

Presentation to the 2025 Joint Ways and  
Means Subcommittee on Human Services

# Self-Sufficiency Programs Refugee Program

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# Agenda

- I. **Current context**
- II. Program and budget overview
- III. Tracking our progress
- IV. Key issues
- V. Closing remarks

# Global and National Context



**More than 122 million people worldwide are now forcibly displaced\* – more than at any other time in history.**

➔ **Humanitarian crises** continue to drive increases in arrivals from Afghanistan, Ukraine, Cuba and Haiti

➔ **Refugee arrival cap increased** under President Biden from 15,000 to 125,000 – the highest in several decades.

➔ **Refugee resettlement has been a core component** of the United States' humanitarian response.

# Oregon's Evolving Refugee Resettlement Efforts

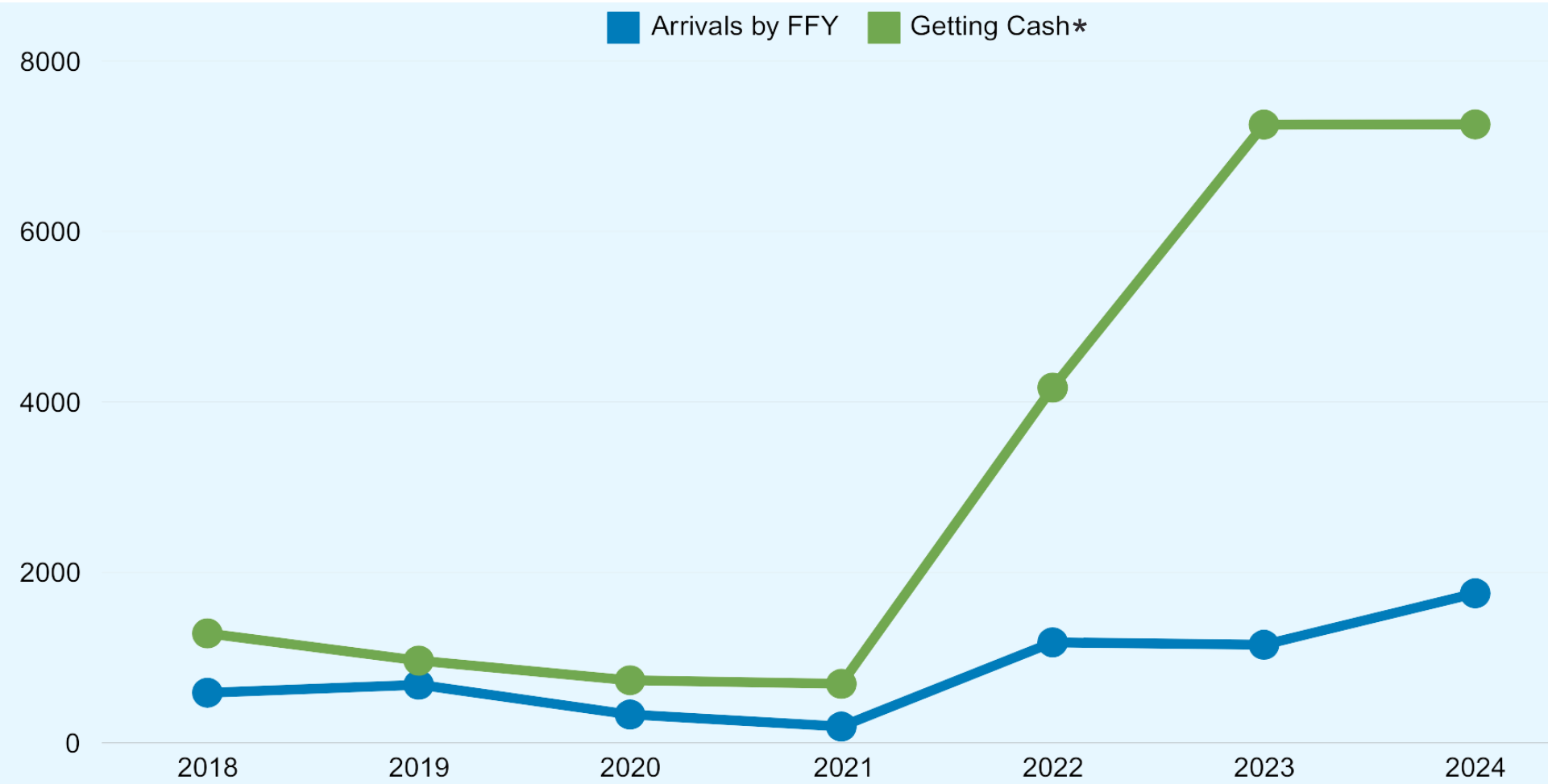
- **Rising arrivals, adaptive response**
- **Culturally specific support**
- **Expanded resettlement capacity**

-  Catholic Charities of Oregon
-  Catholic Community Services of Lane County
-  Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
-  Lutheran Community Services Northwest
-  Salem for Refugees
-  Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees



Newly added as Refugee Resettlement Agency

# Refugee Trends in Oregon: Reception & Placement Arrivals and People Getting Cash Assistance



\*ODHS Cash Benefits Enrollment, capturing only Office of Refugee Resettlement-eligible individuals.

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# Oregon's Refugee Program



The ODHS Refugee Program serves those fleeing persecution in their country of origin who have been admitted for resettlement by the U.S. and granted an eligible immigration status approved by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

The Refugee Program encompasses **three lines of effort:**

- ➔ Benefits administration
- ➔ Statewide coordination
- ➔ Contracting for services ➔

**Refugee resettlement services** in the state are provided through Refugee Resettlement Agencies (RRAs), community organizations, and state agencies.

# What We Do: Benefits Administration

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**Refugee Cash  
Assistance  
(REF)**



**Refugee  
Medical  
Assistance  
(REFM)**



**Family coaching  
for people  
receiving  
REF**



# What We Do: Contracted Services with 25 Organizations

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**Contracted services provide vital support for refugees adjusting to life in Oregon**



**Employment, housing, legal aid and healthcare are critical for long-term success**



**Focused services ensure specific refugee populations receive appropriate assistance**

# What We Do: Statewide Coordination

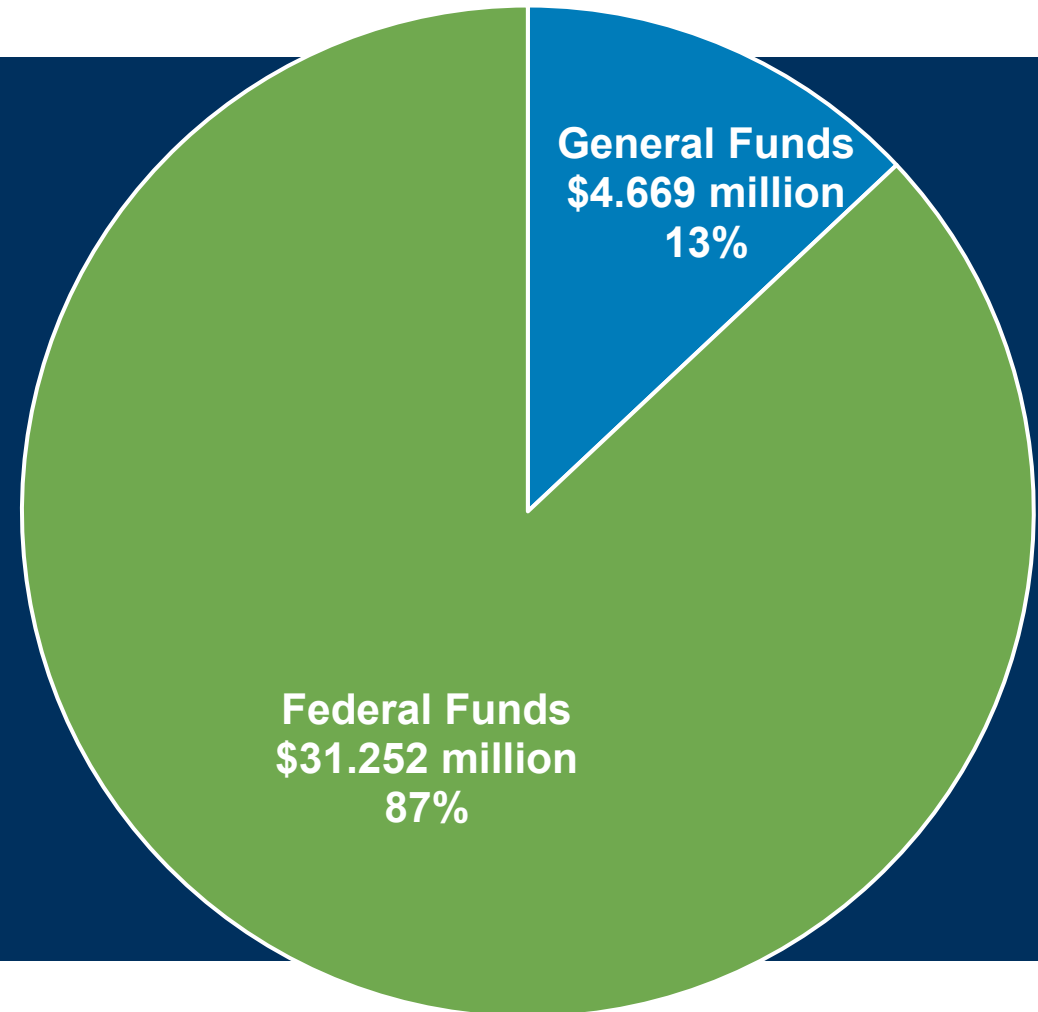
Areas of Coordination	Coordinating With:
Reception and Placement and Welcome Corps arrivals	Resettlement Agencies
Health Screenings	Welcome Corp Sponsor Groups
Health/Behavioral Health Services	State and local government
Housing Coordination	Community Based Organizations
Taskforce Meetings and Consults	Health/Behavioral Health Providers
Community Listening Sessions	Community Members
Youth and School Impact Services	Federal Partners
Employment Services	Educational Institutes

# Refugee Program: Funding

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**Refugee total funds:**  
\$35.921 million

**SSP total budget:** \$4,869.7  
million



# Refugee Program: Budget Estimates

Fund Source	Type of Service	FFY 2024 and 2025	Projected FFY 2026 & 2027
Federal	Mainstream Services (ORR) Contracts	\$7,343,035	\$12,098,392
Federal	Mainstream Services (TANF) Contracts	\$4,652,378	\$3,793,679
Federal	Population Specific (Afghan) Contracts	\$11,516,232	\$3,104,954
GF	Population Specific (Afghan) Contracts	\$2,500,000	\$0
Federal	Population Specific (Ukrainian) Contracts	\$12,731,781	\$1,045,366
GF	Mainstream Services (ECM) Grants	\$4,504,150	\$4,669,000
Federal	Cash and Medical Benefits (ODHS Administered)	\$17,702,367	Unknown

# Refugee Program: Design Staff

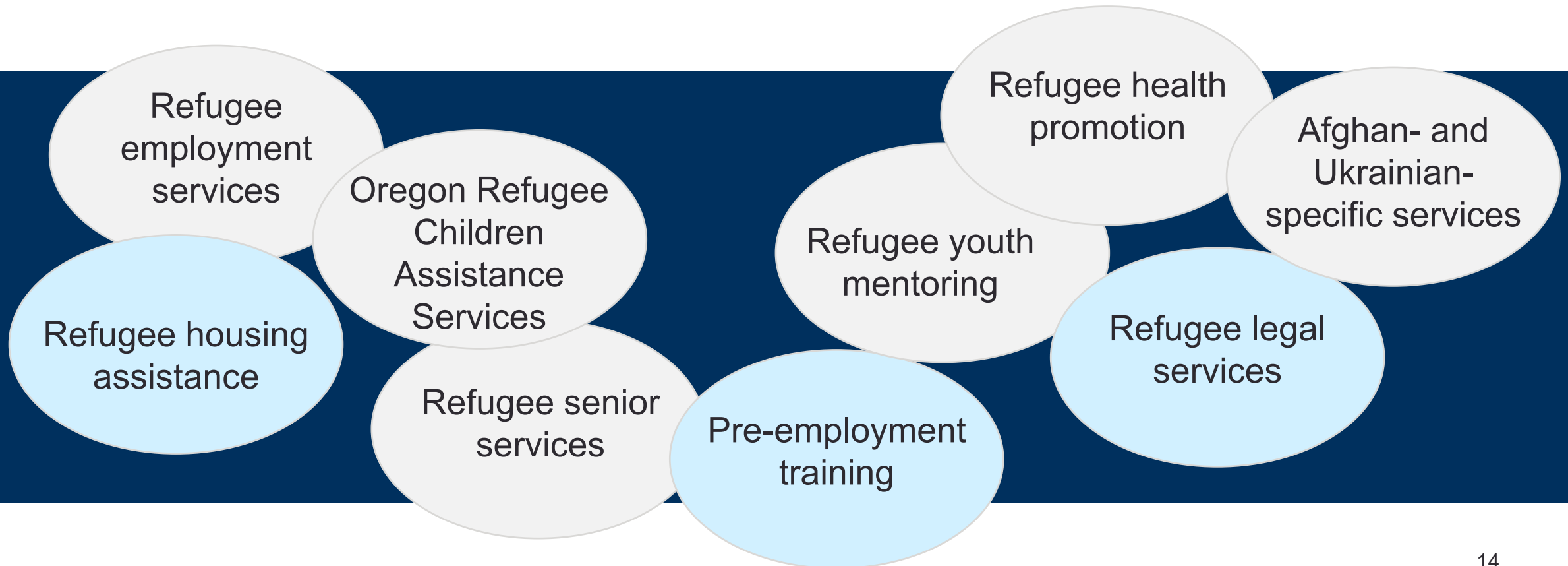
Current Design Positions	Class Title	Filled / Vacant	% Breakdown of Salaries and Benefits		
			CMA	RSS	TANF
Lead Policy Analyst	Operations & Policy Analyst 3	Filled	50%	23%	27%
State Refugee Health Coordinator	Program Analyst 3	Filled	100%		
State Refugee Housing Coordinator	Program Analyst 3	Filled	50%	23%	27%
Data Advisor	Operations & Policy Analyst 3	Filled	100%		
Sponsorship Coordinator	Program Analyst 3	Vacant, in recruitment	100%		
Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) Coordinator	Program Analyst 3	Vacant	100%		
Program Analyst	Program Analyst 2	Vacant	50%	23%	27%
Program Analyst	Program Analyst 2	Vacant	50%	23%	27%

The Refugee Program Manager's position is charged via Cost Allocation.

# Roles of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

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CBOs offer culturally responsive services to immigrant and ORR-eligible populations, contracting with ODHS SSP for refugee support but not Reception and Placement services



# Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR): Eligible Statuses

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**\*Refugees**

**Asylees**

**Cuban, Haitian  
Entrants**

**Victims of Human  
Trafficking**






















**Iraqi & Afghan Special  
Immigrant Visa**

**Afghan Humanitarian  
Parolees**

**Amerasians from  
Vietnam**

**Ukrainian Humanitarian  
Parolees**

# Immigration Statuses: Benefit Eligibility

Immigration Status	Eligible for SNAP, TANF	Pathway to Permanent Residency	Resettled by *R&P/Welcome Corps
Refugees			
Asylees			
Special Immigrant Visa (SVI) holders			
Cuban/Haitian entrants			
Ukrainian Humanitarian parolees			
General parolees			
Other non-ORR eligible immigrants			



# Benefits and Services by Population

Asylees (Asylum Granted)	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care		Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion	Only Afghan refugees receive additional ORR funded services like housing, healthcare, and legal aid	ECM
Cuban/Haitian Entrants	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care		Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion, Limited Legal Services		ECM
Victims of Human Trafficking	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care		Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion		ECM

# Benefits and Services by Population:

## Continued

ORR Eligible Populations	ODHS Benefits	R&P and Welcome Corps Services/Grant	ORR funded Services (Mainstream)	ORR funded Services (Population Specific)	State Funded Services (ECM)
Iraqi & Afghan *SIVs, including Afghan SQ/SI Parolees and SI Conditional Permanent Residents.	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care	90 day resettlement support with a \$1,325 grant per household member, managed by RA	Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion	Only Afghan refugees receive additional ORR funded services like housing, healthcare, and legal aid	ECM
Certain Afghan Humanitarian Parolees (AHP)	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care	Only R&P arrivals receive 90 day resettlement support with a \$1,325 grant per household member, managed by RA	Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion	Receive additional ORR funded services including housing, health/behavioral health, legal services	ECM
Amerasians	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care		Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion		ECM
Certain Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees	Medical, SNAP, Cash, Child care		Employment, ORCAS, Seniors, Youth Mentoring, Health Promotion	Receive additional ORR funded services including housing, health/behavioral health, legal services	ECM

\*SIV: Special Immigrant Visa

# Refugee Cash Benefit Amounts:

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**One in Household**

**\$339 a month**



**Two in Household**

**\$432 a month**

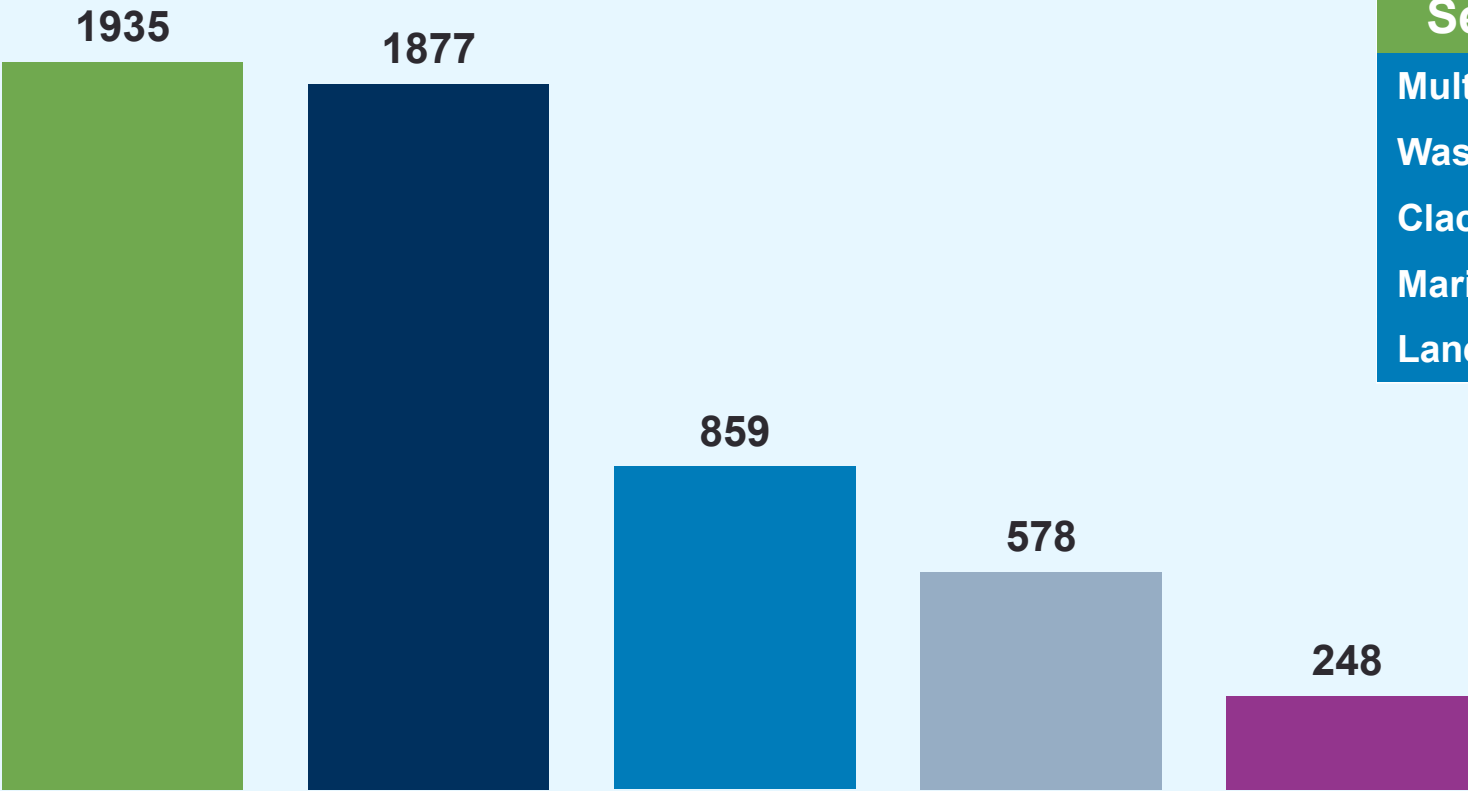


**Temporary Assistance for  
Needy Families (TANF)**

**\$618 a month**



# Demographics 2024: Number of Cash Recipients from Top Five Countries



County Settled In	Percentage
Multnomah	62%
Washington	11%
Clackamas	11%
Marion	10%
Lane	2%

Country of origin   ■ Cuba   ■ Ukraine   ■ Afghanistan   ■ Haiti   ■ Myanmar

# Risk Factors Affecting Immigrants and Refugees

## Before migration

- Exposure to war
- Persecution
- Economic hardship, instability

## During migration

- Life threatening events
- Physical harm
- Exhaustion
- Fear

## After migration

- Poor living conditions
- Social isolation
- Language barriers
- Difficulty paying rent/affording food
- Untreated PTSD
- Difficulties with acculturation/integration process
- Discrimination

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) **Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)**, **Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD)**, **anxiety** and **adjustment disorders** and **substance abuse** are the most common **mental health diagnoses among refugees**.

# Process: Refugee Resettlement and Support in Oregon

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**Refugees assigned to sponsor overseas**



## **Arrival and initial support**

- Sponsor picks up refugees at airport
- Receive 90 days of initial support
- Enroll in cash, food and medical benefits, including Refugee Cash for up to 12 months

## **Continued support**

- Employment assistance and other services for up to 60 months depending on status
- Extended case management to help with long-term integration

# Arrival and Accessing Benefits: When the Process Begins stateside

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## Arrival in the state

- Apply for benefits through ODHS and receive referral to RRA/CBO

**OR**

- Walk into RA/CBO and receive referral to ODHS



- Enroll in cash, food and medical benefits (Refugee Cash up to 12 months)



## Continued support

- RRAs/CBOs provide employment assistance and other services for up to 60 months depending on status.
- Refugees can receive extended case management for up to 24 months within an initial 60 months following arrival.



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# Legal Services: Outcomes

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## Highly Successful

- In FFY 24, the Refugee Program **provided legal services to 1,893 people**
- More than **60% of participants submitted applications** to USCIS or immigration court with the program's help
- **99% of adjudicated cases were approved**

## Currently Receiving Legal Assistance

- **Cuban & Haitian** Entrants
- **Ukrainian** Humanitarian Parolees (ORR-eligible)
- **Afghans** Evacuated through Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) (ORR-eligible)

## Growing Need, Limited Capacity

- Legal **assistance is essential** for **employment, stability,** and long-term integration
- Without more funding, **thousands remain without legal pathways** to stability

# Employment Services: Help People Achieve Economic Stability

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Refugee  
Employment  
Program (REP)

Refugee  
Employment  
Services (RES)

Pre-  
Employment  
Training  
(PET)

In FFY 2024, more than 2,100 individuals received Refugee Program-funded employment services

Cash assistance recipients were **1.8 times more likely** to secure jobs

The average starting wage was **\$18.50—\$2.50 above** Portland's minimum wage

# Extended Case Management (ECM): Leads to Stability, Employment




HB 2508: A **Game-Changer** for  
Refugee Support



Additional ECM Investment  
Matters



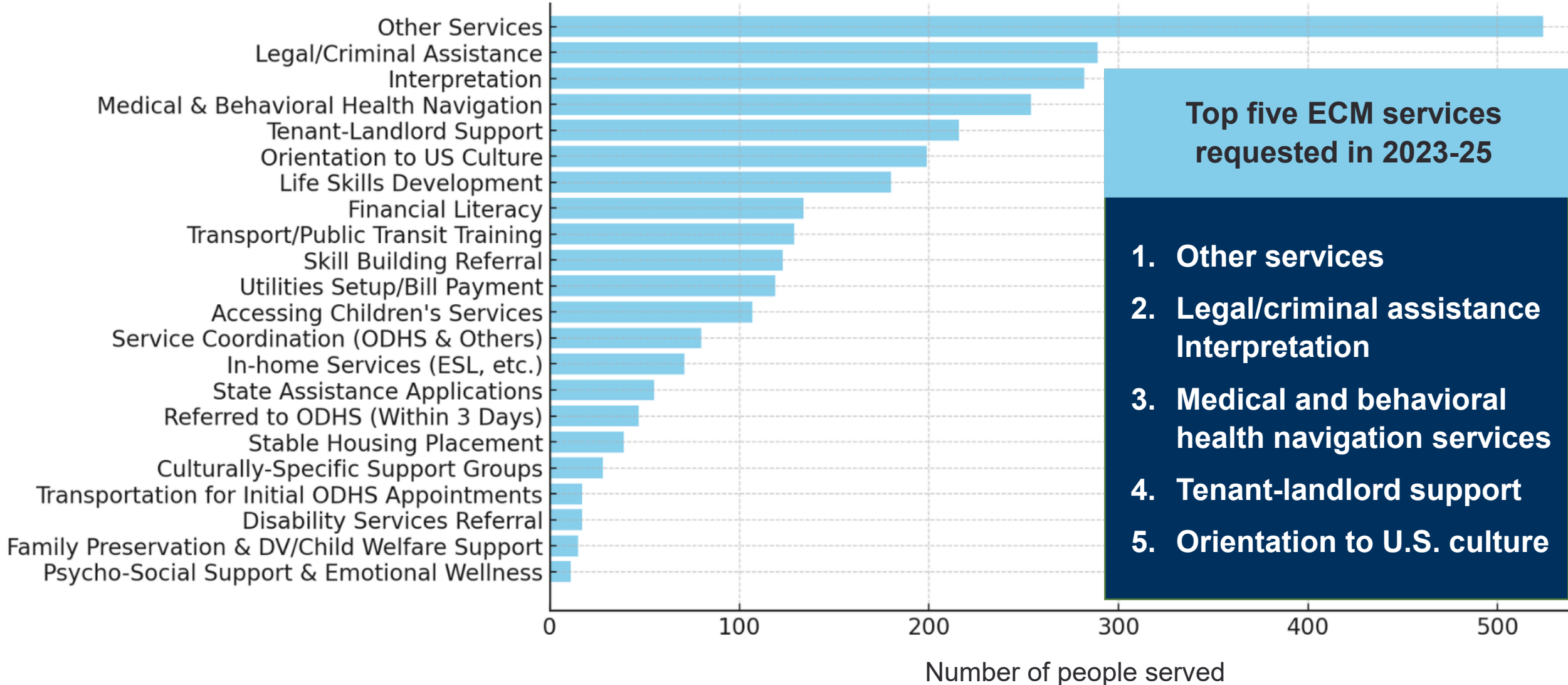
**Growing Need** for  
Comprehensive ECM Support



This Biennium, **1,035 people  
served**

HB 2508, Oregon's **Welcoming Refugees Bill** (2021), extends **case management services by 21 months** beyond the federally funded **90-day period**, ensuring refugees receive continued support for stability and self-sufficiency

# ECM: Types of Services Provided 2023-25



# Refugee Program: Additional Outcomes

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## Supporting Afghan and Ukrainian Communities

- **90% of those served** were **Afghan and Ukrainian households**, reflecting Oregon's commitment to newly arriving populations

## Broad Reach and Essential Services

- **More than 7,000 people** received services from the Refugee Program
- **99% of individuals receiving medical navigation support** successfully completed their care plans

## Investing in Refugee Children and Families

- **307 children** participated in the **Oregon Refugee Children Assistance Services**
- **600+ households (2,700+ individuals)** received **housing assistance**, preventing homelessness and promoting stability

## Strengthening Education and Data Systems

- Partnering with **ODE** to develop **Immigrant/Refugee Student Success Plan**
- Developing database to improve statewide refugee data collection and reporting
- Standardizing contractor reports for enhanced accountability and impact measurement

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# Community-Identified Priorities for Refugee Support

Through **listening sessions** and collaboration with **Resettlement Agencies (RRAs)** and **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)**, the six most pressing refugee needs were identified



# Challenges: Federal Executive Orders, Local Impact

Executive Order or Memo	Key Dates	Summary	Policy Impact	Fiscal Impact
EO #14155 – Realigning the United State Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP)	Order: 01/20/25  Effective Period: 01/27/25 - ongoing (90-day cycles)	<p>Effective 01/27/25, USRAP operations were suspended indefinitely.</p> <p>Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State are to submit a report to the US President every 90 days, to propose a plan for USRAP operations that would align with the President's priorities.</p> <p>The reporting period will cycle every 90 days until approved.</p>	Arrivals of ORR eligible populations, with exception of asylum seekers, SIV Holders, and Cuban Haitian Entrants are suspended indefinitely.	<p>Significantly cuts funding to Resettlement Agencies (RAs)</p> <p>Reduces ORR funding to ODHS SSP for staffing, Refugee Cash and Refugee Medical programs.</p>



# Challenges: Federal Executive Orders, Local Impact

Executive Order or Memo	Key Dates	Summary	Policy Impact	Fiscal Impact
"Stop Work Order" for all Reception and Placement activities	Effective Date: 02/24/25	Department of State issued to all nine National Resettlement Agencies that they and their affiliates, (i.e. Resettlement Agencies in each state) immediately stop all activities charged to Reception and Placement funds.	<p>Disrupts reception and placement support for all arrivals prior to 02/24/25 still within their initial 90-day eligibility period.</p> <p>Disrupts referrals to and service coordination with ODHS SSP.</p>	<p>Increases burden on Extended Case Management GFs</p> <p>Potentially contributed to reduction in ORR funds to SSP</p>

# Challenges: Federal Executive Orders, Local Impact

Executive Order or Memo	Key Dates	Summary	Policy Impact	Fiscal Impact
Department of Homeland Security issues notice of federal funding freeze for naturalization programs to Nonprofits	Notice Issued: 02/05/25	<p>Department of Homeland Services issued freezes of federal funding for naturalization services.</p> <p>Key Nonprofits impacted in Oregon were Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's (SOAR Legal) program and Immigration Counseling Services (ICS).</p>	<p>If naturalization process cannot be completed, candidates for citizenship may become ineligible and deported.</p> <p>Individuals needing to adjust their status to remain eligible for various SSP programs may lose benefits.</p>	This will greatly hinder otherwise eligible individuals from applying for or maintaining benefits for SSP, Medical and multiple other (non SSP) public programs.

# Challenges: Federal Executive Orders, Local Impact

Executive Order or Memo	Key Dates	Summary	Policy Impact	Fiscal Impact
"Notice of immediate Termination" memo for all Reception and Placement (R&P) and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA).	Notice Issued: 02/26/25	<p>Department of State issued a notice that all contracts for R&amp;P and ERMA services with all National Resettlement Agencies would be terminated, effective immediately.</p> <p>This came one day after a federal judge issued an injunction against EO #14155 – Realigning the United State Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP).</p>	Arrivals of ORR eligible populations, exception of asylum seekers, SIV Holders, and Cuban Haitian Entrants are suspended indefinitely.	Significantly cuts funding to Resettlement Agencies (RAs) Reduces ORR funding to ODHS SSP for staffing, Refugee Cash and Refugee Medical programs.

# Search for Safety

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Fleeing persecution as Rohingya Muslims, Nurul Haque and his family **escaped Myanmar** and found refuge in a Bangladeshi camp before arriving in the U.S. in **search of safety and a new beginning**

Thank you.

