

# **Refugee Services Program Year End Report FY 2015**



**City of Portland, Maine  
Health and Human Services Department  
Social Services Division**

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**Refugee Services Program**  
**FY 2015 Year End Report**

## **Who we are and what we do:**

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The City of Portland's Health & Human Services Division, Social Services Division, Refugee Services Program has been providing services to unanticipated secondary migrant refugees since 2000. The Refugee Services program is designed to improve stability, independence, and overall quality of life for newcomers transitioning to Maine. Refugee Services employs multilingual/multicultural staff that provides case management, employment and cultural skills training to asylees, people pending asylum, visa holders, and unanticipated secondary migrants refugees that arrive and speak little or no English, have no housing arrangements, limited or no financial resources and no support connections.

Refugee Services is a founding member of the New Mainers Partnership, a collaboration of organizations led by Catholic Charities Maine Refugee and Immigration Services (CCM RIS) and that includes the City of Lewiston and the Portland and Lewiston Adult Education Programs. The New Mainers Partnership creates a seamless continuum of care model that delivers effective, linguistically and culturally appropriate services to primary refugees and unanticipated secondary migrants in Portland and Lewiston. All services are voluntary and client-directed with the goal of self-sufficiency.

### **The Refugee Services Program serves the following clients:**

- Unanticipated primary refugees who choose to leave their original resettlement state and move to Maine (secondary migrants)
- Refugees who have been in the U.S. for over a year
- Asylees who have been in the U.S. for over a year from the date they were granted asylum
- Clients who have applied for asylum but have not been granted asylum (pending asylum)
- Clients that have an immigration status other than refugee or asylee

### **Catholic Charities Maine Refugee and Immigration Services serves the following clients:**

- Primary refugees who have been resettled in **Maine** for five years or less
- Clients who have been granted asylum and have been in **Maine** for five years or less
- Unanticipated secondary migrants who relocate to **Lewiston**
- Secondary migrant refugees who have moved to Maine within **30 days** of their arrival in the US

## **The Refugee Services Program:**

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The Social Services Division Refugee Services Program provides New Mainers with vital services geared toward self-sufficiency. We provide support services in four areas: Case Management, trauma based services for torture survivors, Employment Case Management Services and Cultural Skills/Life Skills Training.

### **Case Management Services**

The Multilingual/Multicultural staff provides case management services to help unanticipated secondary migrants quickly establish a secure and independent situation for themselves and their family. During FY 15, Refugee Services Program staff assisted over 730 unduplicated individuals with case management services. This number reflects 339 new households. In FY 14 the Refugee Services Program staff assisted 1,305 unduplicated individuals with case management services including 328 new households.

Case management activities include (but are not limited to):

- Assistance locating emergency housing, obtaining emergency food and personal necessities
- Assistance securing and maintaining affordable permanent housing.
- Case planning and advocacy
- Liaison with the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Social Security Administration, Health Care Services and legal aid
- Information & Referrals to community resources
- Crisis Intervention and support services

### **Employment Case Management**

The Employment Case Manager plays a vital role in helping New Mainers establish economic self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. The Employment Case Management provided essential employment support services to the refugee community by offering job search and job retention assistance, information and referrals, and educational and training opportunities. They also work closely with the business community to educate them on the communities which are currently present in Portland and why they should hire these skilled laborers.

In FY 15 the Employment Case Manager opened 41 new cases, and provided ongoing employment services to a total of 63 individuals. This is compared to 110 new cases with an additional 69 individuals in FY 14. Top employment agencies working with the refugee population included Complete Labor & Staffing, HW Staffing, Inn by the Sea, Paradigm Windows, Nichols, and the Arwo Learning Center. Twenty-four (24) of these individuals obtained full-time positions, and earn an average hourly wage of \$8.62; and seventeen (17) secured part-time jobs with an average hourly salary of \$9.17.

Employment Case Managers provided direct services and referrals in the following areas:

- Employment Assessment
- Information about Vocational/Educational Opportunities
- Job Interview Techniques
- Job Development / Job Placement
- Employment Retention Counseling
- Workplace Mediation
- Information & Referrals to Community Resources, including the Maine Job Service (CareerCenter)

### **New Mainers-Refugee Workforce Development Project (NMRWDP) - Job Class & Networking Workshops**

This program is funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement, and Discretionary Targeted Assistant Program. The NMRWDP is a collaborative between Refugee Services, Portland and Lewiston Adult Education, the City of Lewiston and Catholic Charities Maine Refugee and Immigration Services (CCM RIS). Portland and Lewiston Adult Education offers an English Levels 2 and 3 Job Class and Levels 4, 5 and 6 Networking Workshops that teach intensive vocational English proficiency, composition and computer literacy. Students share personal stories and struggles about securing employment and in both classes, each participant learns about career exploration responding to ads, resume writing and online application skills/tools, how to conduct themselves in an interview, employer expectations, workplace culture, and how to retain a job.

Job Developers also attend the classes/workshops and are on-hand to assist attendees with job placement and retention services. Job Developers meet with employers to hear about job opportunities, explain the benefits of hiring refugees and developing position for refugees. They match refugees with available jobs depending on their skills and interest. After securing employment, they provide formal follow-up contact

at 30, 60 and 90 days post placement to assess their progress. The majority of jobs located are entry level positions; however refugees are also taught how to transfer their skills and every effort is made to help get promotions and higher paying positions.

### **Cross Cultural/Life Skills Training**

Cultural Skills Training provides education and orientation to New Mainers and the recipient community statewide. The focus of services is three-fold: [1] to provide a link between the local community and New Mainers to help foster increased awareness and community integration; [2] to educate the different communities, Case Managers, and service providers about cultural differences; and [3] to promote New Mainer Self-Sufficiency. Workshops for our consumers focus on helping New Mainers acclimate to their new environment, increase their knowledge of resources available in the greater Portland area and cultural awareness. Case Managers and service providers attend “Serving a Multicultural Community” that also provides training about the refugee experience and culture. A total of 567 individuals attended a total of 37 Cultural Skills workshops in FY 15.

Cultural Skills Training include:

- Welcome Orientations and Community Resources Workshops
- Understanding GA Guidelines
- Monthly Bus Tours (delivered in partnership with METRO during summer months)
- Winter Workshops (offered October to April)

### **Survivors of Torture (SOT)**

The City of Portland in collaboration with Catholic Charities Maine Refugee and Immigration Services (CCM RIS), Community Counseling Center (CCC) and Tri-County Mental Health Services (TCMHS) in Lewiston serves refugees and asylees who have been tortured and detained under the “color of law”. Clinicians, case managers and interpreters receive culturally competency training, trauma-informed treatment and services to support torture survivors’ recovery and ability to live independently.

Community Counseling Center (CCC) and TCMHS conduct assessments to determine if the person meets the SOT criteria. Once decided, the Clinicians develop a treatment plan which may include one-on-one or group therapy or medication. Every effort is made to offer treatment that is culturally-based and employs customs and traditions that build community connections in support of their healing and self-recovery. The client is then referred to a case manager either at Refugee Services or CCM RIS, depending on their status. Case managers identify goals for stability and connect them to resources that include: English language instruction, health and wellness care, immigration, and referrals to other agencies to provide intensive services victims of torture require.

This program is also funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement. The SOT Program serves refugees and asylees who meet the U.S. definition of torture: “an act committed by a person acting under the color of law specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering (other than pain or suffering incidental to lawful sanctions) upon another person within his custody or physical control.”

The program completed approximately 120 assessments, finding 69 individuals to meet the definition and be eligible for counseling services.

### **FY 2015 Program Highlights**

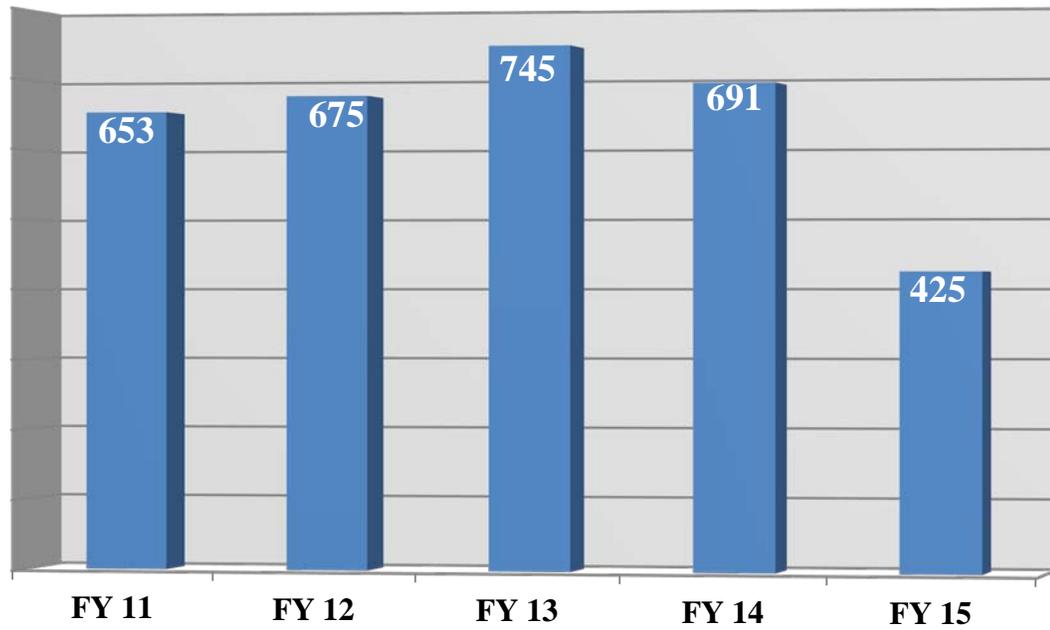
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- Refugee Services Program staff assisted over 730 unduplicated individuals with case management services. This number reflects 339 new households.

- The Employment Case Manager opened 41 new cases, and provided ongoing employment services to a total of 63 individuals.
- Of the individuals who received employment services, 16 found part-time employment and 25 found full-time employment.
- A total of 567 individuals attended a total of 37 Cultural Skills workshops.
- The program completed approximately 120 assessments, finding 69 individuals to meet the definition and be eligible for counseling services.

City of Portland, Maine  
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Social Services Division  
Refugee Services Program  
FY 2015 Year End Report

**5-Year Comparison of New Clients**  
(for all Refugee Services Programs)  
(Not New Arrivals to Portland)

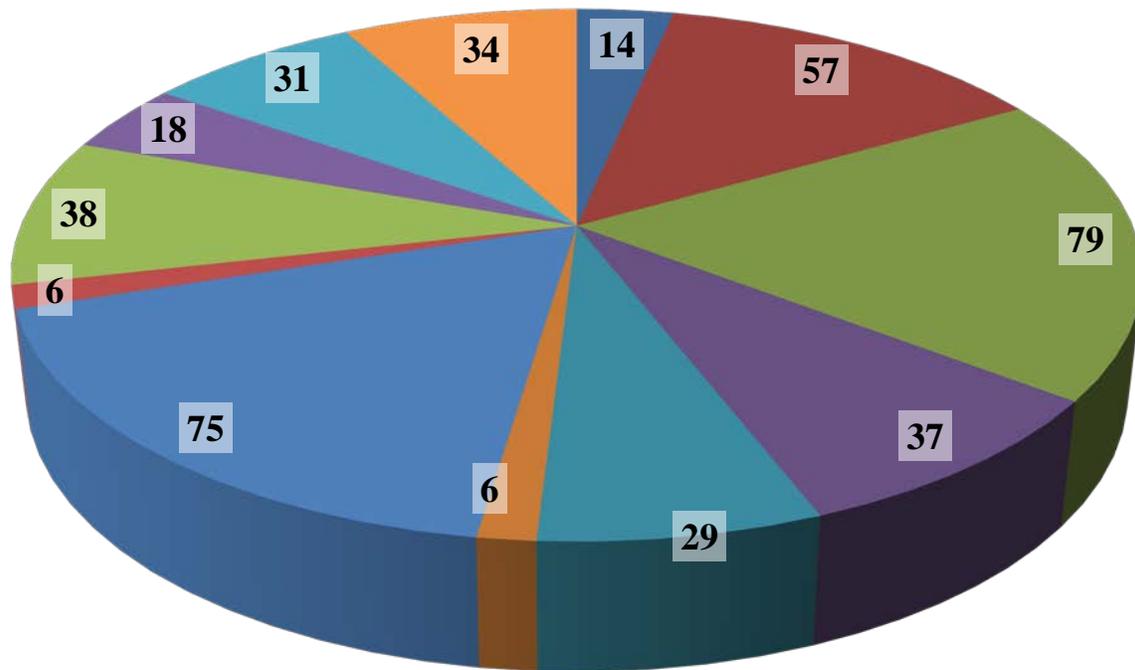


*\*Note: New Intakes includes families/individuals already living in Portland (not new arrivals to Portland) and newly arrived secondary migrant*

City of Portland, Maine  
 Health & Human Services Department  
 Social Services Division  
 Refugee Services Program  
 FY 2015 Year End Report

**Total of New Clients**  
**425 Unduplicated Individuals**

- Afghanistan
- Congo Brazzaville
- Rwanda
- Angola
- Eritrea
- Somalia
- Burundi
- Iraq
- Sudan
- Congo/Zaire
- Republic of South Sudan
- Other\*



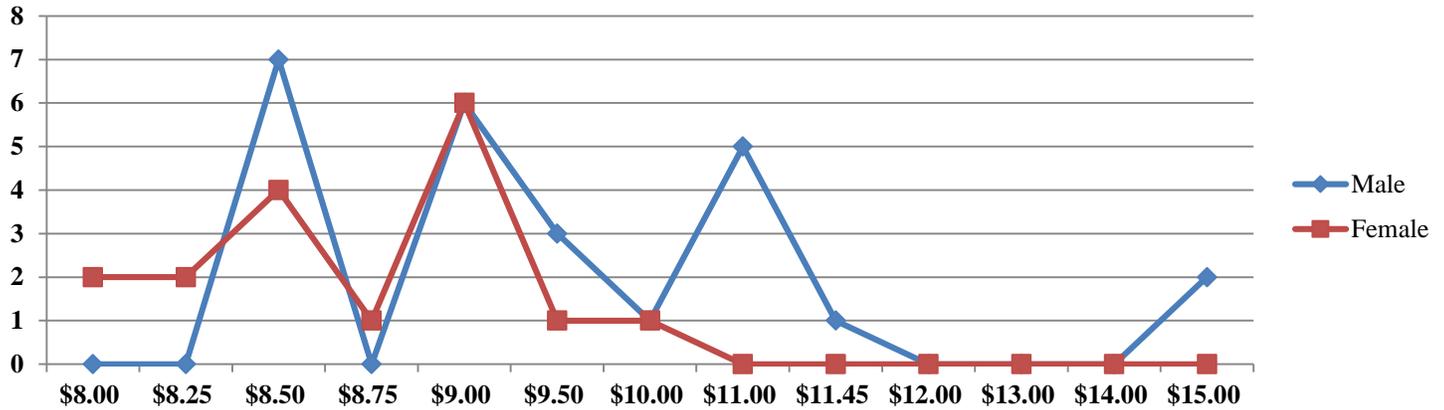
**Country of Origin**  
**New Mainers (Individuals)**

Afghanistan	14	Iraq	75
Angola	57	Rep. South Sudan	6
Burundi	79	Rwanda	38
Congo/Zaire	37	Somalia	18
Congo Brazzaville	29	Sudan	31
Eritrea	6	Other*	34

Other\* includes families and individuals from: Belgium, Cameroon, Cameroon, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Kuwait, South Africa, Soviet Union, Tanzania, Uganda

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 Social Services Division  
 Refugee Services Program  
 FY 2015 Year End Report

### Job Placement - Average Salary Range



**Total Number of Individuals Placed in Employment: 41**

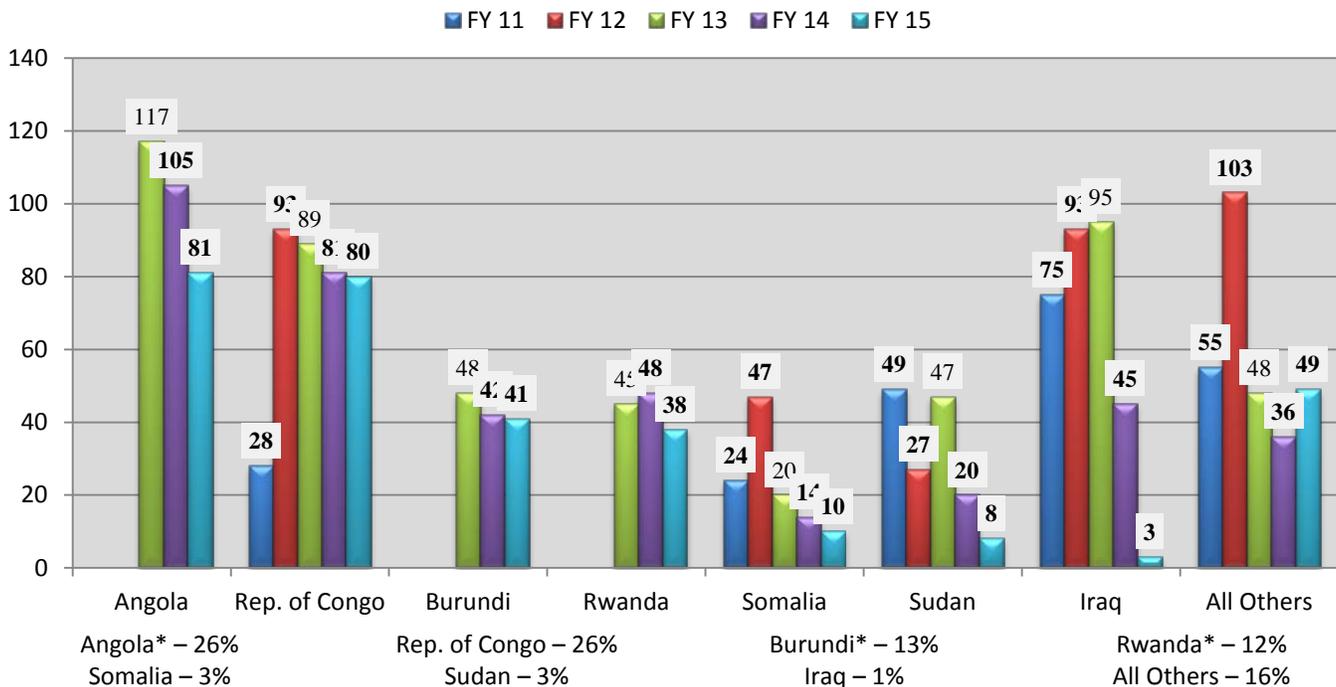
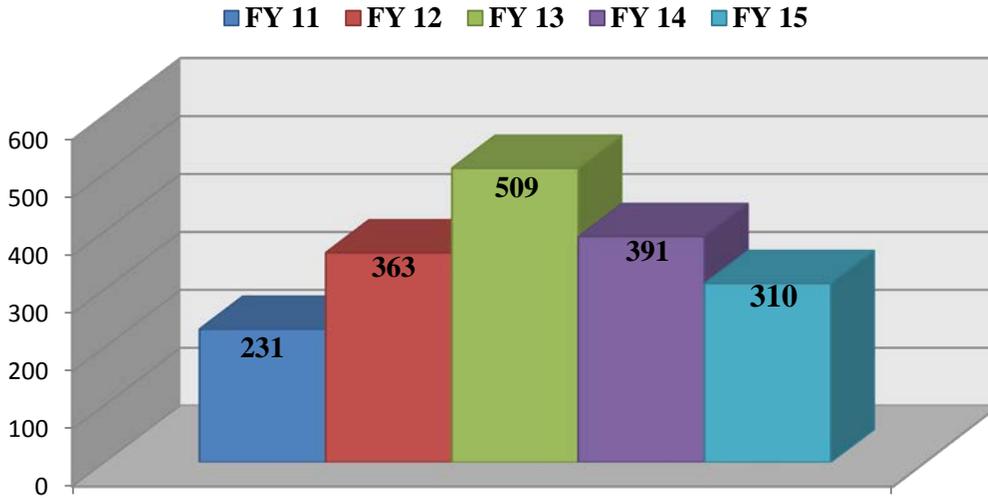
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Top Employers</u>
<b>Full-Time Employment</b>	19	6	Complete Labor & Staffing
<b>Part-Time Employment</b>	8	8	HW Staffing
<b>Average FT Wage</b>	\$7.38	\$11.12	Inn by the Sea
<b>Average PT Wage</b>	\$8.88	\$8.63	Paradigm Windows
			Nichols
			Arwo Learning Center

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 Social Services Division  
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 FY 2015 Year End Report

**REFUGEES/IMMIGRANTS/VISA HOLDERS/ASYLUM PENDING**

A total of 310 individuals, or 38% of all individuals residing in the Shelter

Total Number of New Mainers



"All Others" include: Afghanistan, Djibouti, South Africa

\*FY 13 is the first year tracking Angola, Burundi, and Rwanda, due to low numbers in previous years.

This group consists of visa holder families entering the US with visitor visas