



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

**ROY COOPER** • Governor

**MANDY COHEN, MD, MPH** • Secretary

**SUSAN OSBORNE** • Assistant Secretary for County Operations for  
Human Services

February 19, 2021

**Dear County Directors of Social Services**

**Attention:** Work First Managers and Supervisors, Medicaid Managers and Supervisors

**Subject:** Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance Certifications  
3<sup>rd</sup> Extension Period

**Priority:** Information and Action

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

In response to the continued impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on residents, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), is providing states with an option to request waivers to extend cash assistance and medical assistance for a third certification period. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) has accepted this waiver, and will extend the certification periods for all eligible Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) cases for participants with Date of Entry between April 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020, with the additional months not extending beyond April 30, 2021.

**II. POLICY PROCEDURES**

Specifically, upon request, ORR will waive 45 C.F.R. § 400.211, the normal process for determining the eligibility period, and will extend the eligibility period for clients who became eligible for RCA and/or RMA between April 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020, with the additional months not extending beyond April 30, 2021. For clients who became eligible for RCA and/or RMA on or after September 1, 2020, the eligibility period will remain eight months.

**III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The caseworker will key a Forced Eligibility – Cash and/or Medical application on the Income Support Case that contains the Refugee Cash Assistance and/or Refugee Medical Assistance PDC. The Refugee Cash Assistance and/or Refugee Medical Assistance program should be selected. Refer to “Forced Eligibility for Income Support Medical Assistance, Special Assistance & Cash Assistance” in NC FAST Help, for additional assistance.

**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES • ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES**

LOCATION: 820 S. Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building, Raleigh, NC 27603  
MAILING ADDRESS: 2420 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2420  
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-527-6300 • FAX: 919-334-1265

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

To prepare for the extension, the following will occur:

1. Refugee Resettlement Agencies will notify the county of which clients may potentially be eligible for extended RCA and/or RMA benefits. After receiving the notification, the caseworker will either reopen or extend RCA and/or RMA cases for all Refugee arrivals between April 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020, accordingly. Counties will be able to conduct telephone interviews in-place of face to face interviews.
2. NC FAST will create reports titled "COVID-19: Extend Eligibility Period for Refugee Cash Assistance" and "COVID-19: Extend Eligibility Period for Refugee Medical Assistance" that can be used to confirm the identity of potential clients. The reports are located under Economic Services Reports, RA Section in NC FAST Help. NC FAST will send a communication once the reports are available.

Mapping for the reports:

Economic Services> COVID-19> Reports> Refugee Cash Assistance> COVID-19:  
[20210218 RCA 8mos ending feb2021 apr2021](#)

Economic Services> COVID-19> Reports> Refugee Medical Assistance> COVID-19:  
[20210218 RMA 8mos ending feb2021 apr2021](#)

## **REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE**

Previous clients whose cases have closed, clients whose benefits are about to terminate or who successfully exited the program and then subsequently either lost employment, sustained a reduction in hours, or are unable to gain employment and who are unable to access other assistance such as unemployment insurance or COVID-19 pandemic unemployment assistance would requalify for RCA.

1. Client's statement of employment termination or reduction in hours are acceptable.
2. The extension periods will start the following month the client lost employment or experienced a reduction in hours due to COVID-19.
3. Certification periods will not be extended for clients who became eligible for RCA on or after September 1, 2020, the eligibility period will remain at eight months. These RCA cases will be processed as normal with an 8-month certification process. See examples below:

Scenario one, client A has refugee status; arrived in the United States May 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RCA benefits. RCA eligibility period begin date May 1, 2019 through end date December 31, 2019. Client received RCA for three (3) months, became employed and successfully exited the program in August 2019. Client was laid off in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and has no income. Client reapplies for RCA benefits in April 2020. Client would be eligible for additional months of RCA through April 30, 2021.

Scenario two, client B received granted asylum letter (refugee status) on September 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RCA benefits on November 1st. RCA eligibility period begin date November 1, 2019 through eligibility end date April 30, 2020. Client is now eligible to receive RCA eligibility effective date November 1, 2019 through April 30, 2021.

Scenario three, client C with refugee status of Special Immigrant Visa Holder (SIV) date of entry February 1, 2020. Client was screened and awarded RCA benefits. RCA eligibility period begin date February 1, 2020 through end date April 30, 2021.

## **REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

Previous clients whose cases have closed, clients whose benefits are about to terminate or who successfully exited the program would requalify for RMA.

1. Client's statements are acceptable.
2. The extension period will start on the date of re-application.
3. Certification periods will not be extended for cases that have Refugee arrivals who became eligible for RMA on or after September 1, 2020, the eligibility period will remain at eight months. These RMA cases will be processed as normal with an 8-month certification process. See examples below:

Scenario one, client A has refugee status; arrived in the United States on May 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date May 1, 2019 through end date December 31, 2019. RMA benefits exhausted in January 2020. Client is eligible to reapply for extended RMA benefits through April 30, 2021 regardless of income, unemployment benefits or RMA benefits at time of application.

Scenario two, client B received granted asylum letter (refugee status) on September 1, 2019. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits on November 1st. RMA eligibility period begin date November 1, 2019 through eligibility end date April 30, 2020 (total of 8 months from date of eligibility). Client is now eligible to receive extended RMA benefits for an eligibility effective date of November 1, 2019 through April 30, 2021.

Scenario three, client C with refugee status of Special Immigrant Visa Holder (SIV) date of entry February 1, 2020. Client was screened and awarded RMA benefits. RMA eligibility period begin date February 1, 2020 through end date April 30, 2021.

The certification extension applies only to cases with Refugee eligible clients who arrived into the United States between April 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020. The RCA and/or RMA certification periods can only be extended through April 30, 2021. Submit any questions regarding this information to [RefugeeAssistance.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:RefugeeAssistance.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,



Carla West, Senior Director for Economic Security  
Division of Social Services, Economic and Family Services

CLW/cg

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