

9 FAM PART IV Appendix O, 1000 SPONSORSHIP OF REFUGEES

(TL:VISA-281; 05-15-2001)

9 FAM 1001 ELIGIBILITY FOR SPONSORSHIP BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES (VOLAGS)

(TL:VISA-281; 05-15-2001)

The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has contracts with twelve domestic voluntary agencies (Volags) to assist refugees with initial reception and placement in the United States. [9 FAM PART IV Appendix O, Exhibit VI lists these agencies.] All persons admitted to the United States as refugees are eligible for sponsorship by a voluntary agency. The majority of refugees avail themselves of voluntary agency assistance.

9 FAM 1002 THE REFUGEE DATA CENTER (RDC)

(TL:VISA-142; 4-22-96)

The initial request and follow-up communication on refugee sponsorship should be sent by fax, telex, or direct relay cable to the RDC. Direct relay cables should be slugged for PRM/A/O. The RDC is the primary contact between the Department and the Volags for coordinating refugee sponsorships. PRM funds the RDC to perform this service. The RDC's direct relay address is:

RDC/ICMC
200 Park Avenue South, Room 801
New York, NY 10003

(Cables may also be addressed "RDCICMC 200 Park Avenue South." RDC's fax number is 212/979-8149. Its telex number is RDCICMC 175322.)

9 FAM 1003 REQUESTING SPONSORSHIP

(TL:VISA-142; 4-22-96)

Sponsorship is generally requested only after a refugee has been tentatively approved by INS. When it is necessary to request sponsorship before this, post should notify the RDC of that fact and send a follow-up cable to RDC after the applicant has been interviewed by INS to inform the sponsoring agency of the disposition of the application.

9 FAM 1003.1 Procedures for Obtaining Sponsorship

(TL:VISA-281; 05-15-2001)

At posts NOT ASSISTED BY joint Voluntary Agencies or other Bureau-assigned contractors, consular officers must submit requests for voluntary agency sponsorship to RDC. The request should be in the format provided in *9 FAM PART IV* Appendix O, Exhibit IV with the subject line reading: "RDC Biodata—Request for Volag Assurance."

9 FAM 1003.2 Time Considerations

(TL:VISA-281; 05-15-2001)

Voluntary agencies have a maximum of eight weeks after receipt of a refugee's biodata to secure a sponsorship assurance and submit it to the RDC. Posts should notify the RDC in their request for assurance if an emergency condition necessitates immediate sponsorship. Incomplete or inaccurate biodata information can delay a sponsorship assurance. It is particularly important that the request include complete addresses and telephone *numbers* of relatives or friends the refugee may intend to join.

9 FAM 1004 RECEIPT OF SPONSORSHIP

(TL:VISA-281; 05-15-2001)

Once a voluntary agency has agreed to sponsor a refugee, the post will receive proof of a sponsorship assurance in one of three forms, any of which is acceptable evidence that the refugee has been assigned a sponsor and should be included in the refugee's travel packet:

(1) A cable or RDC telex or fax indicating the principal refugee's name, case number, case size, sponsoring Volag, local Volag affiliate, and final destination in the United States; or

(2) The Reception and Placement Program Assurance Form, a copy of which is shown in *9 FAM PART IV* Appendix O, Exhibit IX; or

(3) A Form I-591, Assurance of Sponsorship.

9 FAM 1005 RECONFIRMATIONS OF SPONSORSHIP FOR CLASS B MEDICAL CASES

(TL:VISA-142; 4-22-96)

a. Revised definitions of Class A excludable conditions implemented in 1991 narrowed the number of excludable conditions but consequently expanded the number of conditions which are included under Class B. Class B now includes some serious medical conditions having a significant impact on refugee resettlement. To ensure that sponsoring voluntary agencies have timely notice of serious Class B medical conditions so that appropriate re-settlement arrangements can be made, posts should obtain reconfirmation of sponsorship for refugees with any of the following conditions:

(1) Refugee minors who are Hepatitis B surface antigen carriers and who are destined for foster care;

(2) Refugees with Hansen's disease with six months of responsive treatment;

(3) Refugees in need of hospitalization upon arrival;

(4) Refugees in need of stretchers, wheelchairs, or crutches (e.g., refugees with missing limbs);

(5) Refugees in need of special housing arrangements; and

(6) Refugees who have mental disorders and need continuous psychiatric or special care.

b. Only if a case manifests conditions requiring reconfirmation after the initial sponsorship assurance request has been sent will a separate reconfirmation be required. Post should request reconfirmation of sponsorship from the sponsoring voluntary agency by communicating with the Refugee Data Center. The request should cite the refugee's case number, principal applicant's name, specific case member with the medical condition and that person's DOB, and the exact medical condition(s) of that person prompting the reconfirmation. The sponsoring agency, in turn, will send an acknowledgement to the post (either on the actual assurance form itself or by separate communication) that the post's reconfirmation request has been received and that the agency is still prepared to sponsor the refugee with the specified Class B condition.

c. Besides these reconfirmation procedures, post should forward to RDC information on any medical problems (beyond those Class B conditions cited previously) that may affect an agency's ability to make appropriate advance resettlement arrangements for the refugee.