



## Quick Facts– Refugees, Asylees, and Asylum Seekers

### Definitions according to the 1951 United Nations Convention:

A **refugee** is a person who is outside their country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country or to return there, for fear of persecution.

An **asylum seeker** is a person who has fled personal danger in their home country, has entered the U.S. directly in search of safety and protection and in order to stay must apply for asylum.

An **asylee** is a non-U.S. Citizen in the U.S. whose application for asylum has been granted by the Department of Justice and about whom a determination has been made that they are "unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin because of past persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution, based on the person's race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.



- 48,281 refugees were accepted for resettlement in the U.S. in 2007 (USCRI)
- 23,000 were granted asylum in the U.S. in 2007 (USCRI)
- 83,000 Asylum seekers had claims pending at the end of the 2007 year. (USCRI)
- Three options that refugees have are:
  - ◊ Repatriation– when refugees return to the country they fled.
  - ◊ Naturalization– when refugees decide to become a naturalized citizen of the host country or country of first asylum.
  - ◊ Resettlement– when refugees settle in the third country, typically the US or Europe. (USCRI)



2007 Refugee Resettlement Arrivals in Colorado	
Afghanistan	7
Burma	192
Burundi	79
Cambodia	4
Congo	2
Cuba	6
Democratic Republic of Congo	28
Equatorial Guinea	3
Eritrea	37
Ethiopia	34
Gabon	1
Guinea	1
Iran	23
Iraq	11
North Korea	2
Liberia	18
Malaysia	3
Mauritania	20
Rwanda	15
Sierra Leone	8
Somalia	199
Sudan	37
Tanzania	1
Thailand	133
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	78
Vietnam	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>954</b>
<i>Total for US (2007)</i>	<b>48,281</b>
<a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/d ata/fy2007RA.htm">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/d ata/fy2007RA.htm</a>	

Rights	Refugee	Asylee	Asylum Seeker	“Green card” Immigrant
Jobs	✓	✓	180 day wait*	✓
Freedom of movement	✓	✓	✓ US only	✓
Access Govt. funded services**	✓	✓	Emergency or public education only	✓
Run a business	✓	✓	N/A	✓
Own property	✓	✓	✓	✓

\*Employment Authorization Document (EAD) given only if the asylum application has been pending 180 days without a decision by an IJ  
 \*\* Gov. funded services such as Medicare, Medicaid, TANF, etc. These services are dependent upon case specific qualifications. Contact your provider for more information.

For more information:

- Rocky Mountain Survivor’s Center: [www.rmscdenver.org](http://www.rmscdenver.org)
- African Community Center: [www.africancommunitycenter.net](http://www.africancommunitycenter.net)
- Lutheran Family Services of Colorado: [www.lfsc.org](http://www.lfsc.org)
- Ecumenical Refugee Services: <http://www.ersden.org/>
- Jewish Family Services: <http://www.jewishfamilyservice.org/>