

Services for Older Refugees Program

Policy Letter 19-03

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Types: [Policy & Guidance](#)

Audiences: [Refugees](#)

This policy letter describes the Refugee Support Services set-aside program, the Services for Older Refugees (SOR) program. The SOR program provides funding for activities that support integration and wellness for older refugees.¹ The letter defines SOR's goals, eligible populations, reporting, and monitoring. For information about funding allocations, please see the Dear Colleague letter on SOR Funding Allocations on the ORR website.

Program Goals and Services

The SOR program's goals are to increase integration and independent healthy living for older ORR-eligible populations.² To accomplish these goals, grantees that receive SOR funding should focus their efforts in following areas:

- Helping older ORR-eligible populations access mainstream aging services in the community such as information about supportive services, nutrition services, meal delivery, elder abuse, senior community centers, and intergenerational activities.
- Providing older ORR-eligible populations with appropriate services that are not available in the community.
 - Examples include interpretation and translation services.
- Creating opportunities for older ORR-eligible populations to live independently as long as possible.
 - Examples include transportation, home care, adult day care, and respite care.

- Developing opportunities for older ORR-eligible populations to connect with their communities to avoid isolation.
 - Examples include mental health support, community navigators, and opportunities for engagement in social and cultural activities.
- Assisting older ORR-eligible populations on the path to citizenship, especially those at risk of losing Supplemental Security Income or other federal benefits, to naturalize.
 - Examples include civics instructions, counseling, and application assistance. Note, funding from the SOR program cannot be used to pay application fees for citizenship examinations and not duplicate citizenship services provided by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The above-mentioned examples are not exhaustive.

Grantees must provide services in accordance with 45 C.F.R. Part 400. Grantees should implement systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the services provided. Grantees should direct funding to localities with the greatest need for SOR services.

Eligible Populations

SOR program services may be provided to all ORR-eligible individuals aged 60 or above. Grantees may provide services to older ORR-eligible individuals within the first five years of their arrival but should prioritize services to individuals who have been in the United States for one year or less.

Reporting and Monitoring

Grantees must report all SOR activities, accomplishments and challenges in the ORR-6. The ORR-6 forms, instructions, and reporting schedule are available on the ORR web site. The narrative must include information about the number of clients served, the type and frequency of services provided, program initiatives, accomplishments, and challenges in administering the program.

ORR monitors the SOR program to ensure that the services provided meet the needs of ORR-eligible populations. ORR will assess how services are provided and identify promising practices and trends for further analysis and information sharing. Grantees are responsible for monitoring sub-grantees.

If you have questions about the information in this Policy Letter, please contact your Regional Representative.

E. Scott Lloyd, Director
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Footnotes:

1. Section 412(c) of the Refugee Act authorizes the Director of ORR to allocate funds to states for specific needs recognized by the director.
2. For a description of ORR-eligible individuals please see Policy Letter 16-1, 45 CFR 400.43, 45 CFR 400.111, and 45 CFR 400.208.