

Medical Examinations for U.S. Bound Refugees

Refugee Health Program
Cross-Cutting Epidemiology, Programs and Partnerships Section
Infectious Disease, Epidemiology and Prevention Division



Types of Medical Exams

- **Overseas Visa Medical Examination**
 - United States Public Health Service
- **Domestic Refugee Health Assessment**
 - Minnesota Department of Health
- **Adjustment of Status Medical Examination**
 - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
 - Needed to obtain a Green Card
 - Adjusts status from temporary to permanent resident



Overseas Visa Medical Examination

- Mandatory for refugees and immigrants
- Completed by Panel Physicians trained and overseen by CDC
- Is exclusionary in nature
- Results recorded on Department of State forms: DS-2054, DS-3030, DS-3025, DS-3026, Pre-departure Medical screening



Medical Screening for Entry into the United States

Excludable or Inadmissible conditions*

- Communicable diseases of public health significance
- Physical and mental disorders with associated harmful behaviors
- Psychoactive substance abuse and dependence
- Other physical or mental abnormalities, disorders or disabilities

*Classified as Class A medical conditions by panel physicians who complete the required overseas examinations.



Communicable Diseases of Public Health Significance

- Infectious tuberculosis
- Syphilis
- Gonorrhea
- Hansen's disease (leprosy)
- Vaccine Preventable Diseases
- Quarantinable diseases such as cholera, pandemic influenza
- Events reportable as public health emergencies such as Polio, SARS, influenza

Source: [CDC Immigrant, Refugee, and Migrant Health: Diseases and Vaccines Included \(www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/exams/diseases-vaccines-included.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/exams/diseases-vaccines-included.html)

Communicable Diseases of Public Health Significance

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

- Mumps
- Measles
- Rubella
- Polio
- Tetanus
- Diphtheria
- Pertussis
- *Haemophilus influenzae* Type B
- Rotavirus
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal disease
- Varicella
- Pneumococcal pneumonia
- Influenza

Source: [CDC Immigrant, Refugee, and Migrant Health: Diseases and Vaccines Included](http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/exams/diseases-vaccines-included.html)
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Quarantinable Diseases Designated by Presidential Executive Order

- Cholera
- Diphtheria
- Infectious tuberculosis
- Plague
- Smallpox
- Yellow Fever
- Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers
- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)
- Pandemic Influenza viruses

Source: [CDC Immigrant, Refugee, and Migrant Health: Diseases and Vaccines Included \(www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/exams/diseases-vaccines-included.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/exams/diseases-vaccines-included.html)

Events Reportable as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) to WHO

A PHEIC is defined as an extraordinary event which is determined:

- (i) to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and
- (ii) to potentially require a coordinated international response.¹

Examples include: Smallpox, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Pandemic Influenza, and other public health emergencies of international concern

Source: [World Health Organization \(https://www.who.int/\)](https://www.who.int/)



Types of Medical Exams Overview – Health Assessment

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Domestic Refugee Health Screening: Best Practices

- Exam within the first 90 days of arrival
- Public health clinics and/or private providers

Goal:

- To protect the health of local, state and national populations through:
 - Health assessment
 - Treatment
 - Referral
- to reduce health-related barriers to successful resettlement



National Guidance on Domestic Refugee Health Screening

- Developed in collaboration with:
 - **HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)**: Revised Medical Screening Guidelines for Newly Arriving Refugees (www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/policy-guidance/revised-medical-screening-guidelines-newly-arriving-refugees)
 - **Centers for Disease Control Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ/CDC)**: Guidance for the U.S. Domestic Medical Examination for Newly Arriving Refugees (www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/guidelines/domestic-guidelines.html)

Minnesota Domestic Refugee Health Screening Guidance
(www.health.state.mn.us/communities/rih/guide/index.html)

CareRef

- Use CareRef to generate age and sex specific screening guidance by country of nationality:
[CareRef \(https://careref.web.health.state.mn.us/\)](https://careref.web.health.state.mn.us/)
- Integrates the most current CDC's refugee screening guidance.
 - Note: Some of the Minnesota screening guidance differs from the CDC guidance based on input from local experts and MDH screening guidance.





Types of Medical Exams – Adjustment of Status

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What is a “Green Card”?

- **Refugees:** adjusts immigration status from Lawful Temporary Resident (LTR) to Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR); provides permanent residence and work authorization.
- **Immigrants:** permission to reside and work in the United States.

Adjustment of Status Exam (Green Card Exam)

- Civil Surgeon **MUST** perform the **full** physical exam needed for immigrants and asylees
- Local public health medical director may act as civil surgeon for refugees
- **ONLY** immunizations are needed for refugees and derivative asylees unless they arrived with a Class A medical waiver
- [USCIS \(www.uscis.gov\)](http://www.uscis.gov) for needed information and forms

Requirements to be a Civil Surgeon

- Licensed physician
- Four years professional experience beyond internship and residency
- Good standing with local and state medical boards
- Authorized to work in the U.S.
- Must apply via USCIS
 - not applicable for local public health (LPH) physician acting as civil surgeon; LPH gets a blanket designation to perform exam

Adjustment of Status for Refugees and Derivative Refugees/Asylees

Refugees

Derivative Refugees and Asylees

No medical exam unless arrived with Class A condition, then complete exam is required

Vaccination requirements only

*Derivative refugees and asylees need to apply for adjustment of status within one year of eligibility to avoid a complete medical exam.

I-693 can be signed by state or local health department officials who meet definition of civil surgeon

I-693 has to be signed by civil surgeon

Signed I-693 given to refugees and derivative asylees in sealed envelope.

Immunizations for Adjustment of Status Exam

- **Select** vaccinations recommended by the *Advisory committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)* are **required** for everyone applying to adjust their status.
- Visa Adjustment vaccine requirements by age
 - [CDC: Vaccination Technical Instructions for Civil Surgeons](http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/civil-surgeons/vaccinations.html)
(www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/civil-surgeons/vaccinations.html)
 - [Table 1: Vaccine Requirements According to Applicant Age](http://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/civil-surgeons/vaccinations.html#anchor_1506449934815)
(www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/civil-surgeons/vaccinations.html#anchor_1506449934815)