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**STATE REFUGEE OFFICE MANUAL**  
**REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

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**CHAPTER II – REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM \***

**CHANGE #2-2024**

**August 1, 2024**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Refugees who resettle in the United States have often been living in poor conditions, many in refugee camps, with inadequate or no health care. Since restoration of good health is a key factor in becoming self-sufficient, refugees may apply for medical assistance at the local Departments of Social Services (DSS).

**Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)** is health care coverage established for refugees who do not meet qualifications for any other health care program. Refugees must **FIRST** be evaluated for all Medicaid program for any of the mainstream Medicaid programs {such as: Family and Children’s Medicaid (MAF) i.e. Medicaid Pregnant Women (MPW), Aged, Blind, and Disabled (Adult) Medicaid, and Children’s Health Insurance Program (NC CHIP)} and determined ineligible PRIOR to being placed on RMA.

Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) is not a Medicaid Program.

**Note:** If the refugee is an adult who is pregnant, has minor children, or is between the ages of 19 and 20, **have limited income, that** adult or adult and minor children are **likely** eligible for a Medicaid program. Refer to the Family and Children’s Medicaid Manual and the Adult Medicaid Manual for more information regarding the Medicaid programs that would be most appropriate for these individuals.

RMA is a short-term transitional program available for the first twelve months a refugee resides in the United States. In determining eligibility for RMA, the county DSS must comply with the policies and procedures described in this chapter of the North Carolina Refugee Assistance Manual. In providing RMA to refugees, the agency must provide at least the same services in the same manner and to the same extent as provided under the North Carolina Medicaid program.

**NOTE:** References will be made, throughout this chapter, to the appropriate section of the NC Medicaid Manual for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (Adult) whenever the RMA program has policies and procedures in common. Exceptions or special rules for RMA will be noted.

**NOTE:** Throughout this Chapter, the term “refugee” will refer to all populations/groups listed below, who are ORR-eligible with a qualified status, exempt from the 5-year ban time frames and potentially eligible for RMA. See Chapter I., Section III. for detailed definitions and acceptable documentation.

- Refugees
- Asylees
- Cuban and Haitian Entrants
- Certain Amerasians (from Vietnam)
- Victims of Human Trafficking
- Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Holders from Iraq and Afghanistan

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**NOTE:** SIV holders and potentially transition to Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) status within the first ninety (90) days, after date of entry into the United States.

- Afghan Special Immigrant Parole (SI/SQ)
- Afghan individuals with Special Immigrant (SI) Conditional Permanent Residence (CPR)
- Afghan Humanitarian Parolees (AHP)
- Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (UHP)
- Non-Ukrainian Individuals displaced from Ukraine.

**NOTE:** Current, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) status holders may have held one of the above statuses prior to adjusting to LPR status.

## II. ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

Refugees can apply for the same benefits and service programs that are available to U.S. citizens. The case manager must first determine whether a refugee individual is eligible for any of the mainstream Medicaid programs, Effective December 1, 2023, NC expanded Medicaid, and this expanded Medicaid processes will likely impact the eligibility determinations for refugee applicants.:

- Family and Children's Medicaid (MAF)
- Medicaid Pregnant Women (MPW)
- Aged, Blind, and Disabled (Adult) Medicaid (MAABD, MAA, MAB, MAD)
- Children's Health Insurance Program (NC CHIP)

If found ineligible, then they must be evaluated for RMA eligibility according to the criteria below.

**NOTE:** If the applicant is found ONLY eligible for an NC Medicaid Program other than those listed above, such as the Family Planning Program (FPP), use the product exclusion evidence for the FPP from the case and an ineligible decision should occur and/or deny case for already receiving, an application will show disposed. Key an RMA application and approve. This claimant (as stated in NC FAST system) can apply for Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA).

**Note:** ORR population who are no longer eligible for Medicaid programs because of income can receive the remaining months of benefits on RMA.

Other exceptions for ORR Population to receive RMA for example.

- SAVE Ran makes them ineligible for Medicaid Programs.

(The local DSS must show how they assisted the client to obtain what documentation or information they needed)

**NOTE:** See Chapter I. Section II. to determine refugees, have acceptable documentation and are eligible for RMA.

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**A. ORR-Eligible Immigration Status Verification**

Individuals must have the proper immigration documentation reflecting refugee status. Qualified groups, potentially eligible for RMA are Refugees, Asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, Certain Amerasians (from Vietnam), Victims of Human Trafficking, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) Holders from Iraq and Afghanistan, Afghan Special Immigrant Parole (SI/SQ), Afghan individuals with Special Immigrant (SI) Conditional Permanent Residence (CPR), Afghan Humanitarian Parolees (AHP), Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (UHP) and Non-Ukrainian Individuals displaced from Ukraine. See Chapter I. Section II. for detailed definitions and acceptable documentation.

**B. Eligibility Timeframe of Coverage**

An individual can apply for RMA at the local DSS where the applicant resides within the first twelve (12) months of arrival.

**1. Definition(s)**

- **Date of Entry** also known as Date of Arrival. Date a non-citizen arrived in the US, usually notated on the USCIS document. For Refugee Program eligibility for asylees, substitute the date asylum was granted for the actual date of entry.
- **Date of Eligibility** also known as Date Alien Status Granted, on Alien Evidence Tab of the NC FAST, Date ORR-Eligible population benefits or services start.

**EXAMPLE:** Afghan Humanitarian Parolee passport stamp or I-94 is 9/15/2021 but the date an Afghan parolee departs an Operation Allies Refuge/Operation Allies Welcome (OAR/OAW) Safe Haven Military base in Fort Wayne, TX and arrives in Raleigh, NC to the community on 12/1/2021. In this instance the 12 month “clock” starts on 12/1/2021.

**EXAMPLE** Individual makes an asylum claim when they enter the US on 12/1/21. Once they are given a hearing and a positive decision is made, they can receive Asylee status. This may take many years. If the individual who arrived on 12/1/21 received Asylee status on 2/2/24, that is the date their 12 month “clock” starts.

**NOTE:** In NC FAST on the Income Support Application, Alien Evidence the “Date Alien Status Granted” **must** be completed. This date may be different for, but not limited to, Cuban/Haitian Entrants, Afghans and Ukrainians with Humanitarian Parolee, Asylees, and Victims of trafficking. If the date is the same as the date of entry, enter the date twice both in the Date of Entry and Date Alien Status Granted fields.

**2. RMA Eligible Period of Coverage**

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- a. **Refugee Status:** Benefits are eligible up to twelve (12) months from refugee’s date of arrival (date of entry) or Date of eligibility (whichever is later) in the United States on or after October 1, 2021.
- b. **Asylee Status:** Benefits are available for up to twelve (12) months from the date asylum is granted in the United States on or after October 1, 2021.
- c. **Victims of Trafficking Status:** Benefits are available for up to twelve (12) months once certification provides Victims of Trafficking with the necessary documentation to be eligible to receive benefits and services on or after October 1, 2021.

**NOTE:** Eligibility determine prior to October 1, 2021, are eligible for 8-months.

**NOTE:** Eligibility determine prior to

	<b>Afghanistan Populations</b> excluding SIV’s Holders	<b>Ukrainian Populations</b>	<b>UHP’s Continues</b>
<b>Authorization</b>	Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriation (ASA) Act, 2022 effective September 31, 2021	Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (AUSAA) effective May 21, 2022	Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022 (AUSAA) effective May 21, 2024
<b>Date of Entry</b>	Afghan humanitarian parolees paroled into the U.S. on or after July 31, 2021, through September 30, 2023, or the date you received humanitarian parole, whichever is later. <b>These individuals' spouse or unmarried children under the age of 21 who are paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2023, are also eligible for these benefits</b>	Ukrainian humanitarian parolees paroled into the U.S. on or after February 24, 2022, through September 30, 2023. <b>These individuals' spouse or unmarried children under the age of 21 who are paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2023, are also eligible for these benefits</b>	<b>Ukrainian humanitarian parolees paroled into the U.S. on or after February 24, 2022, through September 30, 2024.</b> These individuals' spouse or unmarried children under the age of 21 who are paroled into the U.S. after September 30, 2023, are also eligible for these benefits
<b>Date of Eligibility</b>	Beginning on October 1, 2021, or the date the parolee “entered the community” whichever is later.	Beginning on May 21, 2022, or the date you received humanitarian parole, whichever is later,	<b>Beginning April 24, 2024, or their date of parole, whichever is later.</b>
<b>Eligibility Period (in months)</b>	8	July 31, 2021, through September	All 12-month eligibility
		All 12-month eligibility	All 12-month eligibility

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		30, 2021		
	12	On or after October 1, 2021		

**C. Household Composition**

The local DSS must evaluate each member of the family individually. If the refugee is an adult who is pregnant, has minor children, or is between the ages of 19 and 20, that adult or adult and minor children are likely eligible for a Medicaid program. Refer to the Family and Children’s Medicaid Manual and the Adult Medicaid Manual for more information regarding the Medicaid programs that would be most appropriate for these individuals. Refer to the North Carolina Family and Children’s Medicaid Manual and the Adult Medicaid Manual for more information regarding eligibility for Medicaid programs. A MAGI application must be processed first.

**NOTE: while refugees are deemed eligible for RMA, if determined ineligible for Medicaid, it will need to be noted why they are deemed ineligible.**

IF	THEN
Single individual (21 – 64)	Potentially <b>ELIGIBLE</b> for RMA IF determined ineligible for Medicaid.
Married couple without minor children	Potentially <b>ELIGIBLE</b> for RMA IF determined ineligible for Medicaid.
Single individual with minor/child/children	Potentially <b>ELIGIBLE</b> for RMA IF determined ineligible for Medicaid.
Married couple with minor child/children	Potentially <b>ELIGIBLE</b> for RMA IF determined ineligible for Medicaid.
<b>NOTE: Ineligible means they do not meet the STATE/FEDERAL requirements for a program due to status or family composition, etc.</b>	

**1. Refugee Individual**

A single refugee individual household must consist of one adult, 18 years of age or older, with no minor children. To determine RMA eligibility households must first apply for, and if eligible, participate in any NC Medicaid program category including MAGI.

**NOTE:** An individual, 18 years of age is considered an adult in the RMA program. However, individuals, ages 18, 19, and 20, are likely eligible for a NC Medicaid program category including MAGI. Parent’s income and resources are not considered in the determination of eligibility.

**2. Refugee Couple**

Couples without minor children and who do not meet qualifications for

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Medicaid programs are eligible for RMA. To determine RMA eligibility households must first apply for, and if eligible, participate in any NC Medicaid program category including MAGI.

**3. Refugee Family**

A refugee family household with minor children must first apply for, and if eligible, participate in any NC Medicaid program category including MAGI. Those who do not meet qualifications for Medicaid programs are potentially eligible for RMA.

**NOTE:** Children or individuals and couples with dependent minor children found eligible for Medicaid programs under the NC Medicaid State Plan are ineligible for RMA

**4. Refugee 65 Years of Age or Older**

A refugee 65 years of age or older is considered for all Medicaid program categories and must be evaluated for Medical Assistance to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (MAABD).

**NOTE:** Refugee individuals 65 years of age or older with refugee immigration status found eligible for Medicaid programs under the NC Medicaid State Plan are ineligible for RMA. MAABD is the program of best benefit in comparison to RMA. Those who do not meet qualifications for Medicaid programs are potentially eligible for RMA.

**5. Refugee Pregnant Woman Single**

Refugee Pregnant women (single) found eligible for Medicaid programs for pregnant women under the NC Medicaid State Plan are ineligible for RMA. Those who do not meet qualifications for Medicaid programs are potentially eligible for RMA.

**D. Institution of Higher Education**

Effective 9/28/2023, A Waiver has been put in place: Allowing Refugee Medical Assistance Coverage for Full-Time Student until 9/30/2025. Therefore: Refugees who are full-time students in an institution of higher education are eligible for RMA.

**E. Residency Status**

Proof of residency is not a condition of eligibility; accept applicant's statement of intent to reside in a county in North Carolina. Do not request other verification such as post-marked mail, rental/utility records, etc., as newly arrived refugees are not likely to have these documents.

**Example:** An individual Eligible in another state moves to North Carolina: Applicant was receiving RMA benefits in another state prior to moving to North Carolina. The local social services are responsible for contacting the prior state.

**Actions/Resolution:**

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1. Notify that State the applicant has moved to NC and is requesting services in NC.
  
2. Request eligibility dates from the out of state agency and request benefits be terminated so eligibility can be determined in NC.

**F. DSS-6247 “Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits” Notification from Refugee Resettlement Agencies and/or other Community Partners/Agencies who work with-refugee arrival, this excludes the county DSS.**

All refugee applicants who resettle through a Refugee Resettlement Agency (Appendix A) must present a DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits form (to the county DSS) when applying for all public benefits.

**This is a required form for many of the ORR Eligible Populations.** If applicants were resettled through a Refugee Resettlement Agency do not present form DSS-6247, at the time of application then case manager should not move forward. The case manager must request the Refugee Resettlement Agency to provide a completed DSS-6247 first, at the onset of the application in addition to all other immigration documentation.

**NOTE:** DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits, **is NOT a required form** for all populations e. g. Asylees granted Asylum, Victims of Trafficking (Approved Certification Letter), Cuban Haitian Entrants, and Afghan and Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (AHP)(UHP). These ORR-eligible populations often will not necessarily have established an initial relationship with a Refugee Resettlement Agency.

In these instances, it is a benefit to the client to be provided contact information for refugee service providers who are active in the county of residence (See Appendix B).

**G. Income Requirements**

The State may not consider in-kind services and shelter provided to an applicant by a-sponsor or local resettlement agency in determining eligibility for and receipt of Refugee Medical Assistance. The income standard is 200% of the federal poverty level. See [Appendix D](#) for additional guidelines on policy income.

Base eligibility for RMA on the applicant's income on the date of application. Request verification based on most recent pay statement at the time of application **ONLY**.

- The State agency may not use the practice of averaging income prospectively over the application processing period in determining income eligibility for refugee medical assistance.
  
- Count only income from earnings, savings in US bank accounts, and other financial resources acquired while in the United States.
  
- Do not consider a sponsor’s income to be accessible to a refugee.

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- Do not consider any cash grant received by the applicant under the Department of State or Department of Justice Reception and Placement Program (R&P).
- Do not average income prospectively over the application processing period in determining income eligibility for RMA.
- Do not count Match Grant payments as income.

NOTE: If recipient(s) are made ineligible for Medicaid Expansion due to income, but are otherwise eligible for RMA, they can be evaluated for RMA up until 12 months after date of eligibility. In these instances, income does not need to be considered.

#### **H. Resources Requirements**

Base eligibility for RMA on the applicant's resources on the date of application. Request verification based on most recent pay statement at the time of application **ONLY**. Do not consider any resources remaining in the applicant's country of origin in determining eligibility.

- Do not consider a sponsor's resources to be accessible to a refugee.
- Do not consider in-kind services and shelter provided to an applicant by a sponsor or local resettlement agency in determining eligibility for RMA.

### **III. APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

#### **A. RMA Interview**

After determining an applicant's eligibility, proceed using these interview guidelines:

1. The case manager must apply cultural sensitivity in all communications.
2. The case manager must provide services in a linguistically appropriate manner. This may include using telephonic or in person interpreters. PLEASE NOTE: Automated Translation software is insufficient for this process.
3. The case manager must apply the NC Confidentiality Rules for public assistance benefits to RMA program.
4. Applicant(s) can have any person(s) of their choice participate in the interview.
5. Applicant(s) does not have to be present for interview. However, the application must be signed by the applicant or authorized representative. Get signed DSS-6236, Informed Consent for Release of Information form. **NOTE: DSS 6236 is NOT AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE form, it's a Consent form with the Purpose for release/obtainment information ONLY.**

**NOTE: Telephonic Application Interviews:** When an applicant contacts the local Social/Human Services agency, the case manager must conduct a

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telephone interview with the applicant and/or the applicants authorized representative to complete the NC FAST (Integrated Evidence Gathering) IEG. Case managers must document the telephonic signature in the income support case details. An applicant or authorized representative must speak directly with a case manager to complete a telephonic application. A voicemail message requesting assistance is not an application for medical assistance. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements for Refugee Medical Assistance. NOTE: an Authorized Representative must submit adequate proof to demonstrate their role as an Authorized Representative. DSS 6236 is **NOT AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE** form.

**NOTE: Mail-In/Drop-Off Application Interviews:** Refugee Medical Assistance Application (DSS-6242) can be mailed to individuals who choose to apply for RMA benefits. Within three (3) business days of receipt of the DSS-6242, the case manager must contact the applicant and/or the applicant's authorized representative to complete the NC IEG. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements for RMA benefits.

**NOTE: If the local DSS receives a DSS 6242 an interview is not needed unless the application is incomplete.**

**NOTE: If Local DSS receives an incomplete DSS 6242 the case manager must contact the authorized Representative or client to complete the application process and document the case with date, time, and person they spoke with. If there is no answer from either person send 8146A requesting a call to complete the application process.**

4. Information must be presented in a language the applicant understands and/or interpretation services must be provided. Get signed DSS-10001 Language Services Agreement form.

NOTE: If the client was not offered Interpretation services the case manager MUST document the case.

5. The case manager must explain RMA in understandable terms, ensuring that refugees understand their rights and responsibilities. Get signed NC FAST 20009, Rights and Responsibilities.
6. When completing a Face to Face, telephonic or mail-in application the following forms MUST be uploaded into NC Fast on the application at the time of approval: Application Signature Page (In Person) NC Fast 20009, DSS 10001, DHB 9006, DSS 8227, DSS 8108 and evidence of eligibility.
  - a. The case manager must offer the refugee an opportunity to apply for Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits on the same day.

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**B. RMA Application**

**1. Electronic (NC FAST)**

To apply for RMA, the case manager may complete the North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) IEG. Note: If you have a signed DSS 6242 Paper Application YOU do not need the IEG signature page from NC FAST. Caseworker also must document case if application was MAGI application - case number. The case manager must document either the telephonic signature (of applicant or authorized representative) or the wet signature and date of the RMA application in the income support case details.

Note: Although RMA is not set up in NC Fast, the application comes over in the form ePass, the caseworker MUST accept the original date of application for RMA. A wet signature is not needed for the application, but the caseworker must document the case number of original ePass electronic signature when re-keying the application for RMA. (purpose of this is not to cause discouragement)

FYI: A wet signature is only needed for in person applications.

**2. DSS-6242, Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) Application (Paper)**

To apply for RMA, the Refugee may complete a paper RMA Application (DSS-6242). The case manager must document either the telephonic signature (of applicant or authorized representative) or the wet signature and date of the RMA application in the income support case details.

**Note:** Applying online for Medical Assistance can be done via e-Pass (electronic pass). RMA applications are NOT available via ePass.

**3. COURTESY APPLICATION**

1. All courtesy applications must be accepted by the county of residence.
2. An individual or representative may apply at any Local Social Services agency outside of the County of Residence and submit the application to the non-resident county.
3. The non- resident county must COMPLETE the DSS-6242 Refugee Medical Application with the individual's verification of documents and submit it to the county of residence.
4. The individual's person page must document, DSS 6242 must be DATE STAMPED when FAX or EMAIL to the County of Resident within 24 hours.

**C. RMA Application Processing Requirements**

1. **Submit the Required DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits** All refugee applicants who resettle through a Refugee Resettlement Agency (Appendix A) must present a DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits form (to the county DSS) when applying for all public benefits. **This is a required form for many of the ORR Eligible Populations.** If applicants were resettled

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through a Refugee Resettlement Agency do not present form DSS-6247, at the time of application then case manager should not move forward. The case manager must request the Refugee Resettlement Agency to provide a completed DSS-6247 first, at the onset of the application in addition to all other immigration documentation.

2. **NOTE:** DSS-6247, Notification of Refugee Arrival and Intent to Apply for Benefits, **is NOT a required form** for all populations. Some ORR-eligible populations often will not necessarily have established an initial relationship with a Refugee Resettlement Agency. In these instances, **it is a benefit to the client to be provided contact information for refugee service providers who are active in the county of residence (See Appendix B).**
  
3. **ORR-Eligible, Qualified Status** – RMA applicant must submit evidence of documentation issued by USCIS, which indicates eligibility status. This “refugee” qualified group is exempt from the 5-year ban time frames. Secondary verification is not required. A list of acceptable USCIS documentation most often presented by refugees is in Chapter I, Section II.
  - a. Verify the documentation of immigration status.
  
  - b. If status is verified by documents, the applicant has a qualified status, and the case manager shall continue determining eligibility based on other requirements. **Do not use Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) as a form of primary or secondary verification.**
  
  - c. If unable to confirm status from documentation supplied by applicant, **Refer to ORR Fact Sheets (Appendices E – L).** ‘Refugees’ immigration status will always be verified and valid through appropriate documents. If applicants are unable to provide documentation, then they may not have adequate ‘Refugee’ immigration status. The County worker should ensure that they provide support to clients in securing necessary documentation.
  
  - d. If unable to confirm status from documentation supplied by applicant, **approve RMA** if other eligibility requirements are met.

**NOTE: ALL VERIFICATIONS MUST BE UPLOADED INTO NCFAST ON THE APPLICATION.**

**In the event that case is APPROVED, and verification/documents have not been uploaded on the Application, the caseworker may upload all information on the PERSON Page.**

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4. **Processing Time Standard – Applications must be processed within thirty (30) calendar days** unless there is an applicant delay. The thirty (30) calendar days begin the day after the date of application and ends on the day the check or denial notice is mailed. The date of application is the date the applicant, authorized representative, or someone acting on applicant's behalf, signs the application.
5. Requesting Information: A DSS 8146A must be completed when it is determined information is needed for additional information/verification to determine eligibility. Provide the applicant with the DSS -8146A, Notice of Information Need to Determine Eligibility for Work First, Refugee Cash or Medical Assistance, requesting information/Verification needed to make an eligibility determination.

**D. Not Required for RMA Application Processing**

1. **Social Security Number** – Social Security Numbers (SSN) or proof of application for an SSN are not required for RMA applicants.
2. **Do not use Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) as a form of primary or secondary verification.**

**E. Refugee Assistance Independent Programs** - A refugee is not required to apply for, or receive, Refugee Cash Assistance as a condition of eligibility for RMA. However, all recipients of RCA are potentially eligible for RMA. Denial, reduction, or termination of RCA has no effect on a refugee's RMA.

**F.** If the refugee individual/family is determined to be eligible for a Medicaid program in the NC FAST System, authorize Medicaid coverage according to Medicaid program guidelines for that refugee individual/family.

**G.** If the refugee individual/couple is determined to be ineligible in the new MAGI application for a Medicaid program in the NC FAST System, then complete a Refugee Medical Assistance application.

**EXCEPTION - Family Planning Medicaid**

The Family Planning Program (FPP) is provided to individuals who are not eligible for or any other Medicaid category. Refugees who are not eligible for any other Medicaid program may be eligible for RMA. If the potential applicant is deemed eligible by NC FAST for Family and Children's Medicaid: FPP; then the county staff must evaluate each potential refugee applicant for RMA.

Note: Denied the MAGI application for FPP and key the RMA application. Document the RMA application honoring the original date of the ePass application. The electronic signature from the original application should be documented on the case.

FYI: A wet signature is only need for in person applications.

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**IV. FINALIZED APPLICATION**

**A. Disposition of Application**

Eligible applicants are entitled to receive RMA coverage for up to twelve (12) full months from the date of arrival or date of eligibility (whichever is later) in the United States.

**1. Retroactive Coverage**

Depending on the date of arrival/eligibility, eligibility for RMA may be authorized for the 1, 2, or 3 months preceding the month of application. The client must have met all eligibility requirements in the retroactive period.

**2. Coverage of Refugees Who Do Not Meet State's Financial Eligibility Standards (Medicaid Deductible)**

An RMA applicant whose net countable income exceeds 200% of Federal Poverty Level Income Limit must meet a deductible before being authorized for Medicaid. The deductible is met by incurring medical expenses equal to the amount of the deductible. Compute the deductible for the appropriate period, up to 12 months, using the Medically Needy income limit according to the instructions provided under MA Section 2360.

**3. Documentation** - Document case disposition of application in client's case notes. Maintain and retain operational records in accordance with the standards established by the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

**B. Determine Eligibility Period**

Eligible applicants are entitled to receive RMA coverage for up to twelve (12) full months from the date of arrival or date of eligibility (whichever is later). To calculate the eligibility period:

**1. Determine start date** – Eligibility begins on the first day of the month application is made.

**2. Determine end date** – Eligibility ends twelve full months after the refugee's date of entry or attaining eligible status, on the last day of that month.

**C. Notices**

Once the determination of eligibility has been made, the applicant and Refugee Resettlement Agency (RRA), if applicable, both must be notified of the outcome.

**1.** A DSS-6243, Pro-Forma Notice of Approval, Denial/Withdraw and Changing, to RMA applicant regarding the disposition of the application will be system generated in NC FAST with disposition of the RMA application. The notice is system generated and will automatically generate after the disposition is complete. Case manager must also send a copy of DSS-6243 notice to RRA

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if applicable.

**NOTE:** In the event this NC FAST system generated DSS-6243 form is disabled, prints in error, prints incorrect disposition information and/or is not working the case manager **MUST** generate a DSS-8108, or DSS-8109 Notice of Benefits Approval/Denial, form to manually electronically complete (available on the forms website) and mailed to recipient in its place.

These forms are case manager initiated and must be complete with the disposition of the RMA application. Next, the case manager must upload the DSS-8108, DSS-8109 and DSS-8110 into the documents tab of NC FAST. The case manager must specify RMA option and cite the appropriate RMA policy reference. An approval notice must be sent to the RMA recipient and to the NC Refugee Resettlement Agency (representative).

Follow instructions in DSS-8108, DSS-8109, DSS-8110 to establish the following:

- a. refugee has applied for assistance,
- b. the status and disposition of the application, and
- c. the reason if assistance has been refused, denied, or terminated.

**NOTE:** If a refugee applies for other mainstream assistance programs and is determined ineligible, but eligible for RMA, one notice must reflect the mainstream disposition and one letter must reflect the approval disposition.

2. NC FAST 20009, Client Rights and Responsibilities Form must be signed by the applicant and/or the authorized representative.

## **V. CHANGES IN SITUATION**

- A. A change in situation is any change an individual refugee experiences that may affect the individual's eligibility for RMA.

***Example of change in situation for RMA recipients with refugee status turns 65 years old during RMA certification period.***

RMA recipient turns 65 years of age, react to change, and evaluate for Medicaid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (MAABD), under the NC Medicaid State Plan. Terminate RMA if the recipient is now ineligible for RMA.

***Examples of change in situation for RMA the recipient turns twenty-one (21) during the MAGI certification period. The recipient is eligible for the remaining months in RMA.***

***Example of Change in Situation: Recipient (s) has income Medicaid/MAGI which is no longer a factor for RMA is NOW eligible for RMA. The recipient is eligible for the remaining months in RMA.***

***Example of change in situation for RMA recipient with refugee status becomes pregnant during RMA certification period*** RMA recipient becomes pregnant react to change and evaluate for Medicaid programs for pregnant women under the NC

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Medicaid State Plan. If found eligible for Medicaid programs for pregnant women under the NC Medicaid State Plan are ineligible for RMA.

- B.** The refugee and the resettlement agency (as applicable) are responsible for reporting changes. A change in situation must be reported within ten (10) calendar days of when the change is known.
- C.** An agency must react to a change in situation the following month after the change but no later than the second month. Changes are effective the month after the month in which the 10-day notice expires unless the recipient waives the 10-day notice.

**NOTE:** RMA applicants/recipients must receive timely notice termination of benefits.

**NOTE:** Attach to the 8110-proposing termination of benefits a blank DSS 5200 Application for Health Coverage & Help Paying Costs

- D.** Verify the change according to the verification procedures. Always document the change and verification.
- E.** NC FAST will systematically generate a timely DSS-6243 via Pro-Forma, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance, to notify the household how the change affects their benefits.

**NOTE:** In the event this NC FAST system generated DSS-6243 form is disabled, prints in error, prints incorrect disposition information and/or Pro-Forma is not working, the case manager **MUST** generate a DSS-8110, Notice of Benefits Changing. Next the form must be generated (via the DSS forms website) and uploaded into NC FAST on the documents tab regarding the disposition of the RMA application. Lastly, a copy must be mailed to the RMA recipient and the Refugee Resettlement Agency (if applicable).

- F.** Due to the short-term benefits, if a refugee household reports a change of address and it is in another county, **do not transfer the case**. Instead, continue to maintain the **RMA** case in the county of application. The RMA program does not provide recertification or reviews or benefits.

**NOTE:** **DO NOT** terminate RMA if new or additional income is reported and causes the recipient to exceed the income limit. **Eligibility for RMA is based on the applicant's income and resources at the time of application ONLY** i.e., if a refugee has no income at the time of application, count no income. Do not project income for the duration of the RMA certification. Do not count income/resources prior to date of application. A recipient shall continue to receive RMA until the end of the 12-month eligibility period unless there is a change in eligibility (age or pregnancy).

## **VI. REVIEW**

At the end of the refugee's twelfth month in the U.S. or since date eligibility status was granted, terminate RMA assistance. Evaluate to determine if the individual with refugee status is eligible for any other medical assistance and take the necessary program applications or refer to the appropriate agency. In addition to notifying the refugee of the termination, the notice must indicate the determination of eligibility for other programs.

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Manually send a written DSS-8110, Notice of Stopping or Changing Public Assistance. Unlike Medicaid, RMA policy does not allow for extension of benefits due to county failure to provide timely notice. See MA Section 2352 for additional instructions.

**NOTE:** Refugee Medical Assistance is available to refugees for up to the first twelve months after their date of arrival, or attaining eligible status, in the United States, and only if they are not eligible for other **mainstream Medicaid assistance programs**.

**VII. NOTICE AND HEARINGS PROCESS**

**A.** All applicants for and recipients of RMA must be provided an opportunity for hearing to contest adverse determinations. See MA Section 2420.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- The refugee may have a representative as well as a translator/interpreter attend the hearing.
- The hearing decision must be provided in a language the refugee can understand or be translated/interpreted into such a language.

**B.** A hearing need not be granted when RMA is terminated because the eligibility time period (12 months) imposed by law has been reached.

**VIII. RECIPIENT FRAUD AND ABUSE**

Local DSS must comply with Federal requirements regarding potential fraud and misrepresentation that results in medical assistance overpayments. Because Refugee Assistance is not considered a program of public assistance under N. C. G. S. 108A-24, fraud cases must be prosecuted under N. C. G. S. 14-100, "False Pretense and Cheats." See MA Section 2900 for additional information.

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