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Link to the updated version: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/fact-sheet/programs/uc/influx-care-facilities-fact-sheet>

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ORR Influx Care Facilities for Unaccompanied Children Fact Sheet

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is working diligently with its interagency partners to ensure that unaccompanied migrant children are placed with vetted family members or other sponsors in the U.S. as quickly and safely as possible.

Children age 17 and under who are unaccompanied by parents or other legal guardians and who have no lawful immigration status in the United States (unaccompanied children) and who are apprehended by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are transferred to the care and custody of the HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). HHS plays no role in the apprehension or detention of unaccompanied children prior to their referral to HHS custody. HHS does not provide care or custody for adult non-citizens or family units that include adults.

ORR is legally required to provide for the care and custody of all unaccompanied children referred to ORR until they are placed with a vetted sponsor, usually a parent or relative, while their immigration cases proceed.

ORR operates a network of 289 facilities/programs in 29 states and has a proven track record of accountability and transparency for program operations, as well as being a good neighbor in the communities where facilities are located. The impact of these shelters on the local community is minimal. Unaccompanied children remain under staff supervision at all times. HHS works in close coordination with local officials on security and safety of the children and community. The unaccompanied children in ORR custody do not attend local public schools. HHS arranges for the security of unaccompanied children. On-site security is 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As of today, there are 8,042 children in ORR care.

While ORR has worked to build up its standard bed capacity, additional capacity is urgently needed to manage the increasing numbers of unaccompanied children referrals from DHS. In preparation for the potential need for additional beds and to provide services and care that align with child welfare best practices, HHS opened several influx care facilities (ICFs), which offer the full range of services offered in ORR's network of care. ORR is committed to ensuring ICFs meet or exceed state licensing standards.

Operating Influx Care Facilities

Pecos ICF

On April 5, 2021, HHS opened an emergency intake site (EIS) for unaccompanied children at the Target Lodge Pecos North property in Pecos, Texas (Pecos). On June 4, 2022, the site transitioned to an influx care facility (ICF) which provides shelter for boys and girls, 13 to 17 years old. The facility has a funded capacity of 1,000 beds. Today, 114 children are in care at the site.

Dimmit County ICF

On October 13, 2023, HHS opened the Dimmit County ICF in Carrizo Springs, Texas. The facility, which provides shelter for unaccompanied children, boys and girls, 13 to 17 years old, has a funded capacity of 250 beds. Today, 22 children are in care at the site.

ORR ICF at Fort Bliss

HHS activated property on Fort Bliss, near El Paso, Texas, on March 30, 2021, to serve as an emergency intake site (EIS) for unaccompanied children. On May 30, 2022, the site transitioned to an influx care facility (ICF), which provided shelter for boys and girls, 13 to 17 years old. On June 30, 2023, the facility was placed in warm status. In September 2023, ORR began the wind-down process, and the ORR ICF at Fort Bliss is now closed.

Greensboro ICF

HHS has secured a facility in Greensboro, North Carolina as the site of the future Greensboro ICF. When opened, the ICF will provide shelter for boys and girls, 13 to 17 years old, and has a capacity of up to 800 beds. There are currently no children in care at the site, and no current activation date. Opening the facility will depend on a variety of factors including capacity requirements and UC referral rates, among other considerations. Current facilities on campus will be utilized for education, housing, mental health, medical, and case management needs.

Unaccompanied Children Care

Unaccompanied children are provided clean and comfortable sleeping quarters, meals, toiletries, laundry services, educational and recreational activities, and access to medical and mental health services. All children are tested for COVID-19 before being transported to and upon arrival at the influx care facility (ICF). All ORR-funded care providers, including ICFs, are implementing a COVID-19 health screening protocol that follows current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines for preventing and controlling communicable diseases. Children who test positive after arrival are isolated at the facility for their welfare and that of other children and staff. Unaccompanied children receive medical screenings and any follow-up care needed for injuries or illnesses.

Identifying Sponsors

One of ORR's priorities is ensuring the safe placement of unaccompanied children with a vetted sponsor. In each of the ORR programs, case managers work with the children to identify a sponsor in the U.S. Most sponsors are parents or close relatives. If the sponsor is suitable and can provide a safe place for the child to live while they go through their immigration proceedings – the child is unified with the sponsor. As part of the placement process, potential sponsors must undergo a

criminal public records check, and in most cases, a sex offender registry check. When there is a safety concern for release to a related sponsor or when considering release to an unrelated sponsor, ORR also conducts background checks on adult household members and individuals identified in a potential sponsor's care plan.

Case management is part of the ICF's operations. All efforts are being made to safely release children to sponsors as quickly as possible or transfer them to a care provider in ORR's standard shelter network.

Parents or Other Potential Sponsors Seeking Information about a Child

If a parent is trying to contact their child in ORR care, the parent can call the ORR National Call Center, (800) 203-7001, or email information@ORRNCC.com for assistance. The call center confirms whether a child is in ORR's care and will send information in real time regarding the caller's inquiry to the facility in which the child is located. A caller may provide their name, documentation information, background on relationship with child, etc. This information is collected by the call center and sent to the facility. The call center does not verify or authenticate relationships and therefore CANNOT share the location or other personal information regarding the child with the caller. The ORR facility is responsible for responding to a parent/sponsor/legal representative and collects information necessary to verify the relationship and place the child with the parent/guardian/sponsor.

Protecting Privacy

Part of ORR's mission is to protect the privacy and ensure the safety of children. Unaccompanied children have different reasons for undertaking the long and dangerous journey to the United States, but in many cases, they are coming to join a parent or other family member. Often the unaccompanied child's parents find someone to bring the child to the United States. Children may also be escaping violent communities or abusive family relationships, but the choice to come to the United States for safe haven, instead of another community or country they travel through, is in many cases driven by U.S. family connections. Their ages and the hazardous journey they take, make unaccompanied children especially vulnerable to human trafficking, exploitation, and abuse.

To safeguard the privacy of unaccompanied children in ORR care, and consistent with respect to the treatment of any minor child in the U.S., it is ORR's policy towards the media not to discuss individual cases and to prohibit photography, recordings, videos, or any other images of unaccompanied children to protect privacy and minimize potential dangers to the child and the child's sponsor.

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