

**Supporting
Statement for OMB
Clearance Request**

**APPENDIX C:Site
Visit Interview Guide
for Public Agency
Refugee Cash
Assistance Managers
and Staff**

**Understanding the
Intersection Between
TANF and Refugee
Cash Assistance
Services**

New Collection

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Submitted by:
Office of Planning,
Research & Evaluation
Administration for Children & Families
U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services

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Appendix C: Site Visit Interview Guide for Public Agency Refugee Cash Assistance Managers and Staff

Instructions for OMB Reviewer

This information collection request includes four field interview guides (Appendices B-E). Many questions are identical or similar across these interview guides. To help reviewers know which questions are shared across all guides, we have included a parenthetical note (e.g., “Question Asked in All Interview Guides”) for each question that is asked across all four field interview guides. An asterisk indicates that the corresponding question contains small differences from the other guides, but the question is still very similar across all interview guides.

Below are some examples to illustrate what we mean:

Example 1: What is your official job title? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

Example 2: Do you have to report information to any funders or government bodies (e.g., legislature, governor, county executives, etc.)? If so, which? And what information? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**

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Introduction: We are members of the research team conducting the study “Understanding the Intersection Between TANF and Refugee Cash Assistance Services.” The study is funded by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its purpose is to learn how state and local systems are serving refugees through TANF and the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) programs, how these programs intersect, and how these programs may be related to refugee self-sufficiency and employment outcomes. As part of the study, we are visiting a number of sites across the country where refugees have been resettled and access public benefits and services. We are talking with individuals who help implement or operate the programs and services accessed by refugees in these communities.

Before beginning our discussion, we want to thank you for agreeing to talk with us today. We know you are busy and will try to be as focused as possible. The interview will take about 90 minutes. Your participation is voluntary, and there are no penalties for choosing not to take part in the interview. Although your answers are important to the study, you can refuse to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time. Our aim is to learn from your insights and experience, not to audit or judge your agency or programs. Your answers will be kept private to the extent permissible by law. However, because of the relatively small number of organizations participating in the study, there is a possibility that a response could be correctly attributed to you. Information you provide will not be shared with other staff at your program or organization. Only the study team will have access to the information you provide through this interview. Your name will not be listed in any published reports, and comments will not be attributed to you. Instead, your information will be combined with information provided by others.

The Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to document changes in program operations or the provision of services for resettled refugees, as well as implementation challenges. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 90 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 0970-XXXX and it expires XX/XX/XXXX. Please send comments about this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Abt Associates, 4550 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 800 North, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, Attn: Robin Koralek OMB-PRA 0980-XXXX.

Please note that throughout this guide, except where noted, we use the term “refugee” to refer generally to all populations eligible for refugee services, including refugees, asylees, Cuban-Haitian entrants, and Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

I. Organization and Respondent Background

1. What is your official job title? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
2. How many years have you worked in this position? At this agency/organization? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
3. What was your professional background before this position? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
4. Please briefly describe your current position and job responsibilities, including your day to day work with refugees. **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. Probe on the following responsibilities, as appropriate given specific interviewee **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**:
 - Enrollment in TANF
 - Administration of TANF
 - Case management for TANF participants
 - Employment services
 - Enrollment in refugee cash assistance
 - Enrollment in other programs (please list briefly)
 - Referrals/navigation of other services
 - Other
5. What geographic region does this agency serve? How many offices are there in this city/county? What area does this office serve? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**
6. Do you have a copy of an organizational chart for [agency/organization] that you can share with us? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
7. How many staff members does your agency have in total? How many administer cash assistance to refugees? How many work on providing employment, education, or training services to refugees? Providing referrals for these services? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**

II. Local Context

1. How would you describe the economy in your area? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. How available are jobs?
 - b. What types of jobs are available? In what industries?
 - c. What kinds of jobs are available to the refugees that you work with?

- d. Are there any special local economic conditions that might have a particular impact on refugees?
2. What are the largest languages spoken in the area, other than English? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
3. How would you describe the level of community support for refugees in the area? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

III. Characteristics of Refugee Population Served By Agency/Organization

1. What are the main refugee populations served by your agency/organization? (Probe on national origin and, if relevant, ethnic group.) Roughly speaking, how many refugees in each population did you serve in the past year? *[Can ask them to e-mail this after the interview if they do not feel comfortable providing estimates.]* **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
2. Among the individuals you serve who are eligible for refugee services, how many are refugees v. asylees v. Cuban-Haitian entrants v. SIV holders v. other statuses? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
3. How would you characterize the population of refugees you serve in terms of **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**:
 - a. Family size and structure
 - b. Education
 - c. Employment experience
 - d. English language ability
 - e. Prevalence of disabilities
 - f. Prevalence of mental health issues
 - g. Service needs
 - h. Other challenges
4. How do changes in the number or characteristics of refugee populations from year to year affect your service planning and service provision? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. How much does the population of refugees your agency serves change from year to year?
 - b. How much does the number of refugees you serve change from year to year?
 - c. How much do the national origins of refugees change from year to year?
 - d. How different are the characteristics of the different refugee groups you might serve from one year to the next?
5. What, if any information, does this agency receive about upcoming resettlement of refugees? What agencies or organizations provide this information? How much lead time do you get

regarding the nature of the refugee population (for planning purposes)? What additional information would be helpful? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

IV. Reception and Placement Services

1. What organizations provide Reception and Placement (R&P) services to newly arriving refugees in your state/locality? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
2. Do you coordinate or collaborate with the agencies/organizations providing R&P services? If so, what is the agency/organization's role? Has it changed over time? Would it be helpful for the agency/organization to have more or less of a role? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
3. To what extent do they collaborate with your organization on services you provide? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**
 - a. Do they play a role in how individuals enroll in RCA? If so, what?
 - b. Do they play a role in or provide input into how you deliver services to refugees? If so, what?

V. Provision of Refugee Cash Assistance

1. How many RCA cases are currently open in your county? How has this changed over the past five years?
 - a. *If they do not have actual data about the number of refugees, probe for their best guess, either about the area as a whole, or about their own caseloads.*
2. How do refugees find out about RCA and that they should come to your agency to apply for it? What organizations, if any, specifically refer refugees to your agency? What is the nature of the agency's relationship with these organizations?
3. Are there specific staff who work with refugees in your agency? Is there a special office or division that serves refugees and/or special populations (including refugees)? If so, how do you ensure that refugees will be assigned to them?
 - a. *[Ask this question if there are dedicated staff:]* In what ways do these staff work with refugees that is different from how staff generally work with other clients? What types of steps do these staff take to ensure refugees are served in a culturally competent manner? Do they receive special training?
 - b. What steps does your agency take to overcome language barriers in working with refugees? Are there bilingual/bicultural staff? If so, are steps taken so that refugees work with these staff? Are there contracts with CBOs or other organizations to help with language access or culturally-specific issues?
 - c. Are there any other steps your agency takes to ensure that services are delivered to refugees in a culturally competent way? If so, please describe them.

4. Please give a brief overview of the enrollment process for RCA.

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5. Program rules:
 - a. Are there work participation requirements for refugees on RCA? If so, what are they?
 - i. Is there a minimum number of hours RCA participants are required to participate in work activities? If so, how many?
 - ii. Do ESL classes count towards work participation requirements? If so, is there a limit on the hours of ESL that can be counted? What is it?
 - iii. How do you monitor that they are meeting these requirements?
 - iv. Do RCA work participation requirements differ from the requirements for TANF participants? If so, how?
 - b. Do you track work activities that refugees on RCA participate in? If so, what kind of work activities do they participate in? Do you refer refugees to particular activities? If so, what are these activities and what is the reason behind this referral? If not, how do refugees decide what activities to participate in?
 - c. Are there sanction policies for refugees on RCA? If so, please describe them. How do these differ from the sanctions for TANF participants?
 - i. Are these partial or full-family sanctions?
 - ii. How often are refugees exempted from requirements due to reasons such as disability? Other than disability, what are the reasons might they be exempted from requirements? How does the frequency with which refugees are exempted for these reasons compare to other, non-refugee clients?
6. What support services are available to refugees on RCA? Do refugees take up particular support services more than non-refugee clients on TANF or (*if applicable*) General Assistance? How do you assess need for supportive services? What needs do they have, and what are your approaches to addressing them?
7. Does your state/county have a General Assistance (GA) program? If so, is the RCA program's rules aligned with the GA program? If so, please explain how. Do refugees who have completed RCA ever enroll in GA? Under what circumstances?
8. What steps does your agency take to provide services to people who do not speak English?
 - a. What percent of RCA participants do not speak English or speak very limited English?
9. What do refugees do after they time out of RCA? Are there other cash assistance programs they might be eligible for? If so, do you provide assistance in applying?
10. Do refugees in your county only receive cash assistance funded by the TANF program/RCA, or are they served through other sources (such as a solely state-funded program)? If so, what are the other sources of funding?

VI. Employment, Education, and Training Services

1. Do all RCA recipients participate in education/training and/or employment services? (R)
2. What employment, education, or training activities and services does your agency/organization provide in-house? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. Probe on:
 - English language training
 - Job search assistance
 - Adult basic education
 - Vocational training
 - On-the-job training or subsidized employment placement
3. Do other organizations provide employment activities for refugees, and if so, what organizations and what kinds of activities? Do you make referrals to these organizations? What are the reasons for making referrals rather than providing services yourselves? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
4. What kinds of employment, education, or training activities do refugees participate in most frequently? How are needs determined? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
5. How do refugees decide what to participate in? Does your organization provide guidance on these decisions?
6. Beyond any work participation requirements for RCA that we discussed earlier, are there requirements that refugees participate in certain employment activities in order to receive any other services? Please describe what these requirements are. Do you have a role in helping them meet these requirements? What happens if they do not meet these requirements?
7. Does your agency provide any post-employment services to refugees to make sure they retain and/or advance in their jobs? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

VII. Other Refugee Services

1. Other than cash assistance and employment services, what are the key services your agency provides to refugees? Please describe the major services. *(Note: interviewees may have provided this information earlier when talking about their own job responsibilities or about employment and support services.)* **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. Probe on:
 - Social adjustment and cultural orientation services
 - Mental health services
 - Physical or cognitive disability services

2. Are these services tied to cash assistance and/or employment services? If so, in what way?
(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)
3. Do the same staff that work with refugees on cash assistance or employment services also work with them on these services? If not, how are these services coordinated with cash assistance or employment services?
4. Regarding mental health and disability services **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**:
 - a. How are needs for these services assessed?
 - b. Are any steps taken to make sure these services are provided in a culturally competent way? If so, please explain.
 - c. How do identified mental health or disability service needs affect the work requirements facing refugees or choices of activities that refugees are referred to in order to meet these requirements?
5. Are there differences in the way mental health and disability services are provided for refugees than for your non-refugee TANF clients?

VIII. Other General Services

1. What other programs or services do refugees you work with generally access, either at your agency or elsewhere in the community? What organizations or agencies provide them?
(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)
 - a. Probe specifically on:
 - SNAP
 - Disability services
 - Mental health services
 - Child care
 - Other employment programs than already discussed
 - Other education than already discussed
2. Do you provide assistance to refugees in connecting with these services? If so, what kind of assistance? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**
 - a. Probe specifically on:
 - Direct enrollment as part of TANF/RCA enrollment process?
 - Referral?
 - Help with the application?
 - Direct involvement with the program on the refugee's behalf?

- Help to the participant during program participation?
3. If you do not provide assistance in connecting to these services, how do refugees connect with and enroll in these programs? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

IX. Coordination/Integration

1. Does your agency partner with any local organizations that provide assistance to you in serving refugees? If so, please describe the organizations and the nature of the assistance they provide.
- a. Probe on assistance with:
- Language access
 - Cultural competence
 - Resettlement policies and procedures
 - Understanding immigration statuses and work eligibility
2. Coordination/Collaboration (See probes at bottom of this set of questions)
- a. What, if any, other agencies or organizations do you work with to ensure that refugees are receiving cash assistance? What kinds of services do they provide? What is the nature of your coordination or partnerships with these organizations? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
- b. What, if any, other agencies or organizations do you work with that provide employment, education, or training services to refugees? What kinds of services do they provide? What is the nature of your coordination or partnerships with these organizations? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
- c. What, if any, other agencies or organizations do you work with that provide other refugee-focused services? What kinds of services do they provide? What is the nature of your coordination or partnerships with these organizations? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
- d. For each of the above questions, probe on:
- Referrals to/from the other organization
 - Co-location
 - Onsite provision of services
 - Regular meeting
 - Collaborate on events, workshops, or meetings
 - Staffings on particular individuals
- e. Are there formal MOUs in place? If so, what is required of the partners under the MOU? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

3. Are there specific features of your partnership(s) that you feel have contributed to positive or promising outcomes for refugees? Which services and which outcomes? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
4. If a refugee receives services from more than one program at your agency/organization, do they work with the same staff members for all programs, or different staff members for each program? How do you coordinate services that refugees access across the various programs your agency/organization offers? What are some of the challenges your agency faces in coordinating across programs within the agency/organization? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
5. Do you see any new potential opportunities for further coordination or integration with your existing partners in the future? Do you see any new potential opportunities for new partnerships in the future? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
6. What are some of the challenges your agency faces in coordinating with other refugee service providers? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

X. Goals and Outcomes

1. What performance measures or other goals does your agency monitor in administering [*as appropriate*] the following programs to refugees: The cash assistance program? The employability programs? Other refugee service programs? Are these for all refugees you serve, or just a subset (e.g., just those refugees receiving ORR-funded services)? If so, what subset? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
2. What outcomes have your participants achieved with regards to these measures? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. If not specifically mentioned as part of their measures, also ask about the ORR Performance Outcome Measures shared for Publicly Administered Programs, Public Private Partnerships, and Wilson/Fish Programs (but not Matching Grant):
 - Entered employment
 - Average Wage at Employment
 - Employment with Health Benefits
 - Job Retention for 90 days
 - Cash Assistance Reductions due to Earnings
 3. Cash Assistance Termination due to Earnings To what extent have the refugees you have served left RCA? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**
 - a. For what reasons did they leave? Probe on jobs, sanction/time limits, moved away.
 - b. To what extent did they continue to receive benefits from other public assistance programs, such as SNAP?

4. What kinds of jobs have refugees served by your program obtained? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
5. On average, about how long has it taken them to find jobs? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

XI. Promising Practices and Challenges

1. Are there any special programs, services, or initiatives offered by your agency/organization or by others in the community that you think are particularly effective, innovative, or unique in how they meet refugees' needs or help them achieve self-sufficiency? If so, please describe. **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. Probe particularly on programs related to:
 - Access to cash assistance and other benefits
 - Helping refugees fulfill requirements for cash assistance programs
 - Employment
 - English language acquisition
 - Job training
 - Social adjustment and cultural orientation services
 - Mental health services
 - Physical or cognitive disability services
 - Other services
2. What do you think are the main promising practices your agency/organization has had in working with refugees? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
3. What are some of the challenges your agency/organization has faced in working with refugees? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
4. Are there particular needs of refugees that you think are not being met by your agency/organization and others in the community? If so, what are these needs and why are they not being met? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. Are there particular groups of refugees not being well served or whose needs are not being met? If so, what groups, and in what ways are their needs not being met? Why? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
5. Are there any ways you would improve the services you provide to refugees? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

XII. Data

1. What data do you collect about RCA recipients?
 - a. What intake information do you collect on RCA recipients?
 - b. Beyond intake information and benefits provided, what information do you capture about RCA recipients? Their characteristics? Services provided to them?
 - c. Do you capture information on their work-related activities? If so, what?
 - d. Do you capture information on services they receive from other organizations? If so, what?
 - e. Probe on outcome measures discussed earlier.
 - f. What other data do you collect on the refugees you serve?
2. Are there data you are not currently collecting that would be helpful to you? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
3. Do you have to report any information on services provided to refugees? If so, to whom? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - a. Do you have to report information to any funders or government bodies (e.g., legislature, governor, county executives, etc.)? If so, which? And what information? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides*)**
 - b. Are there any state reporting requirements? If so, please describe what information you have to report. **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
 - c. Are there any other organizations or agencies to which you are required to report information on refugee services? If so, what organizations/agencies? And what information? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
4. Beyond required reporting, do you share data on refugee clients with other organizations? Which ones? What data do you share? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**
5. Are there copies of reports or forms that you can provide us? **(Question Asked in All Interview Guides)**

Program Materials to Obtain

1. Organizational background information (brochures, annual reports, etc.)
2. Organizational chart
3. Copies of forms agency/organization uses to gather information on characteristics of refugees served and services delivered (if available)
4. Data reports on characteristics of refugees served and services delivered (if available)