



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
*of* HEALTH SERVICES

# Alternative Immigration Pathways and the Welcome Corps

Savitri Tsering

Wisconsin State Refugee Health Coordinator

March 22, 2023

# Objectives

- Learn why the face of resettlement is changing
- Identify two new ways immigrants can come to America as parolees and refugees
  - Parole and attestation
  - Private sponsorship: Welcome Corps

Parole

# Uniting for Ukraine (U4U)



# Uniting for Ukraine (U4U)

## Required Attestation by U4U Program

Prior to departure **immunizations:**

- Measles
- Polio
- At least one dose of APPROVED covid 19 vaccine

After US arrival TB evaluation:

- IGRA blood test (2 years and older)

Both must be completed withing 90 days post US arrival.

# Uniting for Ukraine (U4U)

- Wisconsin TB Program received supplemental federal funding.
- Funding is available to LTHDs through a variety of programs:
  - Dispensary funds
  - Treatment assistance
  - Mini grants

Please contact [Pat Heger](mailto:Pat.Heger@dhs.wi.gov) at [DHSWITBProgram@dhs.wi.gov](mailto:DHSWITBProgram@dhs.wi.gov) for billing questions.

# Variable TB Incident Rates: Ukraine

- TB incident rate: 71 per 100,000
- New cases with multidrug-resistance (MDR): 13–33%
- Re-treated cases: 45%





Four additional countries' citizens can be paroled into the U.S.:

- Venezuela
- Cuba
- Haiti
- Nicaragua





## Other programs modeled after U4U:

- Require TB testing attestation.
- Recommend symptom screening and risk assessment.
- Provide *unequal* access to Medicaid.



# Ceilings: Maximum Arrivals per Country

Country of Origin	Initial Ceiling	Current Ceiling
Ukraine	100,000	None (2/14/2023: 213,372)
Venezuela	25,000	30,000 per month total from all four countries
Cuba		
Haiti		
Nicaragua		

# Variable TB Incident Rates: Venezuela

- TB incident rate:  
47 per 100,000
- New cases with  
MDR: 3.4%



# Variable TB Incident Rates: Cuba

- TB incident rate: 6.8 per 100,000
- New cases with MDR: 3.5%



# Variable TB Incident Rates: Haiti

- TB incident rate:  
159 per 100,000
- New cases with  
MDR: 3.9%



# Variable TB Incident Rates: Nicaragua

- TB incident rate: 45 per 100,000
- New cases with MDR: 1.4%



# Private Sponsorship: Welcome Corps



# WELCOME CORPS





# **What is Welcome Corps?**

U.S. Department of State's new private sponsorship model

## **Who can sponsor?**

Groups of five or more adult community members who live within or near the same community



# Welcome Corps

- Private sponsorship pilot starts April 2023.
- Refugees arrive under refugee status, not as humanitarian parolees.
- Sponsors take responsibility for services normally offered in the first 90 days by resettlement agencies.





# **Will sponsors need to provide financial assistance to refugees?**

Yes, sponsors must raise \$2,275 per case member in cash or in-kind contributions.



# **Will we be notified of who is coming into the community?**

Unclear: working with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to request state notification due to public health concerns.





# What will sponsors do?

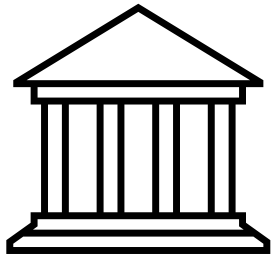
Assist with essential services for refugees during the first 90 days:

- Housing
- Connection to benefits and services, including health screening
- Enrollment in school and English as a second language courses
- Employment



# How is this different?

## Traditional resettlement



Federal Government



Resettlement  
Agency (RA)



RA is responsible for all  
core services in first  
90 days

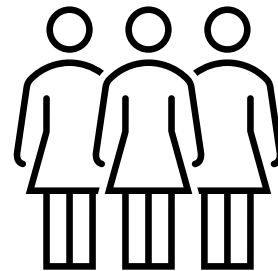
## Private sponsorship



Federal Government



Welcome  
Corps



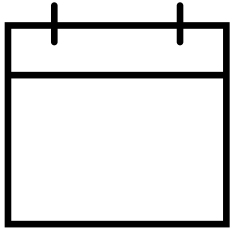
Sponsor Group



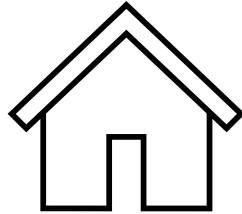
Sponsor is responsible  
for all core services in  
first 90 days



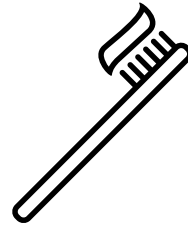
# Core Services



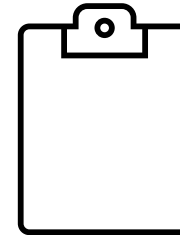
Airport  
pick up



Secure  
Housing



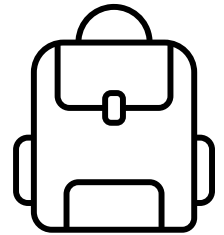
Furniture and  
household items



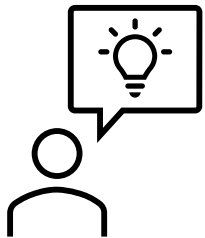
Apply for SSN  
and other  
documents



Access to  
health  
services



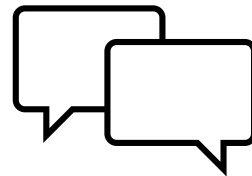
School  
enrollment



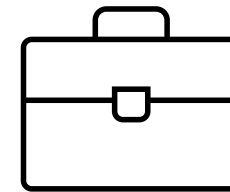
Help with  
English



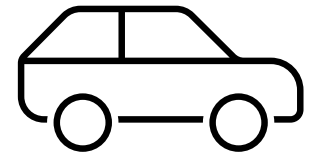
Community  
orientation



Access to  
interpretation services



Assist in finding  
employment



Support with  
transportation

# Welcome Corps

## Phase one: early 2023

- Sponsors are matched with refugees already approved for resettlement.
- Department of State begins matching private sponsors and refugees.

## Phase two: mid-2023

Private sponsors can identify refugees to refer to the U.S. for resettlement and support them.

# Welcome Corps

- Refugees coming through this pathway will need a domestic **refugee medical screening (RMS)** exam.
- RMS includes TB screening and immunizations.
- They will qualify for **Medicaid coverage**.

# Local and Tribal Health Departments' (LTHDs) Responsibility

- Know that refugees could resettle through private sponsorship in your community
- Offer services you would to anyone else
- Promote all health department services that can be provided (communicable disease follow up, PNCC, WIC, etc.)
- Help private sponsors connect to health care

# Alternative Immigration Pathways Recommendations for LTHDs

- Be aware of new immigration pathways and the potential to see new immigrants in Wisconsin communities.
- Recognize not all will have access to Medicaid and refugee RA support.
- Be knowledgeable where different immigrants may be referred to for TB attestation and screening, or the full refugee medical screening exam.

# Resources

## Parole

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announcement:  
<https://www.cbp.gov/sites/default/files/assets/documents/2023-Feb/DHS%20Cuba-Haiti-Nicaragua-Venezuela%20Parole%20Process%2020230105.pdf>
- US Citizen and Immigration Service (USCIS):  
<https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/alerts/processes-for-cubans-haitians-and-nicaraguans-and-eliminates-cap-for-venezuelans>  
<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/processes-for-cubans-haitians-nicaraguans-and-venezuelans/vaccine-attestation>

## Welcome Corps

- Department of State: <https://www.state.gov/launch-of-the-welcome-corps-private-sponsorship-of-refugees-2/>
- Welcome Corps Website: <https://welcomecorps.org/> and frequently asked questions <https://welcomecorps.org/resources/faqs/>

# Questions & Resources

## **Eligibility**

- [Income Maintenance and Tribal Agency Contact Information](#)
- [ORR Fact Sheet Cuban Haitian Entrants](#)
- [Covering Wisconsin](#)
  - [Navigator Map](#)
  - [County specific resources](#)

## **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

- [Uniting for Ukraine: Tuberculosis Information and Resources](#)

**Claire Leback** - Tuberculosis Program Manager

[claire.leback@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:claire.leback@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

**Ellena Keener** – Refugee Health, Tuberculosis and U4U Office Associate:

[ellena.keener@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:ellena.keener@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

**Savitri Tsering DHS to DCF Bureau of Refugee Programs:**

[savitri.tsering1@wisconsin.gov](mailto:savitri.tsering1@wisconsin.gov)