

Notice of Funding Opportunity



Kentucky Refugee Employment & Workforce Integration Grant

POSTED 12/2024

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Basic Information

- 1) Federal Agency Funding Project
Office of Refugee Resettlement (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services)
- 2) Funding Opportunity Title
Kentucky Refugee Employment & Workforce Integration Grant
- 3) Announcement Type
Initial announcement
- 4) Funding Opportunity Number
KOR-2025-RSS-01
- 5) Assistance Listing Number
CFDA#: 93.566
CFDA Number Description: Refugee and Entrant Assistance State/Replacement Designee Administered Programs – Refugee Support Services
- 6) Funding Details
Up to \$2,500,000 total will be awarded. Award amounts range from \$175,000 to \$750,000 and will be distributed based on the metro area targeted for service delivery:
 - Bowling Green metro – maximum 2 awards
 - Covington/Northern Kentucky metro – maximum 1 award
 - Lexington metro – maximum 3 awards
 - Louisville metro – maximum 3 awards
 - Owensboro metro – maximum 1 award
- 7) Key Dates
12/06/2024 – Applicants may begin submitting Letters of Intent via Foundant.

12/17/2024 – Virtual informational meeting and Q&A at 2pm via Zoom
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89515718065?pwd=OUymTXSB9IZzZ2ya9PLDOKuoTOl8pq.1>
Meeting ID: 895 1571 8065
Passcode: 548739

01/02/2025 – Application period begins
01/07/2025 – Second Virtual Q&A session at 2pm Via Zoom
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85446489643?pwd=RxIjgqWfS300dtIb1NbdeMiWtzNaMr.1>
Meeting ID: 854 4648 9643
Passcode: 173782

01/17/2025 – Recommended last submission date for Letters of Intent
01/31/2025 – Applications due
02/28/2025 – Award decisions made
04/01/2025 – Grant award cycle begins
09/30/2026 – Grant award cycle ends
- 8) Executive Summary
The Kentucky Office for Refugees (KOR) is making available up to \$2,500,000 in federal Refugee Support Services funds from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) for award to eligible providers serving

Kentucky. The purpose of this funding is to connect ORR-eligible clients (refugees who have been in the United States for five years or less, including asylees, Afghan and Ukrainian parolees, and other eligible populations) to sustained employment that meets their cost-of-living needs. The anticipated award period is April 2025-September 2026. This funding aims to help clients achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency for adults- through job placement and retention, recertification and career coaching to support skilled work integration- and to develop work experience for young adults for their future economic self-sufficiency.

Through this funding, KOR aims to increase job placements, retention, and career advancement for ORR-eligible individuals across Kentucky. Key performance indicators include job placements, sustaining employment for at least 90 days, apprenticeship enrollments, and youth employment participation. Regular reporting and meetings with KOR staff will ensure the program adapts to community needs and achieves measurable goals.

Eligible applicants include government organizations, non-profit organizations, and education organizations. Applicants should demonstrate the capacity to deliver culturally responsive employment services, collaborate with local employers, and establish partnerships to expand employment, apprenticeship, and youth opportunities. Joint applications are permitted with a designated lead for program administration and reporting.

Successful applicants will provide a comprehensive range of services, including industry-specific English language training, childcare and transportation support, and personalized career coaching. Partnerships with local businesses and workforce agencies will be essential in creating pathways to employment and apprenticeships for clients of all ages.

Eligible activities to achieve this goal include apprenticeships, customized English curriculum development, childcare and transportation assistance, vocational training including driver education, case management (Job Development), outreach and employer engagement, and youth employment opportunities. Apprenticeship programs will provide adult clients with hands-on, job-specific training, while youth employment initiatives will offer young refugees career exploration, job readiness training, internships, and entry-level work experience. Applicants should engage in these activities to the extent that they resolve employment barriers for ORR-eligible clients. All provided services should equip clients with essential skills for obtaining and retaining employment. Program services will align with ORR's employment and employability guidelines as outlined in 45 CFR 400.154. Successful applicants will report on number of job placements secured, number of job placements sustained for at least 90 days, and number of apprenticeships secured.

9) Agency Contact Information

Please direct questions or comments about this funding opportunity to:

Mandela Gapala
State Employment Services Coordinator
Kentucky Office for Refugees
Mgapala@archlou.org

Once this Notice has been published, all inquiries, questions, and comments must be directed to the Agency Contact during virtual informational meetings or via email. Virtual informational meetings will be recorded and a link posted to KOR's website. Email queries and KOR's responses - with contact information redacted- will be published to a document accessible via a link published on KOR's website.

Eligibility

1) Eligible Applicants

a) Types of Entities Eligible to Apply

- Government organizations
- Education Organizations
- Public housing organizations
- Nonprofit organizations

b) Disqualification

Entities currently receiving RSS funds from KOR will be disqualified if their application does not clearly differentiate the services to be offered under this funding opportunity from existing programming funded by KOR.

Applicants who plan to subaward, contract, or otherwise partner with an external provider for substantial services described in their application will be disqualified if they do not submit letter(s) of support, memorandum(s) of understanding (MOU), or equivalent documentation with their application, demonstrating the external provider's consent to provide services as described in the application.

Applicants who do not provide all assurances required throughout the application process will be disqualified.

Applicants who do not demonstrate the intent and ability to secure job placements with varied employers in diverse industries will be disqualified.

Applicants who do not demonstrate the intent and ability to provide services to eligible participants of all levels of English fluency will be disqualified.

c) Limit on Number of Applications

Applicants are not limited in the number of applications they may submit. Additional applications will be scored only if they are substantively different in the project strategy portion of the application.

2) Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is not required for this funding opportunity.

Program Description

1) Purpose of Funding

It is the purpose of the refugee resettlement program to provide for the effective resettlement of refugees and to assist them to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. [45 CFR 400.1(b)]

The Kentucky Refugee Employment & Workforce Integration grant is awarded to enable refugees to obtain employment within one year of enrolling in services. Social services may continue to be provided after a refugee has entered a job to help the refugee retain employment or move to a better job. Social service funds may not be used for long-term training programs such as vocational training that last for more than a year or educational programs that are not intended to lead to employment within a year. [45 CFR 400.146]

2) Funding Priorities

Proposals demonstrating established employer partnerships, prior experience with refugee services, and/or participation in KOR's training series for Ethnic Community-Based Organizations (ECBOs) will receive priority consideration. Proposals should particularly ensure access for eligible participants with low English fluency, for underserved populations such as Cuban Haitian Entrants, and for women. Addressing barriers to access may include resolving challenges related to childcare, transportation, and English language proficiency.

3) Program Goals & Objectives

This funding seeks to connect 3,500 eligible participants to employment in 18 Months across Kentucky. We anticipate that 80% of those receiving services reside in Louisville; 5% will reside in Lexington; 8% will reside in Bowling Green, with any remainder residing in Covington or Owensboro. Successful applicants must set targets and report on outcomes using the following parameters:

- Job placements secured: # of unduplicated eligible participants receiving services under this funding opportunity who secure full-time employment (at least 35 hours weekly) between 4/1/2025-9/30/2026.
- Job placements secured: # of unduplicated eligible participants receiving services under this funding opportunity who secure part-time employment (less than 35 hours weekly) between 4/1/2025-9/30/2026.
- Health benefits received by employed participants: # of unduplicated eligible participants who secure a job through an employer that provides health benefits as part of their compensation package between 4/1/2025-9/30/2026.
- Apprenticeships completed: # of eligible participants receiving services under this funding opportunity who secure an apprenticeship or internship between 4/1/2025-9/30/2026
- Credentials obtained: # of eligible participants who completed employer-sponsored apprenticeship or on-the-job training resulting in industry-recognized certification between 4/1/2025-9/30/2026.

All applicants are expected to meet and report on the following benchmarks:

- 80% of refugees obtaining a job maintain job for at least 90 days
- 65% of refugees obtaining a job maintain job for at least 180 days
- 95% of employment services clients are enrolled in employment services in ClientTrack within 30 days of beginning to receive services
- 90% of employment services client families have completed the Family Self Sufficiency Plan (FSSP) within 30 days of enrollment
- 66% of clients with FSSP participate in 6-month follow-up
- 33% of clients with FSSP participate in 12-month follow-up
- Average wage of employed participants: \$17.90/hour for starting wage recorded for all full-time employed participants between 4/1/2025-9/30/2026.

Examples of services to address barriers include:

- English language instruction
- vocational training
- skills recertification
- day care for children
- transportation assistance

- translation and interpreter services
- case management services
- securing Employment Authorization Documents (EADs)
- translating and validating educational credentials from overseas

4) Performance Measurement

Data collection will occur through ClientTrack, the statewide database for tracking ORR-eligible refugees. Grantees will be expected to enter all participants and track all services related to this project in ClientTrack. Grantees are also responsible for regularly reviewing their ClientTrack data and ensuring its data quality. Grant reporting will be submitted in Foundant, where the application is also submitted. Recipients are required to complete quarterly and semi-annual reports that track their progress on achieving the outcomes outlined in this NOFO. Financial reports are submitted monthly via Foundant. KOR will conduct informal and formal monitoring activities and will send instructions for cooperating with required monitoring activities.

5) Program-Specific Unallowable Costs

Purchasing a vehicle is an unallowable cost. However, organizations are allowed to lease vehicles for transportation of eligible participants for the purpose of employment or employability services.

6) Beneficiary Eligibility

Refugee eligibility for social services is limited to those who meet the following criteria, based on 45 CFR 400:

- Refugees who meet immigration status and identification requirements specified in Subpart D. See the following link for the full text of Subpart D:
[eCFR :: 45 CFR Part 400 Subpart D -- Immigration Status and Identification of Refugees](#)
- Refugees who are 16 years of age or older and not full-time students in elementary or secondary school. However, students may still be eligible for specific employment-related services, such as part-time or temporary (e.g., summer) employment, or for full-time employment upon completing schooling (400.152)
- Refugees who have been in the U.S. for up to 60 months (5 years) (400.152)

States must plan their social service programs and allocate funds to provide services to refugees in the following priority order, as outlined in 45 CFR 400.147:

- Newly arrived refugees during their first year in the U.S. who apply for services
- Refugees receiving cash assistance
- Unemployed refugees not receiving cash assistance
- Employed refugees who need services to retain employment or achieve economic independence

d) Authorizing Statutes & Regulations

The administration of this program is based on:

- Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 400](#): Refugee Resettlement Program
 - o Information specific to Refugee Support Services can be found in Subpart I.
 - o Information regarding eligible refugee participants is found in Subpart D.
- Code of Federal Regulations [2 CFR 200](#): Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
- [45 CFR Part 75](#): Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS awards

Application Contents & Format

1) Format

Applications must be completed and submitted via the Foundant platform using the fillable forms (See “Submission Requirements & Deadlines” for information about Foundant). Applicants may start, edit, review, and save their progress on the application at any time during the application period. Primary Foundant account holders may allow other contributors or members of their organization to assist in completing the application process via a “Collaborate” function. Where appropriate, applicants will be presented with the option to upload documents as attachments to the application.

2) Contents

a) Letter of Intent

Letters of intent must be submitted through the Foundant portal by responding to specific questions and prompts. *Potential applicants may not access the funding application until they have submitted an approved letter of intent.* Through the letter, potential applicants provide a point of contact for the application process, assure that they have read and understood this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), assure that they will use any awarded funds to serve only eligible refugees as defined by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and provide estimates of the number of eligible refugees to be served and the total cost of the proposal.

b) Application Contents

Applications must also be completed and submitted through the Foundant portal. Applicants may start, edit, review, and save their progress on the application at any time during the application period.

i) Organization Information

Applicants will provide basic information about the organization applying for funding, including the applicant’s Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov.

ii) Performance Measures

The performance outcomes by which the project will be measured are to be clearly stated. Applicants must provide targets for 1) the number of eligible refugees to be served, 2) the share of refugees to be served who are from a target population, and 3) the number of refugees who will meet specified outcomes. Applicants must also agree to certain performance benchmarks that apply to all applicants. Finally, applicants must complete a line-item budget and budget narrative using templates provided by KOR.

iii) Project Strategy

Applicants will answer a variety of questions, through which they will provide a thorough description of the proposed project and how it will be implemented. Applicants will be prompted to describe their organization’s history serving refugees, their history managing federal funds, how outreach to and screening of eligible refugees will be conducted, how the organization engages and supports eligible refugees with high barriers to success, what resources will be used for the project and how these are sourced, the project timeline, and the financial practices of the organization.

iv) Attachments

Applicants will be required to attach documents such as an organizational chart, and will have the opportunity to attach supporting documentation such as letters of support, memorandums of understanding (MOUs), financial audits, Form 990s, etc.

v) Assurances

Applicants must provide specific assurances addressing certain policy and procedural matters, use of KOR's client database, and other topics.

Submission Requirements & Deadlines

1) Accessing Application Materials

Letters of Intent and Applications must be submitted via GrantInterface.com, also known as Foundant – Grant Application System. Potential applicants can register for an account and complete the application by starting here: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=kor> or here: <https://www.kentuckyrefugees.org/kor-administered-grant-programs/>

2) Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

a) Each applicant must:

- i) Be registered in *SAM.gov* before submitting its application;
- ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and
- iii) Continue to maintain an active registration in *SAM.gov* with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal agency.

b) Individuals are not eligible to apply.

3) Submission Instructions

Applications must be completed and submitted via the GrantInterface platform (also referred to as Foundant). Potential applicants that have not previously used Foundant in connection with funding from Kentucky Office for Refugees must register for an account to access application materials. Applicants may find tutorials and begin the account registration process here:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=kor>

Each entity may have only one primary accountholder. The primary accountholder will be able to access the organization's full application history, budgets, award notices, invoices, and other communications and documentation shared with Kentucky Office for Refugees. It is recommended that the primary accountholder be an officer or executive within the applying entity.

4) Submission Dates & Times

Letters of Intent are encouraged to be submitted by 01/17/2025.

The deadline for submitting a complete application is **11:59pm EST, January 31, 2025**

Incomplete applications and applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Application Review Information

1) Review & Selection Process

a) Scoring Committee

A panel of reviewers consisting of employees of Kentucky Office for Refugees and independent third-party reviewer(s) with direct knowledge of the refugee experience and/or expertise relevant to the funding opportunity will review and score each application.

b) Review Process

i) Stage I: Independent Review

Applications will be scored independently by scoring committee members using the scoring rubric.

ii) Stage II: Scoring Committee Conference

The scoring committee will meet to discuss applications and seek consensus on a final ranking of all applications from most to least appropriate for funding. If the committee's ranking differs from the average of all independent scoring, the committee will justify the ranking in writing to KOR. The committee will make recommendations to KOR about any follow-up concerns that should be addressed during the award process.

iii) Stage III: Risk Assessment

KOR will complete risk assessments based on the scoring committee's rank order, bearing in mind the maximum award amounts and number of awards for each geographic area.

c) Selection

KOR will select awardees based on the following criteria:

- 1) Scoring committee's rankings
- 2) Disqualification based on high risk assessment score
- 3) Any limits based on geography and/or funding

2) Review Criteria

The maximum score for each question on the application will be published on the application form. The scoring committee will evaluate responses on the following general criteria:

a) Review Part I: Performance Measures

The performance measures portion of the application will be scored first. This section includes the organization's targets, acceptance of KOR's benchmark measures, line-item budget, and budget narrative. This portion of the application will be scored based on how well the proposal will expand access to services, produce outcomes, and do so at a reasonable cost per eligible refugee.

b) Review Part II: Project Strategy

The project strategy portion of the application, including attachments and assurances, will be scored second. The scoring committee will evaluate application responses to assess the risk for poor outcomes, negative refugee experiences, and/or programmatic mismanagement.

3) Risk Assessment

Applicants which remain candidates for funding following the scoring committee's review process will undergo a risk assessment. If KOR is unable to complete the risk assessment with the available documentation, applicants will be asked to submit additional information or documents as part of the risk assessment process. Applicants will be scored as low, moderate, or high risk. High risk applicants may be disqualified, offered a reduced award, and/or subject to special terms and conditions with their award. Additionally, high risk applicants will be formally monitored by KOR during the period of performance. Low and moderate risk applicants may be offered a reduced award, be subject to special terms and conditions, and/or may be formally monitored. The risk assessment will consider the following:

a) Financial stability

The applicant's record of effectively managing financial risks, assets, and resources.

b) Management systems and standards

The quality of the applicant's management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in this part.

c) History of performance

The applicant's record of managing previous and current Federal awards, including compliance with reporting requirements and conformance to the terms and conditions of Federal awards, if applicable.

d) Audit reports and findings

Reports and findings from audits performed under subpart F or the reports and findings of any other available audits, if applicable.

e) Ability to effectively implement requirements

The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on recipients of Federal awards.

SAM.gov review

Before granting an award, KOR will review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov. Before making decisions, KOR will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

Award Notices

1) Process for Selected Applications

a) Notice of Selection

Applicants selected for funding will be notified of their selection and the proposed award amount no later than the end of the month following the application due date. *Notice of selection is not an authorization to begin performance; rather, the executed award is the authorizing document.* Pre-award costs are not allowed. The Notice of Subaward signed by the Director of KOR or her designee is the official document that obligates funds, and it will be provided via Foundant. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in Foundant no more than 60 days following the application deadline.

b) Application Revision

Within days of the notice of selection, KOR will submit to the applicant any questions about and/or any requests for revision of the application. Revisions may include, but are not limited to, service delivery and outcomes targets, project narrative, project timeline, and budgets.

Upon satisfactory completion of any revisions, and no less than two weeks prior to the period of performance start date, KOR will prepare the Notice of Subaward.

c) Notice of Subaward

Applicants selected for funding will receive a Notice of Subaward packet ("Subaward package"). The subaward package includes information about source and amount of the award, the project start and end dates, standard terms and conditions, program terms and conditions, federal certifications and public policy requirements, a signature page for all parties, and other important information about the award and administration of the award. *Once the Notice of Subaward is signed by all parties, it is the official document which obligates funds to the subrecipient.*

2) Process for Declined Applications

a) Notice of Decision

Applicants not selected for funding will be notified of this decision between 30 and 60 days following the application deadline.

b) Scoring Summary

Applicants whose proposals are not selected for funding may request a scoring summary after receiving the Notice of Decision. Scoring summaries will consist of a rubric with the average of the independent scores of the scoring committee for each question that was reviewed and any overall remarks the scoring committee elects to share with the applicant. KOR will not provide detailed justification for any scoring decisions made by the scoring committee.

Post-Award Requirements & Administration

1) Unless subsequently revised by mutual agreement between the applicant and KOR, the final, approved application will serve as the standard for all performance measurement for the funded project during the period of performance.

2) Reporting

a) Financial Reports

Catholic Charities of Louisville reimburses subrecipients for eligible expenses on a monthly basis. Invoices are due by the 10th of each month. Invoices submitted after the 10th will be reimbursed the following month. Catholic Charities will provide the template for invoicing as part of the subaward package.

b) Programmatic Reports

i) Monthly Data Review

KOR will conduct monthly and/or quarterly desktop reviews of all programmatic data as detailed in the “Service Delivery and Outcome Commitments” section of this Notice. Subrecipients are required to routinely update records in the ClientTrack database so that the subrecipient and KOR have access to up-to-date information. KOR will request ad hoc meetings with subrecipients significantly over- or under-performing their goals and benchmarks.

ii) Semi-annual Reports

All subrecipients are required to submit semi-annual reports on the last working day of each April and October during the period of performance, beginning not less than three months after the start date of the project. Semi-annual reports must be completed via Foundant and must be completed to the satisfaction of the KOR. Semi-annual reports include a count of eligible refugees served, outcomes achieved, and funds expended; analysis of any significant over- or under-performance; success stories; and other performance metrics.

3) Collaboration with KOR-funded Entities

c) Referrals for Services

All KOR subrecipients must agree to make and to receive from other KOR-funded entities any appropriate referrals for services for the benefit of ORR-eligible refugees. All subrecipients must operate in the spirit of cooperation with other refugee-serving organizations in the communities where they provide services. The aim of KOR funding is to expand and ensure access to services for all eligible refugees.

d) Quarterly Community Consultations

Resettlement agencies in each of Kentucky’s five metro areas coordinate and host quarterly community consultations. Entities funded through this award must make a good-faith effort to send a representative of their organization to at least two of the quarterly consultations each calendar year during the period of performance.