



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**OFFICE OF REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE**  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
1700 East Cherry Street  
Seattle, Washington 98122-466

May 15, 2020

Dear Stakeholders and Community Partners,

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Washington state requested a waiver from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement to extend Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance beyond the standard eight-month time limit. I am writing to ask that you please help us communicate with people who may be eligible for the RCA and RMA extension.

Recipients are generally eligible to receive RCA/RMA benefits for a maximum of eight months from their documented date of entry (for refugees, Special Immigrant Visa/SIV holders and Cuban-Haitian Entrants) or eight months from the date of the grant of their immigration status (for asylees, victims of trafficking and other humanitarian immigrants).

Due to the policy change in response to COVID-19, an eligible person may receive RCA and/or RMA benefits through September 30, 2020. Clients currently on RCA or RMA who continue to meet program eligibility requirements had their benefits automatically extended through September 30, 2020. Other clients may be eligible to reapply and receive benefits through September 30, 2020, if their eligibility date falls between April 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020 and continue to meet all other program eligibility requirements.

The following chart outlines who is eligible to receive an extension for benefits:

<b><u>Month of Arrival/Eligibility</u></b>	<b><u>Standard Eight-month Time Limit</u></b>	<b><u>Process</u></b>	<b><u>Extended Time Period</u></b>
April 2019	November 2019	New application	September 30, 2020
May 2019	December 2019	New application	September 30, 2020
June 2019	January 2020	New application	September 30, 2020
July 2019	February 2020	New application	September 30, 2020
August 2019	March 2020	New application	September 30, 2020
September 2019	April 2020	Automatic Extension	September 30, 2020
October 2019	May 2020	Automatic Extension	September 30, 2020
November 2019	June 2020	Automatic Extension	September 30, 2020
December 2019	July 2020	Automatic Extension	September 30, 2020
January 2020	August 2020	Automatic Extension	September 30, 2020
February 2020	September 2020	Ineligible	Not Applicable
March 2020 and forward	October 2020	Ineligible	Not Applicable

People can reapply for assistance by:

- Calling the Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233.
- Applying online at [WashingtonConnection.org](https://www.washingtonconnection.org).

Interpretation services are available over the phone. Community Services Offices are currently closed for general lobby services.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [Sarah.Peterson@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Sarah.Peterson@dshs.wa.gov) or Max Gibbs-Ruby, ORIA Lead Policy Analyst, at [gibbsm@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:gibbsm@dshs.wa.gov).

For additional information from DSHS about COVID-19 updates, please visit [DSHS COVID-19 Information](#).

Thank you for all that you do to support refugees and immigrants in the community.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah Peterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" and the last name "Peterson" clearly legible.

Sarah Peterson  
Chief, Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance  
Economic Services Administration, DSHS