



Resource Sheet for New Asylees and Services Providers

California Department of Public Health,

Office of Refugee Health

go.cdph.ca.gov/refugee-health

Office of Refugee Health

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NEW ASYLEE ORIENTATION

California Office of Refugee Health, San Francisco Newcomer's Health, and United States Immigration and Citizenship (USCIS) partners present a monthly virtual orientation for persons granted asylum status. Service providers and attorneys also welcomed.

See CA Office of Refugee Health website for Information and Resources for Asylees
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/ORH/Pages/Asylee-Information.aspx>

See SF.GOV for asylee orientation invite, videos in English and Spanish, plus presentation slides:
<https://www.sf.gov/resource/2023/new-asylee-orientation-materials-and-resources>

HOW TO OBTAIN A REFUGEE/ASYLEE HEALTH ASSESSMENT

The California Refugee Health Assessment Program provides comprehensive health assessment for refugees and asylees as well other Office of Refugee Resettlement Populations.

- Includes many vaccines and tests required for application of adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident (green card).

List of Refugee Health Clinics in CA

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/ORH/Pages/Refugee%20Health%20Clinics.aspx>

HOW TO FIND A MEDICAL PROVIDER FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO DO NOT LIVE IN A HEALTH ASSESSMENT CLINIC AREA OR WHO DO NOT QUALIFY FOR SERVICES

- Use the Find a Health Center Locator to find a local federally qualified health center
<https://www.findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>
- **Print and bring:** Office of Refugee Health's "[Recommended Health Screening Guidelines for Physicians who Serve Newly Arrived Refugee, Asylum Seeker, Asylee, and Humanitarian Parolee Populations in CA](#)".

Note: *The guidelines contain the list of vaccines and tests necessary for application of adjustment of status to lawful permanent residency/green card.*

HOW TO OBTAIN VACCINES AND RECORDS

For routine & COVID-19 Vaccines use any of the following:

- MyTurn Website to make an appointment <https://myturn.ca.gov/>
- [Refugee Health Assessment Program Clinics.](#)
- Primary care provider.
- Federally Qualified Health Centers [Find a Health Center \(hrsa.gov\)](#)
- Pharmacies in CA offer certain vaccines.

Vaccine Records

- For records of all vaccines administered in California visit the California Immunization Registry.
- After 2023, overseas immunizations administered by panel physicians for derivative asylees will also be visible in the CA record system.

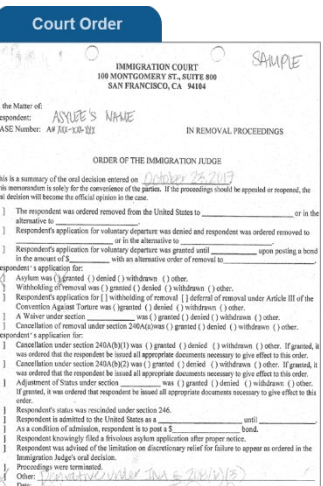
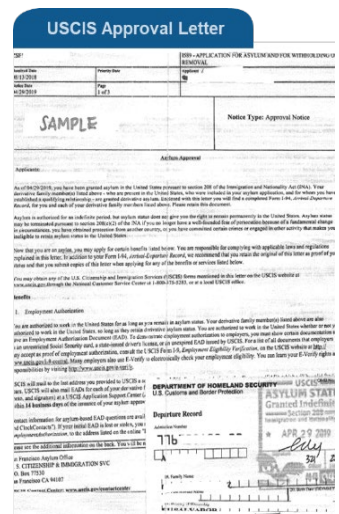
<https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov>

*must provide name, date of birth, and phone number or email.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Asylum Approval Letter from United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or Court Order from Immigration Court

- Asylum approval letter is a critical immigration document which serves as proof of new status.
- Date granted is stamped within the approval letter.
- Grant letter is necessary to obtain services and benefits as a new asylee.
- The date granted also begins the timeline to apply for spouse or minor-aged children under 21yrs to the asylee in the United States, if they live abroad.

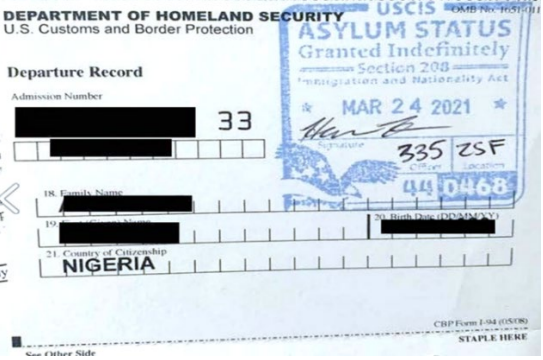


I-94



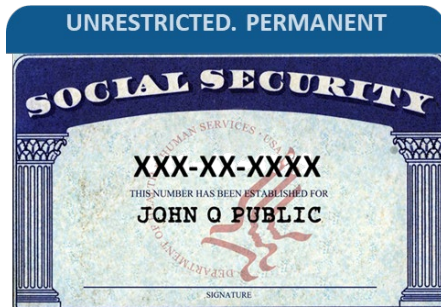
The I-94 is a second critical immigration document, that also verifies Immigration status.

- All new asylees need both the asylum approval letter PLUS an I-94. See example of the document.
- Until an asylee has lawful permanent residency (green card) they will need to show the I-94 to new employers to verify immigration status in the federal system.
- Asylees granted by USCIS Asylum Office automatically receive I-94 with grant letter.
- Asylees granted in an immigration court by a judge who do not receive an I-94 in the mail within 60 days post-grant should contact USCIS.
- Asylees granted in an immigration court by a judge may already possess an I-94 from Customs and Border Patrol (CBP). However, CBP does NOT have the current immigration status. Asylees MUST obtain

Example I-94 Card



USCIS Contact Center
Open 8am-8pm M-F Eastern Time
800-375-5283

<p>a new I-94 from USCIS which reflects new status by calling the USCIS Contact Center.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To fix an error on the I-94, call the USCIS Contact Center. 	
<p>Employment Authorization Document (EAD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asylees are immediately authorized to work. An EAD is not necessary to work as an asylee. Asylees only apply or renew an EAD if a federal form of photo identification is wanted or needed. For asylees who currently have an EAD that will expire soon and need a federal form of identification, the validity of the EAD has been extended 540 days. However, to receive the 540-day extension, people MUST file to renew their EAD by mail or online BEFORE it expires. This will generate a receipt notice with period of renewal. 	<p>USCIS EAD application https://www.uscis.gov/i-765</p> <p>Example Employment Authorization Document (EAD)</p> 
<p>Social Security Number (SSN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique lifetime identifier necessary for employment, taxation, and retirement benefits in U.S. Guard your number against theft! <p>First Time Applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit local field office. Bring asylum grant letter to apply for all individuals granted asylum. Adults need a form of valid form of photo ID such as unexpired passport or Employment Authorization Document. Social Security card arrives in about 30 days. <p>How to Change from a Restricted Social Security Card to an Unrestricted Social Security Card</p> <p>A restricted card, the card will be imprinted with the words "Valid for Work Only with DHS Authorization." See example of a card that is Restricted and Temporary.</p> <p>Return as soon as possible to Social Security Administration with your restricted card to update immigration status in the federal system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit local field office. Bring asylum grant letter, restricted card, and valid form of photo ID. Verify that Social Security Administration has current mailing address on file. Card arrives in approximately 30 days. The new card will have same social security number as before, but 	<p>Social Security Administration Office Locator https://www.ssa.gov/locator/ National number: 1-800-772-1213</p>  

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NO restrictive wording. See example of an Unrestricted Permanent card.

Standard California Identification and Driver's License (Federally Non-Compliant)

- May not be used as a form of federally compliant identity to enter federal facilities or board domestic airline flights within the U.S. beginning May 7, 2025.
- Standard "Non Federal Compliant ID has a picture of a man in the upper right hand corner and is stamped with the words "Federal Limits Apply"
- To apply, bring valid form of photo ID, proof of social security number, 2 proofs of your current address, and fees.
- Individuals may request a cost reduction form if enrolled in any public benefit program from Human/Social services and bring it to the DMV.

California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
<https://www.dmv.ca.gov>
 Beware of "look alike" DMV websites.



Real ID and Driver's License (Federally Compliant)

- May be used for entry to federal facilities or to board domestic airline flights within the U.S. In the absence of another form of federal identity document such as a valid passport or valid EAD, a Real ID will be required by May 7, 2025.
- Picture of a bear and star in the upper right corner. The standard ID does NOT have the bear and star.
- To apply, bring asylum grant letter, I-94, valid form of photo ID, proof of social security number, 2 proofs of current address, and fees.
- Individuals may request a cost reduction form if enrolled in any public benefit program from Human/Social services and bring it to the DMV.



PUBLIC BENEFIT PROGRAMS FOR FOOD, CASH, AND MEDICAL CARE COVERAGE

CA State Fact Sheet Regarding Benefits for Asylees

- Contains notice that asylees are not subject to public charge and contains a list of benefit programs for asylees.

California Refugee Program's Bureau Fact Sheet
https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Refugee/FactSheets/Asylee_Fact_Sheet.pdf

CalFresh-Food Assistance (federally known as the SNAP)

- Federally funded monthly food assistance program for low-income households.
- Benefit is loaded monthly on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to use at participating stores including many farmer's markets.

Program Description: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfresh>

Example Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Card



Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) (federally level Refugee Cash Assistance)

- Employment Service Program for single or married refugees/asylees without minor age children in the household in the U.S.
- Provides time-limited 12 months of assistance.
- Cash benefits are loaded monthly on EBT card.
- Participation required in daily employment-related activities (such as learning English).

Program Description: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/refugees>

CalWORKs for Families – Cash Assistance (federally known as TANF)

- Employment Service Based Program for families with minor children ages 19 and under.
- Benefits are loaded monthly on an EBT card.
- Assistance is time limited for adults.
- Participation required in daily employment-related activities by head(s) of household (such as learning English).

Program Description: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/calworks>

Medi-Cal (federally known as Medicaid)

- Provides health care coverage to low-income individuals for medical costs for primary care, hospital care, prescription medicine, dental care, vision care, and no-cost transport to medical appointments.

Program Description: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals>

Example Medi-Cal Card



How to Choose a Managed Health Plan

- After enrollment into Medi-Cal, all beneficiaries must choose a Managed Health Plan.
- Choice form automatically arrives in mail.
- Fill and return or call to register choice of doctor or clinic with the Health Care Options Choice Line.
- If a choice is not registered by the individual, the state will choose a plan and primary care provider in default and send the plan card to the mailing address on file.

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- For all non-emergency needs, individuals MUST use the primary care provider “PCP/Clinic” listed on the managed plan card or call the managed health care plan to make a new selection.
- For transport, call managed health care plan to set up transport to medical appointments at no cost.
- For interpretation, call the managed health care plan to set up interpretation for all medical and dental appointments at no cost.
- For all medical visits, bring Medi-Cal card, the Managed Health Care Plan Card, and photo ID.

Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Plan Directory:

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MMCDHealthPlanDir.aspx>

Department of Health Care Options Choice Line
Open Monday-Friday 8am-6pm Pacific Time
1-800-430-4263

Example Medi-Cal Managed Health Care Plan Card

L.A. Care
Medi-Cal

lacare.org

Name:
Member ID: Effective Date:

PCP/Clinic:
PCP/Clinic Phone:
Medical Group:

Find a Dentist through Medi-Cal

- Use your Medi-Cal card to access services.
- Be sure to verify dental provider accepts Medi-Cal.

www.smilecalifornia.org

1-800-322-6384

No-Cost Transport to Medical, Dental, Pharmacy and Lab Visits through Medi-Cal

- No-cost transport is available to individuals with straight Medi-Cal (usually first 60 days of enrollment) and those with a Medi-Cal Managed Health Care Plan (usually chosen or assigned after 60 days that Medi-Cal has been active).

CA Office of Refugee Health client facing tool: [How to Get a Ride to the Doctor, Dentist, or Pharmacy](#) explains no-cost transport support for Medi-Cal beneficiaries with straight Medi-Cal or a Medi-Cal Managed Health Care Plan

List of [Transport Providers for Medi-Cal Beneficiaries who are NOT yet enrolled into a Managed Health Care Plan](#)

HOW TO APPLY FOR PUBLIC BENEFIT PROGRAMS

Public Benefit Programs: CalFresh (food), Medi-Cal (healthcare coverage), and CalWORKs/Refugee Cash Assistance (employment/cash) programs.

Must meet income eligibility and provide the following:

- Asylum Grant Letter
- I-94

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- Social Security Card or Application Receipt
- Valid Photo ID
- 2 Proofs of Current Address
- Vaccine Records for Minor Children
- Most recent bank statements or declaration that applicant does not have a bank account which lists sources and how much income earned.
- Rental contract or declaration about housing address and cost to stay.
- Car owners need to bring vehicle registration.
- Pregnant women should bring proof of pregnancy letter from medical provider (if available).
- Individuals age 18+ who are no longer in high school should apply for cash aid separately (RCA program), even if residing in the same household as other family members/applicants for CalWORKS cash aid.

**Discuss with the county eligibility worker any documents that you do not have or are in the process of obtaining.*

Apply Online

<https://benefitscal.com>

Apply In Person: Local County Human or Social Service Agency Locators:

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/Pages/CountyOffices.aspx>

HOW TO OBTAIN HEALTH INSURANCE IF YOUR INCOME IS TOO HIGH TO QUALIFY FOR MEDI-CAL

1. Insurance through Employment

- Individuals may have to wait for open enrollment period (usually November- January).

2. Covered California

- If employer does not offer insurance, individuals have **60 days** of a qualifying life event (which includes loss of Medi-Cal or change of immigration status to a new asylee) to buy health insurance through the state health insurance exchange Covered California.
- If you do not buy insurance, you will face a state tax penalty at the end of the year. Individuals can add dental and vision plan coverage.

Find a no cost Covered California Agent by Phone or in Person. Search by city and language spoken. Beware of 'look alike' websites.

<https://www.coveredca.com/>

PROGRAMS FOR ELDERLY, BLIND, AND/OR DISABLED

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- Program that provides monthly payments for individuals 65+, those with a disability or blindness who have income and resources below specific financial limits.
- To read more visit: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11051.pdf>
- To apply, visit your local Social Security Administration Field Office.

In Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

- Provides assistance in the home for individuals with a disability, blindness or elderly as an alternative to nursing home care with necessary daily life activities such as bathing, cooking, and cleaning.
- Individual must have Medi-Cal to qualify.
- To read more visit: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/in-home-supportive-services>
- Must apply through the local county Human/Social Services Agency.

BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Medi-Cal Beneficiaries can access Mental Health and Well-being Referrals to mental health services with referrals generally made through an individual’s primary care provider.

Call the primary care provider or managed health care plan for link to care.

California Mental Health Crisis 24/7 Hotline

- The 988 hotline offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors that provide free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
- Dial the phone number: 988

County Mental Health Departments 24/7 Hotlines

<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MHPContactList.aspx>

LEGAL RESOURCES

Licensed Attorney, Immigration Lawyer Search

<https://apps.calbar.ca.gov/attorney/LicenseeSearch/QuickSearch?FreeText=>

Licensed Accredited Legal Representative

Individuals listed are accredited by the Department of Justice to assist with immigration related applications and may charge lower fees than immigration attorneys.

www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-accreditation-roster-reports

American Immigration Legal Association Service Directory

Search for licensed immigration attorneys state by state according to specialty.

<https://www.aialawyer.com/>

UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES (USCIS)

USCIS Website

<http://www.uscis.gov>

Only use the **official** government USCIS website. Tools include ‘search our site’ feature to read on specific immigration topics, find commonly needed forms, learn processing times, apply for some benefits online, check the status of your case, learn how to change your address, or look up current processing times.

USCIS FORMS COMMONLY NEEDED BY ASYLEES IN THE FIRST YEAR

AR-11 Change of Address Form

<https://www.uscis.gov/addresschange>

- All non-citizen immigrants MUST report each change of address to USCIS within 10 days of each move.
- This is a mandatory requirement until an individual naturalizes as a U.S. citizen.
- Online filing generates immediate proof that change has been filed.

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Family Reunification

The date people are granted asylum begins a two-year window of time in which they may file the Refugee/Asylee Relative Petition Form I-730 to bring spouse and unmarried children under age 21 to the U.S. as derivative asylees.

USCIS sheet [“I am a refugee or asylee. How do I help my relative get refugee or asylee status in the United States?”](#)

USCIS Form I-730

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-730>

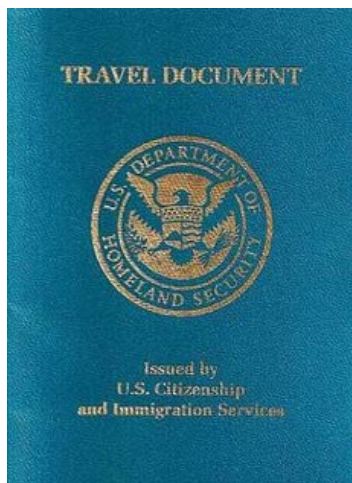
Refugee Travel Document

- People must have a Refugee Travel Document to return to the U.S. if you have refugee or asylee status or Green Card based on refugee or asylee status.
- If people do not obtain a Refugee Travel Document before they leave the U.S., they may be unable to re-enter or may be placed in removal proceedings before a judge.
- You must check with the consulate of the country you intend to visit to inquire whether a Refugee Travel Document will be accepted for entry.
- It may take many months to process an application so exercise caution if buying non-refundable tickets.

USCIS sheet [“I am a refugee or asylee. How do I get a Refugee Travel Document”](#)

USCIS Form I-131 <https://www.uscis.gov/i-131>

Example of Refugee Travel Document



ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS TO LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENT/GREEN CARD

Asylees no longer must wait 1 year to adjust status to a green card holder. They can apply any time after being granted asylum. However, USCIS will not process the application until they are present in the United States for at least 365 days.

- There are **two** components to apply for adjustment of status to Lawful Permanent Resident.
 - Form I-693 *Report of Immigration Medical Examination and Vaccination Record* **AND**
 - Form I-485 *Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status*.

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- You are not required to submit both forms together.
- Filing the I-693 with Form I-485 may eliminate the need for USCIS to issue a Request for Evidence.
- For asylees, the I-693 form can only be completed by a USCIS registered medical doctor called a “civil surgeon.”
- Use the USCIS Locator Tool to find a list of local civil surgeons to complete the I-693 medical exam <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/find-a-civil-surgeon>
- Forms properly completed and signed by a civil surgeon do not expire and can be used indefinitely as evidence.

For more information, please visit the [USCIS Green Card for Asylees page](#)

USCIS sheet [“I am a refugee or asylee. How do I become a U.S. permanent resident?”](#)

USCIS Form I-693 <https://www.uscis.gov/i-693>

USCIS Form I-485 <https://www.uscis.gov/i-485>

Fee Waiver Guidance for USCIS Form I-485

<https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees/additional-information-on-filing-a-fee-waiver>

Permanent Resident (Green Card) Example



HOW TO REGISTER FOR MANDATORY SELECTIVE SERVICE (MALES AGED 18-25 YEARS)

The Selective Service is a list of names maintained by the U.S. government to use in case a national emergency requires expansion of the Armed Forces.

- Registering with Selective Service is NOT signing up for the Armed Forces.
- Register at your local United States Post Office or Online. Online registration generates automatic receipt/proof of registration.
- Keep proof of registration.
- Required for citizenship and financial aid.
- Register Online: <https://www.sss.gov>

EDUCATION RESOURCES

USA Learns

- No cost resource to learn English online.

<https://www.USALearns.org>

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USA Hello <ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost resource for cultural orientation, U.S. laws and customs, English classes. https://usahello.org/
California Adult Education Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">Many free classes in English, Citizenship Exam Preparation, and High School Diploma (GED). https://caladulthood.org/
California Vocational Schools Directory <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lists all <u>accredited</u> trade schools. http://california-vocational-schools.com
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) www.fafsa.ed.gov <ul style="list-style-type: none">Used by all students in the U.S. to determine eligibility for government financial assistance to help cover costs for college/university/ and vocational schooling.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR GENERAL HELP, FOOD, HOUSING
General Phone Resource Phone Line <ul style="list-style-type: none">Call 2-1-1 from anywhere in California to ask for assistance to find a particular resource. Dial 2-1-1
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) food program <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides supplemental food and diapers to families with children aged five and under and/or pregnant individuals in income-qualified households. https://www.myfamily.wic.ca.gov/
Food Banks in CA <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides support to address food insecurity at no-cost, often on a weekly basis, with canned and fresh groceries distributed as sites in the community. www.cafoodbanks.org/our-members/ https://www.cdss.ca.gov/food-banks
Housing Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">Housing programs may vary by county. For more information on local housing programs, please visit your County's Housing Department Website or search using the key word <i>Affordable Housing</i> to enroll in non-profit provider lists regarding openings in your area.California Department of Social Services Housing and Homeless ProgramsAfghan Support and Investment Program - CDSS program that provides rental support to new Afghan arrivals including new asylees. Applications will be accepted through May 31, 2025.
RESOURCES TO SAVE MONEY
California Lifeline Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">State program for discounted cell phone services to low-income eligible households. www.californialifeline.com

<p>No-Cost Smart Phone Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Federal program for qualified low-income households for one free cell phone per household with unlimited text, call, and subsidized data plan. Must only choose one provider. Apply online. Phone arrives in mail directly from company. <p>Link to Application for Tag Mobile</p> <p>Link to Application for Assurance Wireless</p>	
<p>Affordable Connectivity Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Federal program for low-income households for discounted internet service and discounts on laptops, tablets, desktop computers. <p>https://acpbenefit.org/</p>	
<p>CARE Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">For discount on electric and gas bills for eligible households.Link to CARE Program	
<p>Comcast Internet Essentials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">For internet service at a discount for low-income families with children. <p>https://www.internetessentials.com</p>	
<p>Low-Cost Internet Service and Computers</p> <p>https://www.everyoneon.org/find-offers</p>	
<p>FREE Guided Tax Preparation</p> <p>https://irs.gov</p>	
<p>NO-COST INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION SUPPORT</p>	
<p>Tarjimly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">No cost translation/interpretation service.Connects refugees and immigrants with volunteer translators via a free mobile app, where they can text, send voice notes or get on an internet call. <p>https://www.tarjimly.org</p>	