



FACT SHEET



Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program

Background

The Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP) is supervised by the California Department of Social Services, Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB) and administered by county welfare departments. The RPB manages and coordinates the CHEP within federal regulations, funding availability, and the California State Plan for Refugee/Entrant Assistance and Services. The CHEP is funded by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to provide eligible Cuban/Haitian Entrants with medical assistance, cash assistance, and social services.

Cuban and Haitian nationals are given their "entrant status" after they arrive in this country and may be determined to be unable to return to their respective countries. Cuban and Haitian entrants are eligible for CHEP under Title V (Fascell-Stone Amendment) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980.

Cuban and Haitian nationals who are neither refugees nor asylees may also be eligible for ORR-funded assistance programs. They are the only population eligible for assistance and services while they are in removal proceedings, paroled, or awaiting an asylum determination. These clients retain eligibility for services even if the validity period of their parole status expires. However, these individuals must show documentation that confirms their nationality and their immigration status in order to receive ORR-funded benefits and services.

Parole Status

Some 12,000 to 16,000 Cuban nationals annually are granted a public interest parole for travel to the United States (U.S.) under the U.S. Cuban Migration accords. These individuals are known as "Cuban lottery parolees" and are eligible for CHEP services. Parole is a

temporary status granted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) pursuant to the Attorney General's authority under the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA), Section 212(d)(5). Individuals may be granted parole for humanitarian reasons, or for emergent or compelling reasons of "significant public benefit."

Documentation

Acceptable documentation for CHEP eligibility includes a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services I-94 Card (Arrival/Departure Card) showing a current parole stamp, indicating status under the INA, Section 212(d)(5), Cuban or Haitian nationality, and the date of parole. Lottery parolees are documented with a parole stamp in a Cuban passport and an I-94 Card showing their date of entry. Cuban or Haitian parolees who adjust their immigration status under applicable legislation would continue to be eligible for CHEP benefits even if the parole status expires.

Program and Benefits

Cuban and Haitian entrants are eligible for assistance and services, such as Entrant Cash Assistance and Entrant Medical Assistance programs, for a period of up to eight months from the date of entry or release from DHS custody. Cuban entrants who adjust their immigration status under the Cuban Adjustment Act may continue to be eligible for refugee services after the adjustment; however, they lose eligibility for CHEP benefits if they become U.S. citizens.

For the telephone number and location of your county welfare department, please visit www.cwda.org/resources.htm.