LIVING WITH A DISABILITY IN THE UNITED STATES FOR REFUGEES

The laws of the United States protect and help people with disabilities.
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If you or a family member has a physical or mental impairment that limits your ability to work or take care of yourself, you can seek help under the Americans with Disabilities Law.

**WHAT IS A DISABILITY?**

A disability is when you have problems:

- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Breathing
- Learning
- Remembering
- Caring for yourself
- Moving around
People with a disability CAN live a full life.

You CAN work.
You CAN go to school.
You CAN take a bus, train or even drive a car.
You CAN live with your family or by yourself.
You CAN have friends, travel, and play.
It is alright to ask for help. You can be helped:

- Getting medical care
- Getting a job
- Finding a home
- Going to school
- Getting a wheelchair, hearing aid or other medical equipment
- Getting someone to assist in taking care of your or a disabled family member
HOW TO APPLY FOR CASH ASSISTANCE

You need to apply for SSI disability benefits.

Step 1
Be examined by a doctor.

Step 2
Contact your local Social Security Office to set up an appointment to complete the application form in person or over the phone.
Call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

If you are not approved, you CAN appeal the decision to the government.

- Contact your local Social Security office to see what additional information they need to appeal.
- Go back to your doctor. Your doctor can help fill out the appeal papers.
Organizations that help people with disabilities do all these things are called Rehabilitation Service Agencies or Vocational Rehabilitation Centers.

To find a Center near you, go to www.jan.wvu.edu/sbses/vocrehab.htm

People with disabilities CAN work.

You CAN learn to take care of yourself.
You CAN learn new skills to get a good job.
You CAN learn to speak English or American Sign Language.
Children with a disability CAN go to school until they are 21 years old.

If a child is having problems learning, parents can ask for special help from the school.

Parents should work with the school to make an Individual Education Plan or IEP for their child.
There are organizations around the United States that help people with Disabilities live on their own. They are called Independent Living Centers.

**Personal Assistants**

can help you live independently in your own home.

**Respite Care**

can help you rest if you take care of a family member with a disability.
Home Assistive Technology

Changes can be made to your home to make it more useable.

Contact your local Independent Living Center for help.

To locate your local Independent Living Center:

- Call the National Council on Independent Living at 703-525-3406 (voice) or 703-525-4135 (tty).
- Contact the CIL Management Center at 716-836-0822 (voice), E-Mail: info@wnyilp.org or go to their website www.wnyilp.org/cilmc/directory.php
- Go to the Virtual CIL website www.virtualcil.net/cils
Some public buses and trains are made so people with disabilities can use them.

**A Ticket To Work** is a program that can help you pay to use buses and trains. Ask your local Social Security office about it.
If you cannot get to a bus or train, you may be able to have a bus or car to come pick you up at your house. It is called Para transit.
Government offices are built so people with disabilities can use them.
There are tools that can help you be more independent. You can get tools that help you:

- Move around
- Take a bath
- Use the toilet by yourself
- Take care of your children
- Use a computer
- Use a phone
- Drive a car

The government can help you pay for some of these tools.
There are a lot of fun things you can do to stay healthy. It is important to go outside and move around. You can play sports and exercise.
After you have lived in the United States for 5 years, you can apply for citizenship.

It is important to become a citizen of the United States. You will lose your federal benefits if you do not become a citizen.

To be a citizen, you will need to take a test and complete the forms.

- You can get help completing the papers for citizenship.
- You can take classes to study for the test.
- If you are not able to apply for citizenship due to your disability you can apply for a waiver called an N-648 form.
RESOURCES

Social Security Administration
800-772-1213 (voice)
800-325-0778 (TTY)
http://www.ssa.gov/

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS

National Council on Independent Living
703-525-3406 (voice)
703-525-4135 (TTY)

CIL Management Center
716-836-0822 (voice)
E-Mail: info@wnyilp.org
www.wnyilp.org/cilmc/directory.php

Virtual CIL website
www.virtualcil.net/cils

STATE REHABILITATION PROVIDERS

Job Accommodation Network
800-526-7234 (voice)
877-781-9403 (TTY)
www.jan.wvu.edu/sbses/vocarehab.htm

EQUIPMENT TO BE ABLE TO DO THINGS
ON YOUR OWN

ABLEDATA
Toll-Free: 1-800-227-0216.
http://www.abledata.com

CATAEA: National Public Website on
Assistive Technology
Toll-Free: 1-800-726-9119 (voice/tty)
http://assistivetech.net
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

For almost a century, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) has helped immigrants and refugees build better lives in the U.S. and around the world. USCRI serves through four field offices and a network of 27 community-based partner agencies to migrate refugees and help immigrants in the U.S. secure basic housing and employment, as well as targeted programs covering marriage, family and citizen, financial literacy, citizenship, and more. Each year approximately 6,000 to 10,000 refugees are resettled, and almost a million immigrants are assisted through the USCRI network.

USCRI is a leader in delivering effective, measurable refugee services to individuals and communities throughout the United States. USCRI serves refugees in 27 communities, helping them to make successful transitions to American life. USCRI’s comprehensive services are designed to help refugees succeed in the United States and become productive members of American society.

Health and Human Services Division

A successful resettlement also has positive long-term health outcomes. USCRI works to promote health and protect the health and well-being of refugees and immigrants. USCRI is an integral part of the health care delivery system. USCRI works closely with local health care providers and institutions to identify health care needs and to provide services to refugees and immigrants.

USCRI is committed to improving the health and quality of life for refugees resettled in the United States. The Health and Human Services (HHS) Division was created to support the health and well-being of refugees and immigrants to enable families and individuals to become fully integrated into American society.

USCRI serves individuals, families, and communities in 27 communities across the United States. USCRI’s comprehensive services are designed to help refugees succeed in the United States and become productive members of American society.