

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



February 23, 2004

REFUGEE COORDINATOR LETTER NO. 04-04

TO: COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: LETTERS OF INTEREST ON BEHALF OF REFUGEES

It has come to my attention that there may be some misunderstanding in the refugee community about who may complete letters of interest on behalf of refugees. The purpose of this letter is to clarify the requirements on this issue. Letters of interest must be completed only by the voluntary resettlement agencies (VOLAGs). This is stipulated by agreement between the Department of State and the VOLAGs. Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) may assist in the accurate completion of these letters.

It is critical for letters of interest to be completed accurately; therefore, only one family member should file a letter of interest on behalf of the refugee with the local VOLAG. The MAAs may help by accompanying the family member to the VOLAG's office, by providing translation services, and by assisting the family member to understand the process. It is extremely important that the spelling of names, the birthdates, and the relationship information be correct as any inconsistency could result in a denial of the request and/or charges of impropriety.

Please contact Janet Sandlin at (916) 654-1246 or Kathy Noble at (916) 654-1376 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by
Thuan Nguyen on 2/23/04*

THUAN NGUYEN, Chief
Refugee Programs Bureau