ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Refugee Resettlement | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr

Services for Older Refugees Program

Policy Letter 22-08

Initially published November 10, 2021;
Revised December 8, 2021[1]
Revised January 27, 2025 [2]

This policy letter (PL) defines the Refugee Support Services (RSS) set-aside program, Services for Older Refugees (SOR),[3] which provides states[4] funding for activities that support integration and wellness for refugees aged 60 and above. This PL supersedes ORR PL 19-03, providing guidance regarding SOR's eligible populations, goals and services, equity and inclusion considerations, and reporting and monitoring requirements. For information about funding allocations, see the relevant fiscal year Dear Colleague Letter(s) on SOR funding allocations on the ORR website.

Eligible Populations

SOR program services may be provided to all ORR-eligible[5] [6] individuals aged 60 or above. States may provide services to eligible individuals within the first 5 years of their arrival or date of eligibility but should prioritize services for those who have been in the United States for 1 year or less.

Program Goals and Services

The SOR program's goals are to increase integration and independent healthy living for older ORR-eligible populations. To accomplish these goals, a state must provide the following SOR services in accordance with 45 CFR Part 400 and are required to ensure that it or its subrecipient agencies:

1. Provide case management, to begin by performing an initial assessment of the needs and goals of the individual.
2. Develop a plan to meet those needs through services and activities.
3. Refer the individual, and facilitate the individual's access, to the relevant services and activities.
4. Document services provided and activities.
5. Assess the progress of each SOR enrollee toward meeting their needs and goals.

States should focus their SOR services and activities on the following areas, according to the needs of its participants:

- **Helping older ORR-eligible populations access mainstream aging services in the community**, through activities such as providing information about, or improving access to

[1] The two December 8, 2021 revisions are annotated and are described within footnotes 6 and 7.

[2] January 27, 2025: Removed former section on equity and inclusion

[3] Pursuant to section 412(c) of the Refugee Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(c)), Congress authorized the Director of ORR (hereinafter "Director") to enter into contracts to provide services to address specific needs recognized by the Director.

[4] Throughout this PL, states refers to states and replacement designees that receive RSS funding from ORR to administer the SOR program.

[5] For a description of ORR-eligible individuals, see ORR PL 16-01, its attached Documentation Guide, the ORR PL 16-01 FAQs, and ORR PL 22-02, as well as 45 CFR § 400.43.

[6] On December 8, 2021, ORR revised footnote 4 by striking the reference to rescinded ORR PL 21-07 and replacing it with ORR PL 22-02.

information, about supportive services, nutrition services, meal delivery, prevention of elder abuse, senior community centers, and intergenerational activities.

- **Providing older ORR-eligible populations with appropriate services that are not available in the community,** such as interpretation and translation services.

- **Creating opportunities for older ORR-eligible populations to live independently as long as possible**, through forms of assistance such as transportation, home care, adult day care, and respite care.

- **Developing opportunities for older ORR-eligible populations to connect with their communities to avoid isolation,** through resources such as mental health support, community navigators, and opportunities forengagement in social and cultural activities.

- **Assisting older ORR-eligible populations on the path to citizenship to naturalize, especially those at risk oflosing Supplemental Security Income or other federal benefits**, through activities such as civics instruction, counseling, and application assistance. Note: funding from the SOR program cannot be used to pay application fees for citizenship examinations and should not duplicate citizenship services provided by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The above-mentioned examples are not exhaustive.

States must provide all services in accordance with 45 CFR Part 400. States should direct funding to localities with the greatest need for SOR services based on existing resources and the concentration of newly arrived SOR-eligible populations.

Reporting and Monitoring
States must describe SOR activities in their state plans and should ensure appropriate mechanisms to assess the need for, and track, SOR services.

States must[7] develop and track specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound annual program outcomes for all SOR activities. States must report the number of clients served, the type and frequency of services provided, outcomes, accomplishments, and challenges in the ORR-6 Program Performance Report semi-annual schedules A and D, and submit the ORR-6 Annual Service Plan. States must also submit the annual RSS Sub-Grantee Report (OMB Clearance Number 0970-0556). These forms, instructions, and the reporting schedule are available on the ORR website.

States are required to submit data for all ORR-eligible population enrollments, including SOR enrollees, within ORR's State Arrival and Service Data Collection Process, using the ORR-5 data collection form. Instructions for the ORR-5 are also on the ORR website.

States must also submit the Standard Form 425 Federal Financial Report through the Payment Management System (PMS) on a quarterly basis. For questions regarding PMS, please contact the PMS Help Desk at 877.614.5533 or pmssupport@psc.gov.

ORR will monitor the SOR program through routine monitoring to ensure that states are in compliance with this policy letter, and the services provided are in alignment with specific activities described in their respective state plan. During monitoring, ORR will review a state's annual program outcomes and progress towards each goal. Additionally, ORR will assess how services are provided, identify promising practices, and observe trends for further analysis and information sharing. States are responsible for monitoring sub-recipients for compliance and achievement of objectives as outlined in their approved state plan.

Resources

If you have questions about this PL, contact RefugeePolicy@acf.hhs.gov. ORR also encourages you to utilize ORR's Technical Assistance provider(s) for additional resources on serving refugees.

Sincerely,

Cindy Huang
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement

[7] On December 8, 2021, ORR revised this sentence by replacing "should" with "must."