



December 20, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Stacey Shor, Vice President &
Chief Development Officer

773.467.3885

StaceyShor@jcfs.org

HIAS Chicago Refugee Resettlement Program to End

(Chicago, Illinois) - Jewish Child & Family Services and HIAS Chicago regret to announce that due to an extreme reduction in the number of refugees authorized to resettle in the United States in 2017-18, our refugee resettlement program is being ended by the U.S. Department of State. We are proud that, in partnership with our caring community, we have successfully resettled thousands of refugees over decades of effort. Together, staff and volunteers have welcomed individuals from the Former Soviet Union, Bosnia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq and Syria. We have ensured that each had safe, furnished homes, connected them to employment and education for their children and set them on a path towards integration. The strength of our combined efforts was recently recognized during a successful State Department monitoring visit in November.

The decision to discontinue resettlement efforts was not ours. The State Department is in the process of closing and consolidating programs across the country. The administration established an unprecedented cap of 45,000 refugees, the lowest number set since Presidents have been authorized to determine limits in 1980. It is possible the actual number of arrivals will, in fact, be even lower. By comparison, over 50,000 refugees were resettled last year and nearly 85,000 the year before. Significant decreases in arrivals mean fewer programs are needed to support resettlement. As saddened as we are to see our program end, we are deeply concerned about those individuals and families awaiting their turns to come to the United States. Those who have been waiting years or even decades will now need to wait even longer to find freedom.

Please know that HIAS Chicago's immigration and citizenship work will continue as it has for over a century. We will continue to explore new ways of serving individuals and families who have already been resettled or immigrated. Our commitment to social justice and welcoming the stranger remain as strong as ever. Thank you for your support.

HIAS Chicago is a program of Jewish Child & Family Services, a partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community. We embrace diversity. Our commitment to inclusivity is woven throughout our services, programs and welcoming workplace. For more information about Jewish Child & Family Services, visit jcfs.org or call 855.275.5237.

###