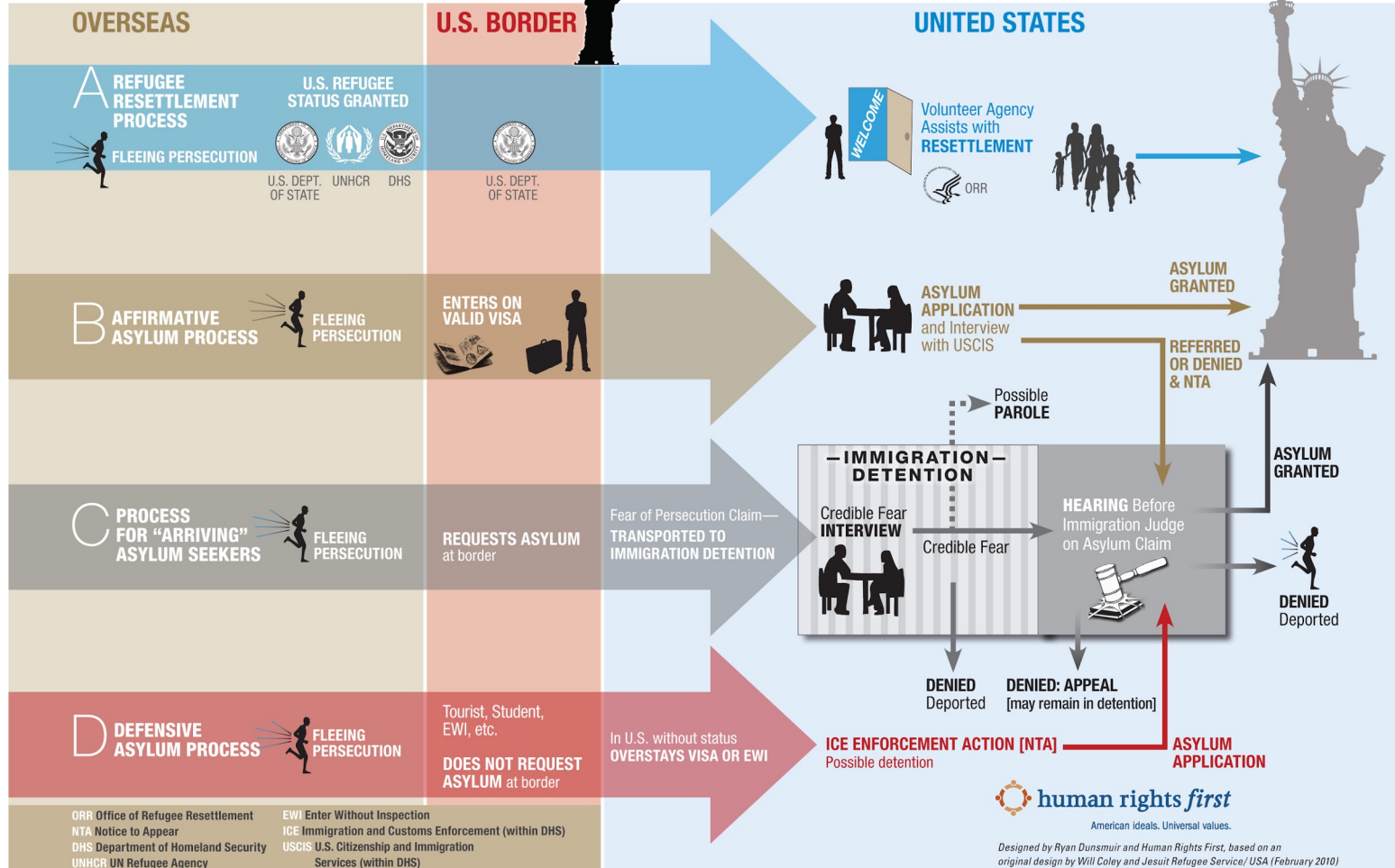

Local Collaboration in Response to Afghan Refugees Arriving in the Alamo City

Tino Gallegos
Immigration Liaison
City of San Antonio

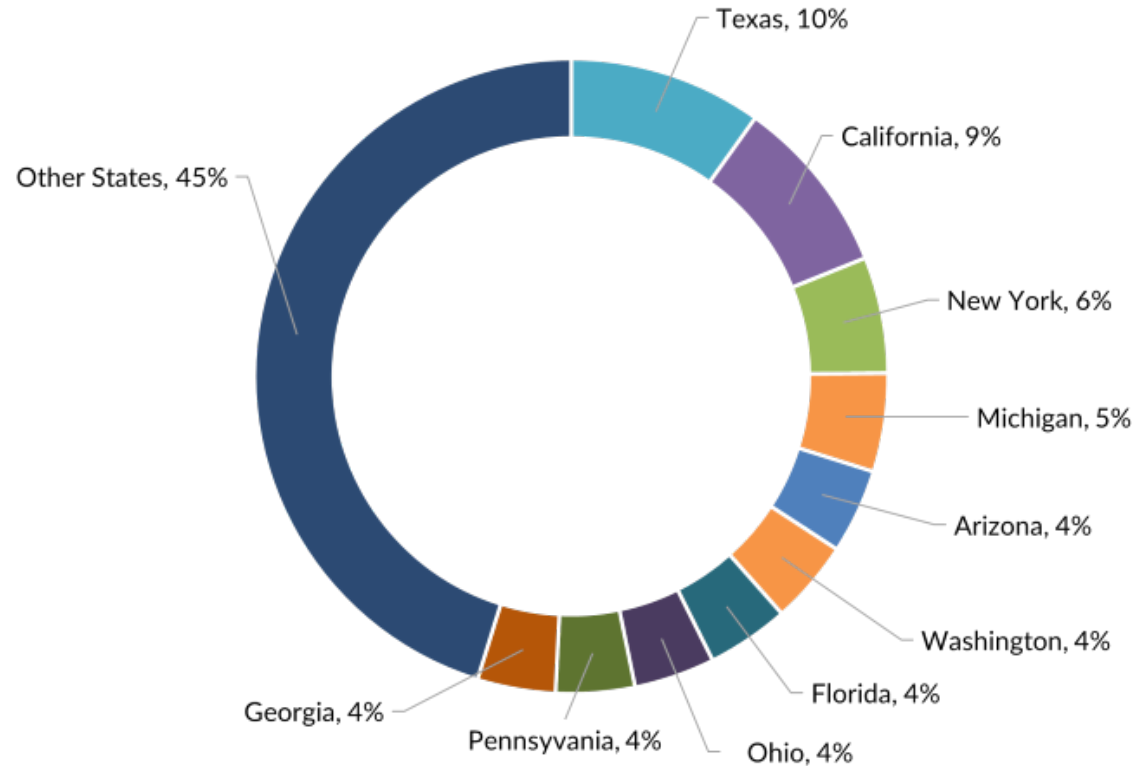


OFFICE OF THE IMMIGRATION LIAISON

How Refugees Get to the U.S.



Since 2010, Texas has resettled 10% of all refugees, more than any other state.



Source: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states-2021#top-states>

Why do Refugees choose San Antonio?

- ★ Texas has been the top destination for resettled refugees since 2010
- ★ San Antonio has historically had a robust refugee resettlement infrastructure
- ★ Military City USA was already a destination for Afghans and Iraqis who assisted the military during the Global War on Terror
- ★ San Antonio has received both planned and unplanned arrivals, because refugees in other parts of the US move here

Anniversary of the Kabul Evacuation

- ★ The Taliban took over after the U.S. military left last August.
- ★ Some Afghans were in the process of obtaining SIV status
- ★ Some Afghans had not applied for any status
- ★ All had to be moved quickly outside of the country



Photo: Senior Airman Brennen Lege/U.S. Air Force
via AP







How many Afghan Evacuees arrived in San Antonio?

- ★ Texas is again a top destination for Afghans
- ★ The three federally funded resettlement agencies reported approximately 1,700 Afghans evacuees arriving through formal resettlement since August
- ★ Estimated 2,000 – 2,500 Afghans who arrive outside of the formal system

Refugees in San Antonio

Principal Countries of Origin for Resettled Refugees 2017-2020

	Afghanistan	1st
	Iraq	2nd
	Myanmar (Burma)	3rd
	Iran	4th

San Antonio's Refugee serving organizations

★ Federally funded

- Catholic Charities of San Antonio – <https://ccaosa.org/refugee-resettlement/>, 210-222-1294
- RAICES - <https://www.raicestexas.org/what-we-do/social-services/refugee-resettlement/>, 210-858-5640
- Refugee Services of Texas - <https://www.rstx.org/locations/san-antonio.html>, 469-640-3027, sanantonio@rstx.org

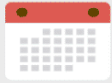
★ Not federally funded

- Center for Refugee Services - <https://sarefugees.org/>, 210-949-0062

Refugee Resettlement at a Glance

brought to you by Catholic Charities, Diocese of Camden Refugee and Immigration Services

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL



DAY OF ARRIVAL



Receive word of a family's arrival date and size from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and begin preparations. Contact any friends or family members.

Find an apartment at a fair market rate, in a safe neighborhood, with access to groceries, schools, transportation and services.

Furnish the apartment with all furniture and household supplies according to the family's size.

Pick up the family from the airport. An interpreter or someone who speaks their native language must be present.

Provide a hot meal the night of arrival and groceries to last a day. Make a follow-up home visit within 24 hours and take the family grocery shopping.

Cultural orientation begins on day one. Walk the family through emergency procedure and cultural norms the night of their arrival.

FIRST 10 DAYS



Arrange job interviews and ensure that the refugee secures employment.



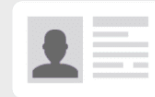
Enroll children in school within 30 days. Provide ongoing school support, including educating parents on the U.S. school system, interpretation at parent-teacher meetings, homework help and school supplies.



Enroll the family in English (ESL) classes. Most refugees arrive speaking little to no English. Provide interpretation for all appointments.



Help the refugees sign their lease, register their mailbox, and sign on to utilities. Teach them how to use public transportation. Provide information on budgeting.



Help the family apply for social services like cash assistance and food stamps. Obtain work documents: employment authorization and a social security card.



Arrange medical appointments for all family members and provide transportation. Children need vaccinations to begin school. Help the family apply for health insurance.



Engage donations and volunteers. Connect the refugee with community resources.



Continue cultural orientation over the course of three official sessions and a final assessment. Cultural education and orientation should be ongoing with every interaction.



FIRST 90 DAYS AND BEYOND

Provide case management to respond to any unmet needs. Make available counseling services and support.



Continue providing ESL, transportation, medical case management, transportation, interpretation services, school support, immigration legal services, cultural orientation...

Refugees must be self-sufficient within 90 days. After that their government assistance runs out.

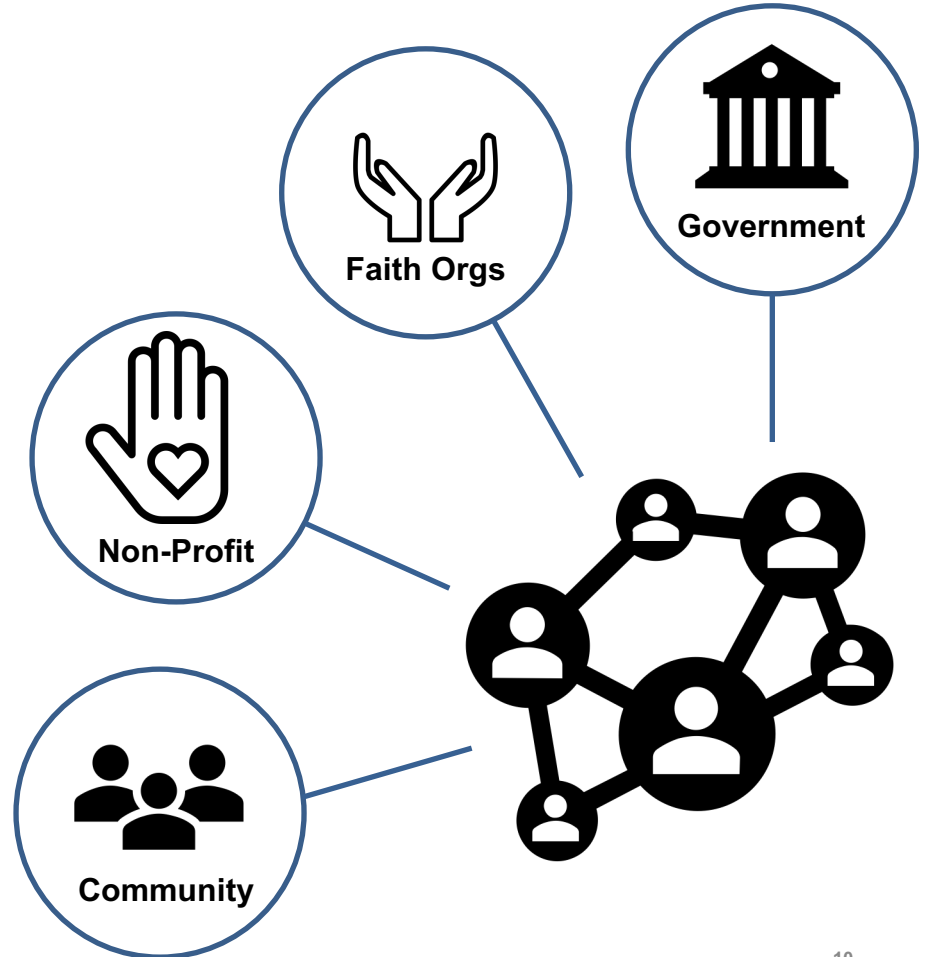
Remain part of the refugees' community and a primary contact as any life situations arise. Refugees lack a support network when they arrive. We are the people they trust.

SUPPORT SERVICES:
Up to 5 years
(or more)

Learn more and get involved: [CatholicCharitiesCamden.org/Refugee-Immigration](https://www.CatholicCharitiesCamden.org/Refugee-Immigration)

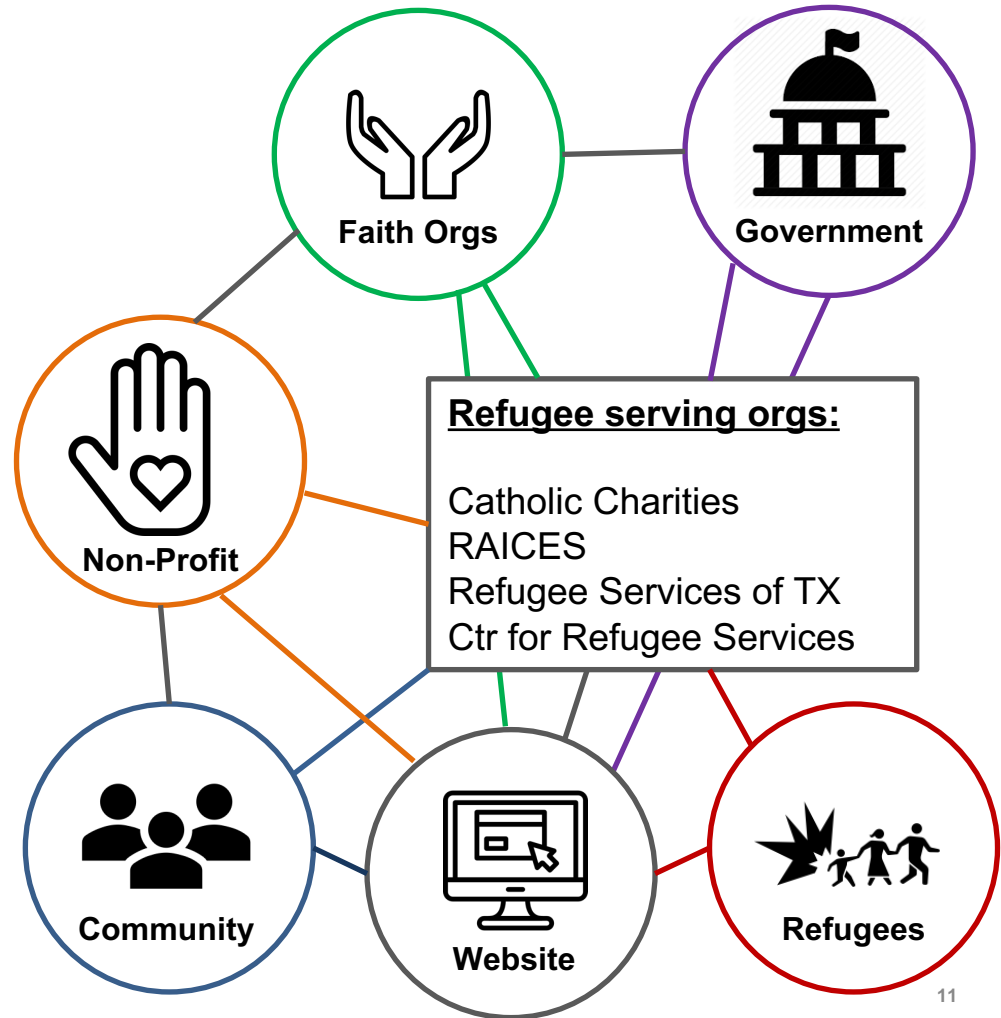
Why Collaborate?

- ★ No one can do it alone
- ★ Channel community energy and resources to meet the most urgent needs
- ★ Have prior collaboration models (Migrant Resource Center)
- ★ Everyone does what they do best



ARRC Model

- ★ Afghan Refugee Response Collaboration (ARRC)
- ★ Community Support to Refugee serving agencies
- ★ Support between organizations
- ★ <https://afghansinsa.org/>
- ★ Bi-weekly meetings



Collaborations seeded by ARRC

- ★ Food Bank storage of donations
- ★ Food Bank staff assisting with benefits applications
- ★ LDS Church volunteers assembling furniture/setting up apartments
- ★ CRS signing up APA families for Carelink
- ★ Communities of Welcome program with Culturingua, Interfaith San Antonio Alliance, and City of San Antonio

How to help

- ★ Join the ARRC
- ★ Communities of Welcome: make friends with a newcomer family, visit <https://www.culturingua.com/welcome> or contact Nadia Mavrakis nadia@culturingua.com
- ★ Hire a refugee
- ★ Volunteer & Donate to Refugee Serving Organizations

Thank You

Mayra Montero

Immigration Liaison

mayra.montero@sanantonio.gov

210-207-8993 (office)

[https://www.sanantonio.gov/humanservices/
ImmigrationServices](https://www.sanantonio.gov/humanservices/ImmigrationServices)

