

December 18, 2019

TO THE HONORABLE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE BROWN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Ladies and Gentlemen:

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CONSENTING TO CONTINUE TO
ACCEPT REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT IN BROWN COUNTY**

WHEREAS, approximately 14 refugees per year were resettled into Brown County over the course of the last five years; and

WHEREAS, due to a recent Executive Order signed by President Donald J. Trump, refugees may no longer be resettled into localities unless the prior written consent of the highest elected local official, here, the Brown County Executive, is obtained; and

WHEREAS, Governor Tony Evers has requested that, on or before 12-20-2019, the Brown County Executive provide written consent to continue to allow for the resettlement of refugees in Brown County, and the State of Wisconsin has estimated that Brown County would likely receive between 10 and 20 refugees for resettlement in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the decision of whether or not to allow refugee resettlement to continue in Brown County is a policy matter for the Brown County Board of Supervisors to determine, as opposed to being an administrative matter for the County Executive to determine; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable for the County Board to authorize and direct that the County Executive provide written consent to Governor Evers to allow refugees to continue to be resettled in Brown County in 2020.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Brown County Board of Supervisors hereby authorizes and directs that the Brown County Executive provide written consent to

Governor Evers on or before 12-20-2019 to allow refugees to continue to be resettled in Brown County in 2020 and beyond.

Fiscal Note: This resolution does not require an appropriation from the General Fund.

Respectfully submitted,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Approved By:



 TROY STRECKENBACH
 COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Date Signed: 12/23/19

19-137R

Authored by Corporation Counsel as directed by Executive Committee on 12-09-2019

Approved by Corporation Counsel

***Amended at the Brown County Board meeting on December 18, 2019**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ROLL CALL # 116
Roll Call Vote Taken

Motion made by Supervisor Tran

Seconded by Supervisor Sieber

SUPERVISORS	DIST. #	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	EXCUSED
SIEBER	1				
DE WANE	2				
NICHOLSON	3				
HOYER	4				
GRUSZYNSKI	5				
LEFEBVRE	6				
ERICKSON	7				
BORCHARDT	8				
EVANS	9				
VANDER LEEST	10				
BUCKLEY	11				
LANDWEHR	12				
DANTINNE, JR	13				

SUPERVISORS	DIST. #	AYES	NAYS	ABSTAIN	EXCUSED
BRUSKY	14				
BALLARD	15				
KASTER	16				
VAN DYCK	17				
LINSSEN	18				
KNEISZEL	19				
DESLAURIERS	20				
TRAN	21				
MOYNIHAN, JR.	22				
SUENNEN	23				
SCHADEWALD	24				
LUND	25				
DENEYS	26				

Total Votes Cast 26
 Motion: Adopted Defeated Tabled

CORPORATION COUNSEL

Brown County

305 EAST WALNUT STREET
P.O. BOX 23600
GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN 54305-3600



David P. Hemery
Corporation Counsel

PHONE: (920) 448-4006
FAX: (920) 448-4003
EMAIL: David.Hemery@co.brown.wi.us

RESOLUTION/ORDINANCE SUBMISSION TO COUNTY BOARD

DATE: 12-12-2019
REQUEST TO: County Board (as directed by Executive Committee on 12-09-2019)
MEETING DATE: 12-18-2019
REQUEST FROM: Dave Hemery, as directed by Executive Committee on 12-09-2019
Corp Counsel
REQUEST TYPE: New resolution Revision to resolution
 New ordinance Revision to ordinance

TITLE: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CONSENTING TO CONTINUE TO
ACCEPT REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT IN BROWN COUNTY

ISSUE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

To allow for the continued resettlement of refugees in Brown County in 2020

ACTION REQUESTED:

Consideration and action

FISCAL IMPACT:

NOTE: This fiscal impact portion is initially completed by requestor, but verified by the DOA and updated if necessary.

1. What is the amount of the fiscal impact? \$0.00
2. Is it currently budgeted? Yes No N/A (if \$0 fiscal impact)
 - a. If yes, in which account? Postage
 - b. If no, how will the impact be funded? _____
 - c. If funding is from an external source, is it one-time or continuous?
3. Please provide supporting documentation of fiscal impact determination.

COPY OF RESOLUTION OR ORDINANCE IS ATTACHED

Background of Refugee Resettlement and Refugee Services in the U.S., WI, and Brown County

Refugee: A person who has been forced to flee their country due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or their political opinion – 1951 Refugee Convention.

Refugee Resettlement Process in the United States: The current process of resettling refugees in the U.S. was established by the Refugee Act of 1980. Among other things, the Refugee Act of 1980:

1. Created the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which funds and oversees programs designed to improve the employability, self-sufficiency, and integration of refugees into the United States.
2. Set the ceiling of refugee admissions of each Federal Fiscal year at 50,000, unless a different number is recommended by the President and approved by Congress. This process is referred to as the “Presidential Determination.” The Presidential Determination for FFY 2019 was 30,000 and will be 18,000 in FFY 2020. By comparison, the Presidential Determinations for FFY 2015 and FFY 2016 were 70,000 and 85,000, respectively.

Overseas Background Checks and Screenings: The refugee admissions process is overseen by the U.S. Department of State. To be admitted as a refugee to the United States, a person must first be officially granted “refugee” status by the United Nations, or one of two smaller international organizations. Then, the person must apply for resettlement at one of the nine overseas Refugee Support Centers, contracted by the Department of State. To be approved a refugee must pass multiple rounds of health and security screenings conducted by as many as eight federal entities including the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, and the National Counterterrorism Center. The application, screening, and background check process typically takes at least two years.

Initial Resettlement Services: Once a refugee is approved to be resettled, their case is assigned to one of nine national Resettlement Agencies (also referred to as Voluntary Agencies, or “Volags”). Each refugee family or individual is then assigned to a local affiliate office somewhere in the U.S. The specific location a refugee is assigned to depends on such things as the presence of relatives or friends already in the U.S., or the presence of a refugee or immigrant community with the same or similar ethnic background to the refugee being resettled.

Local Volag affiliates are responsible for coordinating initial “Reception and Placement” services for all newly arriving refugees. These services include arranging safe and affordable housing, provision of basic household furnishings, coordinating health screenings, providing cultural orientation lessons, enrolling children in school, and referring adults for employment and English language services. All Reception and Placement Services must be provided within the first 30-90 days after the refugee arrives to the U.S.

In addition to these services, refugees are also awarded a one-time stipend of \$900-\$1100 per person. This stipend is typically used to pay for the refugee’s initial rent and security deposit for their first apartment, or for other initial resettlement necessities.

State Services: Additional supportive services are available to refugees through funding provided by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). In Wisconsin, as in most states, ORR funded programs are

overseen by the State Refugee Coordinator. In Wisconsin the State Refugee Coordinator is the Refugee Programs Section Chief, within the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

Wisconsin uses ORR funds to contract with over thirty local service providers who offer services to refugees via six separate programs. These programs and services aim to improve outcomes for refugees in such areas as employment, English skills, all aspects of health, K-12 education, citizenship, community integration, youth mentorship, older adult integration, and other social service needs.

In addition to these services, the State of Wisconsin also uses ORR funds to administer cash and medical benefits programs to some refugees. These programs are only available to those refugees who do not qualify for other similar benefits programs (such as W-2 or BadgerCare Plus), and only offer benefits for the first eight months after a refugee arrives to the U.S.

All refugee-specific programs administered by the State of Wisconsin are 100% federally funded. No state or local tax dollars are used in providing these programs.

Work Authorization, Green Cards, and Citizenship: All refugees are fully authorized to work from the first day they arrive in the U.S. From their date of arrival refugees are granted all the same rights as Lawful Permanent Residents (commonly called "Green Card holders") and must apply for Lawful Permanent Resident status (i.e., their "Green Card") one year after arrival. Refugees are encouraged to apply for U.S. citizenship once they have been in the U.S. for at least four and a half years.

Brown County Services and Recent Arrivals: In the city of Green Bay and Brown County, the State of Wisconsin contracts with Forward Service Corporation (FSC) to provide services through the Refugee Support Services (RSS) program. Through RSS, FSC provides employment services, interpretation, translation, health coordination, general case management, and other supportive services to refugees in Brown County. FSC also operates the cash and medical programs for those refugees who are eligible.

The majority of refugees in Brown County were not resettled there directly from overseas. Instead, these refugees were initially resettled someplace else in the U.S., then chose to move to Brown County because of the employment opportunities, affordable lifestyle, and welcoming community that Brown County offers. Refugees that choose to move to a new state after their initial resettlement in the U.S. are commonly referred to as "secondary migrants."

When refugees are resettled directly to the city of Green Bay or Brown County from overseas, Catholic Charities of Green Bay (CCGB) acts as their local "Volag" affiliate. While it is not a full refugee resettlement office, CCGB is contracted by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, one of the nine national Volags, to operate a "remote placement" program. Remote placement programs resettle refugees near a relative or friend when there is no other local affiliate of a national Volag where the friend or relative lives.

In the last five years an average of 14 refugees have arrived to Brown County directly from overseas.