

Presidential Documents

Executive Order 13888 of September 26, 2019

Enhancing State and Local Involvement in Refugee Resettlement

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Purpose. In resettling refugees into American communities, it is the policy of the United States to cooperate and consult with State and local governments, to take into account the preferences of State governments, and to provide a pathway for refugees to become self-sufficient. These policies support each other. Close cooperation with State and local governments ensures that refugees are resettled in communities that are eager and equipped to support their successful integration into American society and the labor force.

The Federal Government consults with State and local governments not only to identify the best environments for refugees, but also to be respectful of those communities that may not be able to accommodate refugee resettlement. State and local governments are best positioned to know the resources and capacities they may or may not have available to devote to sustainable resettlement, which maximizes the likelihood refugees placed in the area will become self-sufficient and free from long-term dependence on public assistance. Some States and localities, however, have viewed existing consultation as insufficient, and there is a need for closer coordination and a more clearly defined role for State and local governments in the refugee resettlement process. My Administration seeks to enhance these consultations.

Section 6(d) of Executive Order 13780 of March 6, 2017 (Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States), directed the Secretary of State to determine the extent to which, consistent with applicable law, State and local jurisdictions could have greater involvement in the process of determining the placement or resettlement of refugees in their jurisdictions, and to devise a proposal to promote such involvement.

I have consulted with the Secretary of State and determined that, with limited exceptions, the Federal Government, as an exercise of its broad discretion concerning refugee placement accorded to it by the Constitution and the Immigration and Nationality Act, should resettle refugees only in those jurisdictions in which both the State and local governments have consented to receive refugees under the Department of State's Reception and Placement Program (Program).

Sec. 2. Consent of States and Localities to the Placement of Refugees. (a) Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall develop and implement a process to determine whether the State and locality both consent, in writing, to the resettlement of refugees within the State and locality, before refugees are resettled within that State and locality under the Program. The Secretary of State shall publicly release any written consents of States and localities to resettlement of refugees.

(b) Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall develop and implement a process by which, consistent with 8 U.S.C. 1522(a)(2)(D), the State and the locality's consent to the resettlement of refugees under the Program

is taken into account to the maximum extent consistent with law. In particular, that process shall provide that, if either a State or locality has not provided consent to receive refugees under the Program, then refugees should not be resettled within that State or locality unless the Secretary of State concludes, following consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Homeland Security, that failing to resettle refugees within that State or locality would be inconsistent with the policies and strategies established under 8 U.S.C. 1522(a)(2)(B) and (C) or other applicable law. If the Secretary of State intends to provide for the resettlement of refugees in a State or locality that has not provided consent, then the Secretary shall notify the President of such decision, along with the reasons for the decision, before proceeding.

(c) Subsection (b) of this section shall not apply to the resettlement of a refugee's spouse or child following to join that refugee pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1157(c)(2)(A).

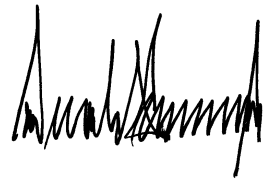
Sec. 3. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department or agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, located in the lower right quadrant of the page.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
September 26, 2019.