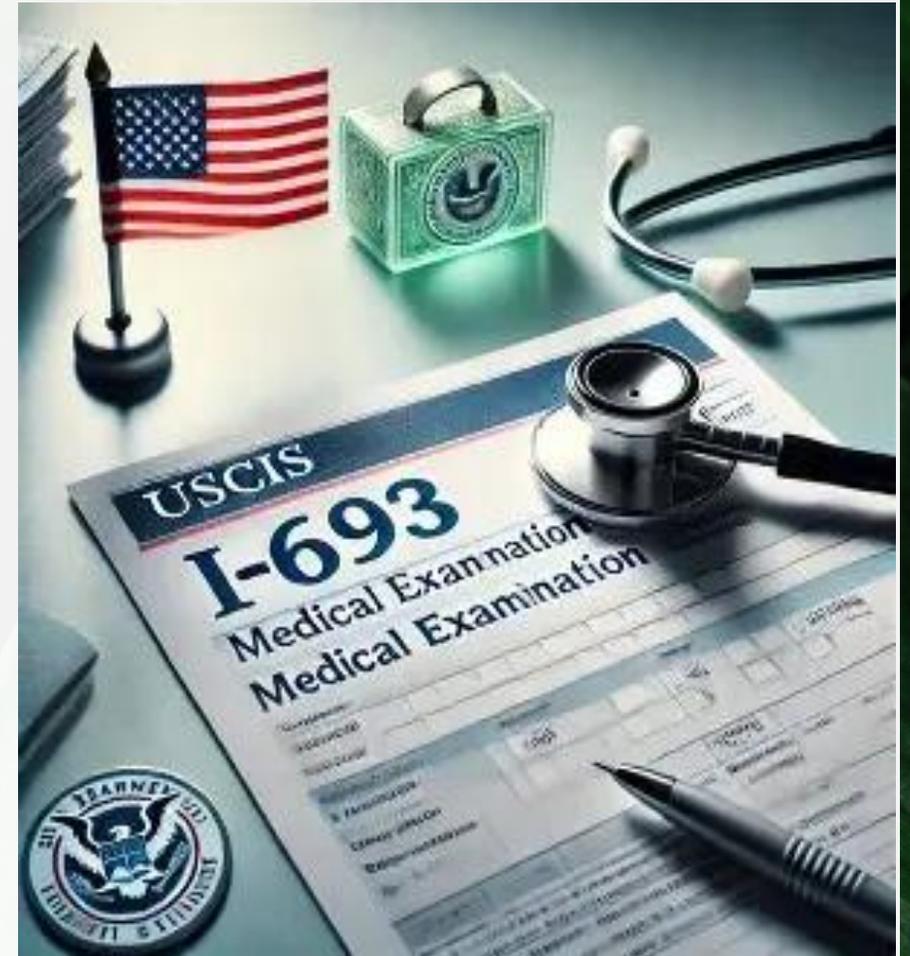
I693 Application completed

49 application of I 693 were completed in 2025

Countries of Origin of Refugees Assisted For Change of Status to Permanent Residency

Syria	10
Burma/Myanmar	17
Congo	10
Iran	8
Venezuela	4

80% of the applications are approved by USCIS within 13 months. Each case is unique, and some cases take longer approval time than others.



Billing for I693 Documentation

Orange County	\$ 0
Wake County	\$40.00
Durham County	\$42.70
Guilford County	\$40.00
Forsyth County	\$35.00



Update to NC State RH Screening Policy

- ❖ New arrivals with S/S of TB, **regardless of country of origin**, should undergo clinical evaluation for TB disease.
- ❖ New arrival with no clinical evidence of TB disease, and with no prior tx of TB or LTBI, should have IGRA (or TST) completed during the domestic medical exam, if IGRA was not completed overseas in the last six months.



Update to NC State RH Screening Policy

- ❖ IGRA tests approved by WHO or the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for Panel Physicians.

The following IGRA tests are currently being used:

- 1) QuantiFERON (FDA-approved),
- 2) T-Spot (FDA-approved),
- 3) Wantai (WHO-approved) and
- 4) STANDARD E TB-Feron ELISA (WHO- approved).



Other changes to RH Screening

- Chancroid, Granuloma inguinale/donovanosis, Lymphogranuloma venereum, Genital herpes, Genital warts, Trichomoniasis.
- HIV screening for ages < 13 - >64, but for children < 13 are not to be tested if the mom tested negative/low risk for HIV infection.
- Adult with 1st dose of varicella vaccination, without hx of infection should receive 2nd dose.
- Screening for varicella immunity in children is no longer recommended.
- Covid vaccine is no longer a requirement for change of status to permanent residency.
- Initial lead testing for Refugees is now for ages 6 to <18 years old. They also receive follow up testing with Blood Lead Levels at or above 3.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ according to CDC recommendation.

CHALLENGES TO RH PROGRAM

- ❖ NO NEW ARRIVALS IN ORANGE COUNTY SINCE APRIL LAST YEAR
- ❖ REDUCTION OF REIMBURSEMENT TO HD FOR RH SCREENING SERVICES.
- ❖ REFUGEES ARRIVING AFTER MAY 5, 2025, OR LATER WILL RECEIVE BENEFITS FROM OFFICE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT FOR ONLY 4 MONTHS.

Thank you



RESOURCES

<https://www.cdc.gov/immigrant-refugee-health/hcp/domestic-guidance/history-and-physical.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/immigrant-refugee-health/php/case-reporting-edn/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/immigrant-refugee-health/hcp/domestic-guidance/immunizations.html>;
<https://www.cdc.gov/immigrant-refugee-health/hcp/civil-surgeons/vaccination.html>;
<https://www.cdc.gov/pinkbook/hcp/table-of-contents/chapter-22-varicella.html>; and
<https://www.cdc.gov/polio/hcp/vaccine-considerations/index.html>