

Bulletin

January 23, 2006

Minnesota Department of Human Services □ 444 Lafayette Rd. □ St. Paul, MN 55155

OF INTEREST TO

- County Directors
- Social Services Supervisors and Staff
- Financial Assistance Supervisors
- Financial Management Supervisors

ACTION

Please implement immediately.

DUE DATE

February 16, 2006

DHS Provides Instructions to Process Requests for Repatriation Assistance

TOPIC

Repatriation Program-Provide county agencies with direction and current policy on how to process requests for repatriation assistance and subsequent federal reimbursement of county costs.

PURPOSE

Inform county human service agencies of the responsibility to provide temporary assistance to those who experience unexpected and unavoidable problems abroad, and how to assist them upon their return to the U.S. to resume their lives as quickly as possible.

CONTACT

Dolly Palacio-Roa, 651-296-1882 dolly.palacio-roa@state.mn.us
For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 1 (800) 627-3529

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Resettlement Program Office
444 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-3837

SIGNED

CHARLES E. JOHNSON
Assistant Commissioner
Children and Family Services

I. BACKGROUND

The U.S. Repatriation Program was established in 1935 to provide temporary assistance to U.S. citizens and their dependents that become destitute in a foreign country. Authorization for the program is found in: 42 USC Sec. 1313, Title 42, Chapter 7, Subchapter XI, Part A, Assistance for United States Citizens Return from Foreign Countries; 45 CFR 212; Public Law 86-571, 24 USC Sec 321-329, Title 24, Chapter 9 – Hospitalization of Mentally Ill Nationals Returned from Foreign Countries; Executive Order 12656, National Emergency Repatriation Plan, November 18, 1998.

These statutes authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make arrangements for providing temporary assistance to U.S. citizens and their dependents who have returned from a foreign country to the United States because of destitution, illness, threat of war or similar crisis. Upon arrival in the United States, services are the responsibility of the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The Department of State (DOS) certifies that a citizen or dependent of a citizen is eligible for repatriation and returns him or her to the U.S.

II. INFORMATION

Temporary repatriation assistance under the U.S. Repatriation Program is provided to eligible individuals in the form of a loan which must be repaid to the U.S. Government. Eligibility for the Repatriation Program is based on certification by DOS.

Temporary repatriate assistance may be provided to individuals for up to a maximum of 90 days (from date of entry into the U.S.) if they have no income or resources available to them.

Temporary assistance includes maintenance in the form of money payments, medical care, temporary housing, transportation and other goods and services necessary for the health and welfare of individuals. This includes counseling or referral for the repatriate in regard to employment and training.

III. ACTION

A. COUNTY CONTACT PERSON

Each county agency must designate a county contact person who is responsible for coordinating assistance to repatriates, act as liaison between the county, state and federal agencies, and maintain comprehensive records for the Repatriation Program. This person may be required to provide services after normal work hours.

Submit the name of the designated individual, their address, work and home phone number to:

Dolly Palacio-Roa
Resettlement Programs Office
Minnesota Department of Human Services
444 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-3837
E-mail: dolly.palacio-roa@state.mn.us

Provide this information no later than February 16, 2006.

B. PROCESSING REPATRIATION ASSISTANCE

There is no formal application for this program except the signing of the repayment agreement. A copy of this agreement will be sent to the contact person at the county at the time a repatriate is referred to the county.

Temporary repatriate assistance is available for a maximum of 90 days from the date of entry. It provides assistance for the costs of rent, security and utility deposits, essential clothing, household and personal items, etc. For the first thirty days, there is a one-time payment of up to \$560 per person, depending on need. For the subsequent sixty days, the assistance provided would be based on the need standard of the Minnesota's Family Investment Program (MFIP). The funds are provided for no more than thirty days at the time (i.e., one payment a month for each of the three months). However, this assistance is not provided retroactively; it is available only for the period of time remaining between the individual's request for assistance and the end of the ninety days following arrival in the country. In the final month after repatriation, the assistance amount is prorated for periods of less than thirty days to ensure that it does not exceed the ninety-day limit.

C. CASH AND/OR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Since repatriate assistance is a loan which must be repaid to the U.S. government, it is therefore important that the county evaluate the financial needs of the individual very quickly and advise him or her of the potential eligibility and their right to apply for any of Minnesota's cash and/or medical assistance programs at the time they arrive. If an individual is eligible for MFIP or other types of assistance (e.g. SSI, General Assistance, VA, etc.), he or she should be processed for those benefits whenever possible.

D. FOOD SUPPORT

Persons receiving repatriation assistance may be eligible for food support. Repatriation assistance, which is a loan by virtue of signing the repayment agreement, is not considered income for food support.

E. FUNDING AND REIMBURSEMENTS

County agencies are to use county funds to provide repatriation assistance to applicants. One hundred percent federal reimbursement is available for direct applicant and administrative costs. Documentation of these costs is necessary for requesting reimbursement.

County agencies must complete Form SSA-3955 "Expenditure Statement and Claim for Reimbursement."

IV. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this bulletin should be addressed to:

Dolly Palacio-Roa
Resettlement Programs Office
Minnesota Department of Human Services
444 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-3837
e-mail: dolly.palacio-roa@state.mn.us

Special Needs

This information is available in other forms to persons with disabilities by calling (651-296-1383), or contact us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 1 (800) 627-3529 (TTY) or 1 (877) 627-3848 (speech-to-speech relay service).