

Ukraine Funding: HHS Allocation and Oversight of Refugee Assistance

GAO-26-107815

Q&A Report to Congressional Committees

March 16, 2026

Why This Matters

Russia's February 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine has caused devastating loss of life and a humanitarian crisis. Almost 6 million people have fled Ukraine as of December 2025, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

From fiscal years 2022 through 2024, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) granted humanitarian parole—temporary permission to stay in the United States—to approximately 259,000 Ukrainians and their eligible family members. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) received \$3.78 billion across three Ukraine supplemental appropriations in fiscal years 2022 through 2024 to provide refugee assistance to Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole and other eligible populations.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, includes a provision for GAO to conduct oversight of assistance provided under the Ukraine supplemental appropriations. This report addresses who Ukrainian parole beneficiaries are, the HHS refugee assistance they received, how HHS allocated refugee assistance funds provided under Ukraine supplemental appropriations, and how HHS provided related oversight of and technical assistance to states and other grantees.

Key Takeaways

- Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole into the United States (Ukrainian beneficiaries) from February 24, 2022, to September 30, 2024, were generally eligible for refugee assistance programs administered by HHS's Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). These programs included Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Medical Assistance, Refugee Support Services, and other programs.
- About 135,000 Ukrainian beneficiaries received ORR refugee assistance nationwide in fiscal years 2022 through 2024, based on the most recent data available. The number of these beneficiaries served in each state ranged from fewer than 50 to over 24,000. Ukrainian beneficiaries who did not receive ORR refugee assistance may not have needed assistance or may have been unaware of it.
- Selected state agencies and other ORR grantees conducted outreach to Ukrainian beneficiaries and provided assistance with initial resettlement, housing, and legal services. Grantees also expanded service availability to underserved geographic areas and sometimes provided remote services.
- Of the \$3.78 billion in refugee assistance funding ORR received from the Ukraine supplemental appropriations, it allocated almost half (\$1.79 billion) based on population estimates of Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole and the remaining funds (\$1.99 billion) based on estimates of other populations eligible for ORR services, such as certain eligible Cubans and Haitians.

- ORR generally oversaw grantees serving Ukrainian beneficiaries within its existing framework for program oversight. ORR required grantees to report certain program and financial information, reviewed grantee reports and data, and conducted program monitoring reviews. We searched 31 selected monitoring reports from fiscal years 2022 through 2024 for findings specific to Ukrainian beneficiaries or instances of fraud overall. Across these selected reports, we identified one corrective action specific to serving Ukrainians, in which ORR required the grantee to update its eligibility training curriculum.

Who are Ukrainian beneficiaries of humanitarian parole?

These beneficiaries are Ukrainians who left their country and to whom DHS granted temporary permission to stay in the United States. The Secretary of Homeland Security has the authority to temporarily parole noncitizens into the United States on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit.¹ Parole is not an immigration status, but a paroled noncitizen may apply for any immigration status for which they may otherwise be eligible while present in the United States.²

From fiscal years 2022 through 2024, DHS granted humanitarian parole to approximately 259,000 Ukrainians and their eligible family members who left Ukraine.³ Most were granted humanitarian parole through a process called Uniting for Ukraine. To be eligible for Uniting for Ukraine, Ukrainians had to be located outside the United States and have an individual based in the United States—called a supporter—file an online application that included an agreement to financially support the beneficiary during their parole period.⁴ DHS established this process in April 2022 and used it to parole about 230,000 Ukrainians into the country, as previously reported.⁵ DHS also paroled about 29,000 Ukrainians into the United States outside of the Uniting for Ukraine process.⁶

What types of refugee assistance were Ukrainian beneficiaries eligible to receive?

The Ukraine supplemental appropriations provided Ukrainian beneficiaries with eligibility for most refugee assistance programs.⁷ Specifically, they could be eligible for programs administered by HHS's ORR, but not for the State Department program that provided initial resettlement services to refugees (see fig. 1).⁸

Figure 1: Eligibility of Ukrainians Granted Humanitarian Parole for U.S. Refugee Assistance, by Program

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	 Grant recipients and funding	 Ukrainian beneficiary eligibility
<p>Refugee Cash Assistance Provides short-term cash assistance intended to help individuals meet basic needs. Generally equivalent to public cash benefit levels established by state governments.^a</p> <p>Refugee Medical Assistance Provides short-term medical coverage to refugees ineligible for Medicaid with benefits that are generally similar to Medicaid.^a</p> <p>Refugee Support Services Provides services generally up to 5 years to support employment and self-sufficiency, such as employment services, English language training, social adjustment, child care, citizenship, and case management.</p>	States or state alternative programs ^b	 May be eligible
<p>Preferred Communities Provides services up to 2 years to vulnerable populations with additional needs. Services can include long-term case management or health and medical interventions, among others.</p> <p>Matching Grant As an alternative to Refugee Cash Assistance, provides cash assistance, employment services, and case management for up to 240 days.</p>	National resettlement agencies (nonprofit organizations)	 May be eligible
<p>Reception & Placement Program Provided individuals or families initial resettlement assistance up to 3 months after arrival. This included initial housing; basic needs (furniture, food, and clothing); and assistance enrolling in school, language or other programs.^c</p>	National resettlement agencies	 Not eligible

Source: GAO analysis of information from HHS’s Office of Refugee Resettlement and archival information from the Department of State. GAO (icons). | GAO-26-107815

Note: Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole between February 24, 2022, and September 30, 2024, were generally eligible to apply for the HHS programs shown. They may also have been eligible for smaller programs administered by HHS not shown in the table.

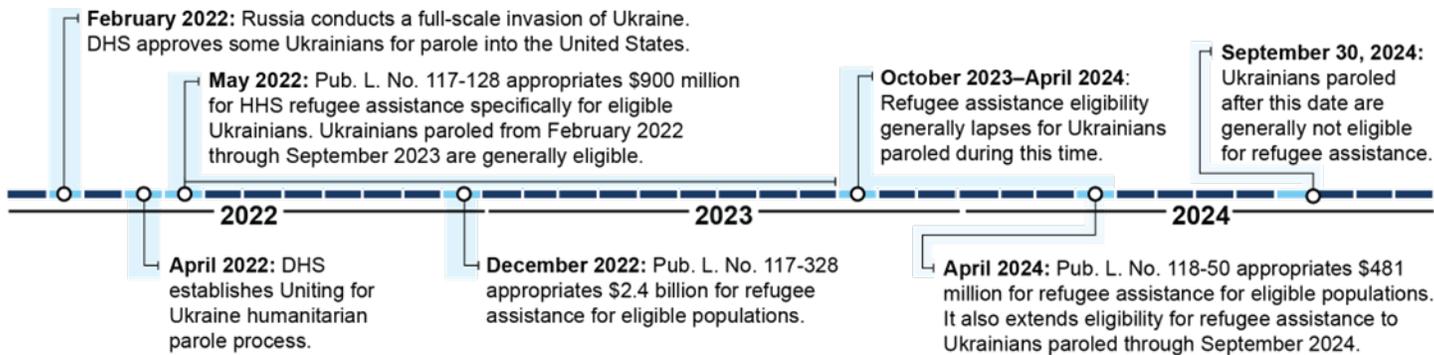
^aORR-eligible populations may receive up to 12 months of Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance if their eligibility date was before May 5, 2025, which would be the case for Ukrainian beneficiaries. Individuals who became eligible on or after May 5, 2025, could receive assistance for up to 4 months.

^bWhen a state government partially or fully withdraws from administering refugee assistance, ORR can designate other entities to administer this assistance within that state. For fiscal years 2022 through 2026, ORR selected replacement designees—typically nonprofit agencies—to administer some or all aspects of Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Medical Assistance, or Refugee Support Services in 13 states. In March 2025, ORR announced that it would no longer provide nonprofit agency replacement designees with Refugee Support Services formula funding beginning in fiscal year 2026.

^cIn January 2026, ORR began overseeing all domestic resettlement, including coordinating the placement of newly arriving refugees across the United States and administering initial resettlement services, according to ORR’s website.

At the beginning of the war in early 2022, Ukrainians paroled into the United States were not eligible for refugee assistance. However, the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022, allowed Ukrainian parole beneficiaries to be eligible for HHS refugee assistance during their parole period.⁹ This law and the subsequent Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024, generally provided Ukrainians eligibility for refugee assistance based on the dates they were paroled into the country through September 2024. Because of this, some Ukrainians who arrived between October 2023 and April 2024 were not eligible for assistance until the 2024 law was enacted (see fig. 2).¹⁰

Figure 2: Key Dates Related to HHS Refugee Assistance for Ukrainians Granted Humanitarian Parole



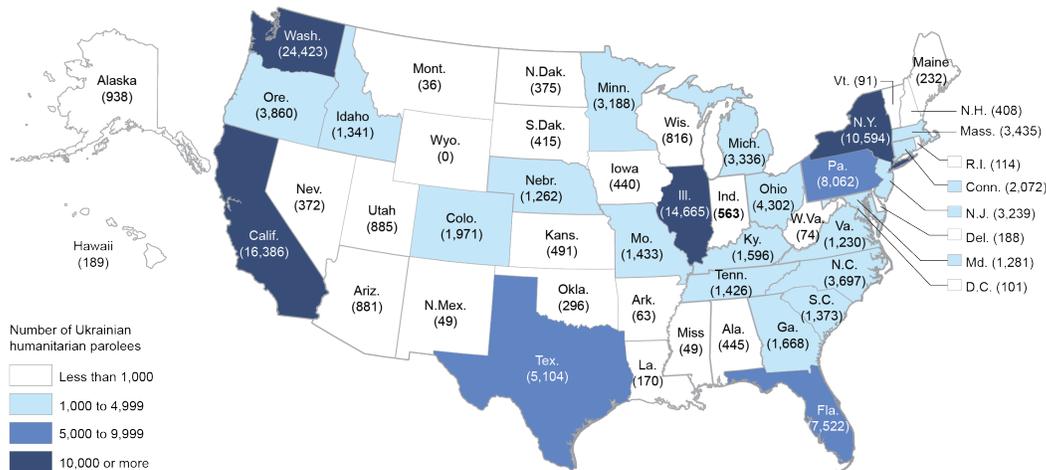
Source: GAO analysis of federal laws and Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Homeland Security (DHS) information. | GAO-26-107815

Note: The three Ukraine supplemental appropriations providing refugee assistance funding to HHS were the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022, Pub. L. No. 117-128, 136 Stat. 1211; Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, in Div. M, Pub. L. No. 117-328, 136 Stat. 4459; and Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024, Pub. L. No. 118-50, 138 Stat. 895.

How many Ukrainian beneficiaries received ORR assistance nationally?

Around 135,000 Ukrainian beneficiaries received refugee assistance from one or more ORR programs nationwide in fiscal years 2022 through 2024, based on the most recent data available. Ukrainians made up approximately 11 percent of all individuals who received ORR services during this period (135,000 of 1,270,000 individuals). Ukrainians received services in all states except Wyoming. The number of Ukrainians served in each state ranged from fewer than 50 to over 24,000. In fiscal years 2022 through 2024, the four states that served the largest number of Ukrainians were Washington, California, Illinois, and New York (see fig. 3).

Figure 3: Number of Ukrainians Granted Humanitarian Parole Who Received ORR Refugee Assistance by State, Fiscal Years 2022–2024 Combined



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Health & Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) data. | GAO-26-107815

What types of services did selected grantees provide Ukrainian beneficiaries?

ORR grantees we interviewed—three selected states and five national resettlement agencies—conducted outreach; provided resettlement, housing, and legal services; and expanded service availability for Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole.

Outreach. Representatives of seven of the eight grantees said they conducted outreach to Ukrainian beneficiaries, their supporters, or community organizations working with Ukrainians. Outreach can help to raise awareness of other ORR services Ukrainians were eligible for, locate service providers, or build trusting

relationships, according to grantee representatives. Because Ukrainians did not come to the United States through the State Department's initial resettlement program, they needed to be made aware they could be eligible for ORR services or instructed on how to apply, according to representatives of five grantees.¹¹ For instance, one state refugee coordinator told us they conducted targeted outreach by collaborating with community organizations, such as Ukrainian churches, to identify where Ukrainians were settling. One resettlement agency representative noted that community outreach was helpful since Ukrainians had strong ties with their community and often became aware of ORR services through other community members.

Initial resettlement services. Representatives of the five national resettlement agencies we interviewed said they used Ukrainian supplemental funding to provide initial resettlement services to Ukrainian beneficiaries. As noted above, this was because Ukrainians did not go through the State Department's resettlement program, which otherwise provided such services. Resettlement agencies provided Ukrainians with services, including intake and needs assessments; and referrals to health services, employment assistance, and English language classes, according to resettlement agency information. One resettlement agency representative noted that many of the Ukrainians their affiliates served were elderly individuals, women, and children who may require specialized services, such as child care. Individuals needing specialized services could be served for longer periods through intensive case management provided under the Preferred Communities grant.

Ukrainians' needs for ORR services also varied because individual Ukrainians—most of whom came through the supporter-based Uniting for Ukraine process—received different amounts of assistance from their supporters. ORR officials and representatives of two grantees said supporters and communities were often highly engaged in assisting Ukrainians to resettle—such as by providing housing, rental assistance, or help finding employment.¹² However, according to information from two grantee representatives, some Ukrainians experienced supporter “breakdowns” in which supporters backed out or did not provide adequate support. An internal ORR report from 2023 assessing the needs of Ukrainian beneficiaries also noted that supporter breakdown was common.¹³ Further, in December 2025, we reported on weaknesses in the supporter vetting process for Uniting for Ukraine and another supporter-based humanitarian parole process and made related recommendations to DHS to address them.¹⁴

Housing assistance. Three grantee representatives said their state or agency helped Ukrainian beneficiaries with housing costs such as rent or security deposits. Unlike individuals who arrived through the State Department resettlement program—which placed new arrivals in specific locations with housing arranged by local resettlement agencies—some Ukrainians settled in high-cost metropolitan areas. Most Ukrainians had supporters who were supposed to ensure they had housing. However, three grantee representatives we interviewed and ORR's 2023 report indicated a need for housing assistance among Ukrainians for reasons such as supporter breakdowns and housing affordability. One state conducted a Ukraine-specific needs assessment that identified housing as a primary need due to the lack of affordable and long-term housing in the state and a high risk of homelessness. In response, the state used Ukraine supplemental funds to create a specialized Ukrainian housing program that provided assistance with security deposits, rent, and utilities to Ukrainians.

Legal services. Four grantee representatives noted that they provided legal assistance to Ukrainian beneficiaries. The temporary nature of Ukrainians' humanitarian parole period created the need for immigration legal assistance, according to representatives of two resettlement agencies and ORR's 2023

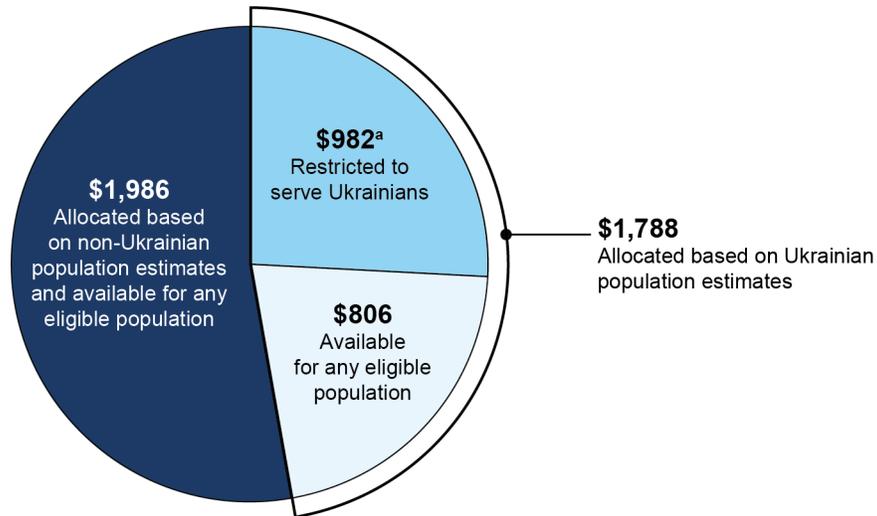
report. For instance, Ukrainians asked for assistance applying for re-parole or other immigration categories, such as temporary protected status or asylum.¹⁵ One state contracted for legal services focused on helping Ukrainians with their immigration needs, according to a representative from the state refugee coordinator's office. Typically, grantees could not use ORR funds to provide legal services to refugees, but ORR issued guidance to explain that grantees may use funds from the first Ukraine supplemental appropriation to provide immigration-related legal assistance to Ukrainians.¹⁶

Expanded service provision. Four grantees identified new service providers, expanded existing service contracts, or provided services remotely to address the lack of service providers in some areas.¹⁷ Some Ukrainians settled in areas without existing local service providers, according to some grantees we interviewed and information from ORR. Unlike refugees who were placed in locations through the State Department program, Ukrainian beneficiaries might arrive anywhere. Officials from two states said they recruited new providers to serve Ukrainians settling in areas with relatively few providers or to address the overall increased need for services among Ukrainians in their state. One resettlement agency provided remote services to Ukrainians who weren't connected to resettlement agencies or who struggled to access benefits in their communities, such as a referral phone line with Ukrainian-speaking operators.

How did ORR allocate the Ukraine supplemental appropriations?

Of the \$3.78 billion ORR received in refugee assistance across the three supplemental appropriations, ORR allocated 47 percent (\$1.79 billion) for assistance based on population estimates of Ukrainian beneficiaries and the rest (\$1.99 billion) based on estimates of other populations eligible for ORR services.¹⁸ (See fig. 4.) Of the amount allocated based on Ukrainian beneficiaries, ORR restricted all of the grant funds from the first appropriation (\$898 million) to be spent only on Ukrainians, as intended by the law.¹⁹ It also restricted a small portion of the funds from the other two appropriations (\$84 million) to be spent only on Ukrainians.

Figure 4: ORR Allocations of Refugee Assistance Under Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations, Fiscal Years 2022–2025 Combined (in Millions)



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Health & Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) data. | GAO-26-107815

Note: Of the \$3.78 billion appropriated across all three Ukraine supplemental appropriations for refugee assistance, ORR allocated \$3.77 billion to grant funds and \$6 million (0.2 percent of the appropriated funds) to other costs, such as travel and administrative costs. About \$4,950 expired without being spent. ORR officials said that funds may expire when ORR overestimates costs and is unable to use extra funds for other costs before they expire.

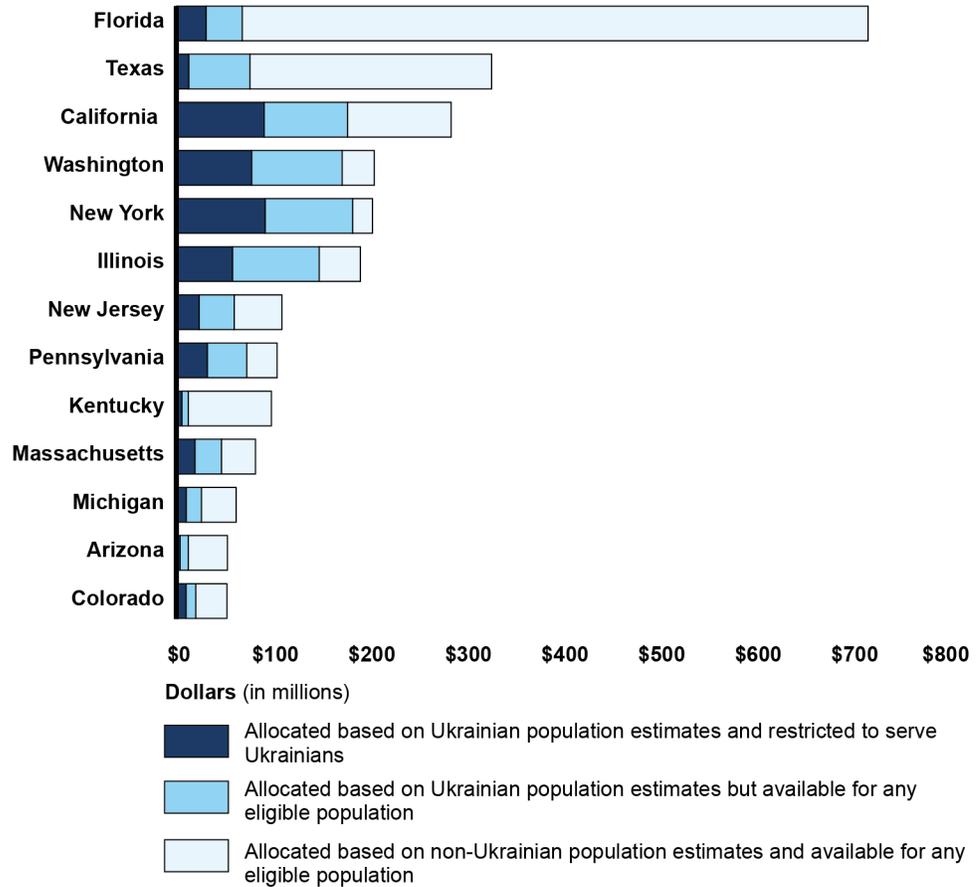
^aThis includes all of the grant funds that ORR allocated from the first supplemental appropriation across programs (\$898 million) and the grant funds that ORR allocated from the other two supplemental appropriations for the Preferred Communities program (\$84 million). Rather than basing Preferred Communities allocations on population estimates, ORR allocated funds for this program to each grantee in line with the grantee's share of program funding since the existing 5-year grant began in 2021.

The second and third appropriations did not restrict funds to serve a specific population and could generally be spent on any eligible population.²⁰ Accordingly, ORR allocated part of these appropriations for refugee assistance based on Ukrainian population estimates and the rest based on estimates of other ORR-eligible populations. For these appropriations, ORR generally did not require grantees to spend the grant amounts allocated based on Ukrainian population estimates only on Ukrainians, with the exception of the Preferred Communities program. For this program, ORR restricted \$84 million in grant funds allocated to serve Ukrainians to be spent only on this population. ORR officials said this was because Preferred Communities program services could be tailored to address the unique needs of Ukrainians.

Across programs overall, ORR officials told us that they prioritized funding for the state-administered programs—Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance, and Refugee Support Services. ORR allocated 84 percent (\$3.17 billion) of the Ukraine supplemental appropriations to these programs.²¹ In contrast, it allocated 16 percent (\$609 million) to discretionary grant programs administered by national resettlement agencies, such as Preferred Communities and Matching Grant.²²

At the individual state level, ORR's allocations for the two states that received the largest amounts—Florida and Texas—were largely based on their non-Ukrainian populations, such as eligible Cubans and Haitians. ORR's allocations for the next four states receiving the largest amounts—California, Washington, New York, and Illinois—were largely based on their eligible Ukrainian population, with part of the allocation restricted to be spent only on Ukrainians, and the remainder available for any eligible population (see fig. 5).

Figure 5: ORR Allocations Under Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations for Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance and Refugee Support Services to States Receiving \$50 Million or More, Fiscal Years 2022–2025 Combined



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Health & Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) data. | GAO-26-107815

Note: The amounts for Arizona, Kentucky, and Michigan do not include some portions of Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance that were managed by state alternative programs.

To determine state-level allocations among populations, ORR used various data sources, which changed over time based on availability (see table 1). For discretionary programs administered by national resettlement agencies, ORR used other criteria based on the grant contracts. For example, for Preferred Communities grantees, ORR awarded the supplemental Ukraine appropriations to each grantee in line with the grantee’s share of program funding since the existing 5-year grant began in 2021.

Table 1: Information ORR Used to Determine Allocations of Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Among Populations for State-Administered Programs

Program	Information sources or other factors used by ORR
Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially used a combination of 40 years of historic ORR data on Ukrainian refugee arrivals and supporters' location data from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). • Subsequently used prior funding levels as a baseline and adjusted them based on information from state grant recipients on their actual enrollment and projected needs.
Refugee Support Services^b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially used a combination of historic ORR data on Ukrainian refugee arrivals and supporters' location data from USCIS. • As data became available, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ used Ukrainian beneficiaries' program enrollment data as reported by states, ○ used Ukrainians' destination data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (collected at ports of entry), and ○ accounted for secondary migration (i.e., when Ukrainians moved between states) by providing each state with partial credit. • Applied state minimum and maximum amounts based on program formula requirements.

Source: Information from the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). | GAO-26-107815

^aORR allocated these funds based on grantees' cost estimates.

^bORR allocated these funds using a formula based on the estimated number of individuals to be served.

States had through September 2025 to liquidate the Ukraine supplemental funds awarded in fiscal year 2022 and through September 2027 to liquidate funds awarded in fiscal year 2024. Officials with HHS's Office of Grants Management said that because states would not submit final spending reports until December 2025 or later, they could not yet provide consistent information on how much of the supplemental funds had been spent nationwide.

How did ORR oversee grantees that served Ukrainian beneficiaries?

ORR generally oversaw grantees serving Ukrainian beneficiaries within its existing framework for program oversight, which examines programs as a whole rather than individual populations.²³ To oversee its programs, ORR required grantees to report certain program and financial information, reviewed grantee reports and data, and conducted in-person and virtual program monitoring reviews. We reviewed selected monitoring review reports from 2022 through 2024 and identified one finding specific to serving Ukrainians, which was addressed and closed.

Grantee reporting. As part of its regular administration of refugee assistance, ORR requires that all grantees report regularly on their programs and spending. States must annually report individual-level information, such as alien identification numbers, for each person enrolled in a state-administered ORR program, according to ORR documents. National resettlement agencies must report this information monthly for relevant programs, according to agency representatives. All grantees must report their expenditures quarterly or semi-annually depending on the program.²⁴

In addition, ORR officials said they required grantees to report more detailed data on enrollment and spending related to the Ukraine supplemental appropriations. For instance, ORR initially requested that states provide more frequent updates on enrollment numbers for Ukrainians to more quickly identify trends and help plan subsequent funding allocations. Officials told us this was due, in part, to ORR lacking detailed arrival location data on Ukrainian beneficiaries, who did not come to the United States through the State Department's resettlement program. Additionally, ORR required all grantees to report spending amounts separately for the first Ukraine supplemental appropriation that was restricted to be used only for Ukrainians.²⁵ ORR required these detailed data to analyze spending by funding source, according to ORR guidance.

ORR review of grantee reporting. As part of its regular reviews of grantee reporting, ORR took several steps to check the accuracy of reported data, according to agency officials and grantee representatives. For instance, ORR's

data system on program enrollment had some built-in checks (e.g., checking that a person's ORR eligibility date and U.S. arrival date were not in the future). ORR also conducted data matches, such as with data sources from DHS or the State Department, to verify individuals' eligibility, according to ORR officials.

ORR program monitoring reviews. ORR officials said ORR included Ukrainians as part of its normal monitoring reviews. These typically occur at least once every 3 to 5 years or within the project cycle, according to agency guidance.²⁶ ORR monitors grantees with large budgets more frequently.

We reviewed 31 ORR monitoring reports from fiscal years 2022 through 2024, which included reports of the major programs for national resettlement agency headquarters and the four selected states. We searched these reports for findings specific to Ukrainian beneficiaries or instances of fraud overall. Across these selected reports, we identified one finding and corrective action specific to serving Ukrainians.²⁷ Specifically, per a 2024 monitoring report, ORR found that one grantee had not updated its training curriculum to reflect changes in eligibility rules, although it had up-to-date Ukrainian eligibility information via webinars and email guidance. ORR required that the grantee add the information to its training curriculum. After determining in January 2025 that the grantee took this action, ORR closed the corrective action.

What related guidance and technical assistance did ORR provide grantees?

ORR provided guidance, trainings and technical assistance, and information on topics such as eligibility rules, data collection, and the allowable uses of Ukraine supplemental funding, according to ORR documents and grantee representatives we interviewed.

Guidance. ORR issued various policy and program letters between 2022 and 2024, such as to explain how grantees should determine Ukrainian beneficiaries' eligibility for services and provide updates on changing eligibility rules over time.²⁸

Trainings and technical assistance. ORR held grantee trainings, provided one-on-one assistance, and created an email inbox for grantees to submit inquiries about Ukrainians and other populations. ORR funded web-based training and technical assistance through a grantee that provided resource lists, data and research, and individual consultations.²⁹ Grantee representatives said that they were also able to communicate with ORR directly by phone or email. For example, representatives of one national resettlement agency said that when they needed assistance with interpreting an individual's immigration documentation, they emailed ORR images of the documents, and ORR helped determine whether the individual was an eligible Ukrainian beneficiary.

Information sharing. ORR led regular group calls with grantees until late 2024. One state refugee coordinator said that ORR's regular calls with grantees and DHS officials provided updates on the numbers of supporter applications for Uniting for Ukraine by city and state. Such information was helpful for projecting the number of future arrivals and estimating the need for ORR services in different locations.

Representatives of seven of the eight grantees we interviewed mentioned that ORR's guidance or technical assistance was helpful. Some noted that ORR's information was overall clear, detailed, or responsive to grantee questions. Given the new and changing nature of serving Ukrainians, some mentioned that ORR's frequent communication was particularly helpful.³⁰

Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report for HHS review and comment. HHS did not have any comments on the draft. We also provided relevant excerpts of the report to DHS for technical review and incorporated DHS' technical comments as appropriate.

How GAO Did This Study

To describe Ukrainians who were granted humanitarian parole and the types of refugee assistance they were eligible to receive from HHS, we reviewed relevant federal laws and regulations, including the Ukraine supplemental appropriations. We also reviewed related ORR policy guidance and interviewed ORR or other officials.

We approximated the number of Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole during the period of eligibility for ORR services by analyzing available DHS data. We included the number of Ukrainians granted parole (1) through the Uniting for Ukraine process and (2) at and between ports of entry along the southwest land border during fiscal years 2022 through 2024. To avoid duplicate counting, we subtracted the number of individuals paroled through Uniting for Ukraine at land ports of entry. We assessed the reliability of these data by reviewing data documentation, interviewing officials knowledgeable about the data, and assessing the data for any obvious errors or missing information. We found the data sufficiently reliable to approximate the number of Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole over the period of analysis.

To describe how many Ukrainians received ORR refugee assistance, we analyzed program data for fiscal years 2022 through 2024, the most recent data available. To describe how ORR allocated refugee assistance funds from the Ukraine supplemental appropriations, we analyzed ORR financial data for fiscal years 2022 through 2025 and reviewed related documentation, such as on how ORR calculated funding allocations. We also interviewed ORR officials about allocation determinations.

We assessed the reliability of ORR financial and program data by interviewing ORR officials about the data and interviewing selected grantees about program data. We reviewed financial and program data for anomalies, duplications, or gaps and followed up with ORR on any possible errors. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of describing ORR allocation of funds and the numbers of individuals served by ORR programs.

To describe the types of services provided to Ukrainian parole beneficiaries in more detail, we conducted semi-structured interviews with officials from three selected states and five national resettlement agencies. We interviewed state refugee coordinator officials in three of four selected states (California, Illinois, and Washington).³¹ The four selected states served the highest numbers of Ukrainian beneficiaries in fiscal years 2022 and 2023, according to ORR data, accounting for 47 percent of Ukrainians served by states (including the District of Columbia). We also interviewed two ORR regional officials representing the ORR regions that included the four selected states.

We also selected and interviewed representatives of five of the nine national resettlement agencies that served Ukrainian beneficiaries through the Preferred Communities and Matching Grant programs.³² In total, the five selected resettlement agencies accounted for almost three-fourths of the Ukrainians served by these programs in fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

To examine how ORR provided related oversight and technical assistance, we reviewed relevant ORR guidance, reporting forms, and other documents and interviewed ORR officials. Additionally, we reviewed 31 selected ORR monitoring

reports from fiscal years 2022 through 2024 and searched for findings specific to Ukrainian beneficiaries or instances of fraud overall. We identified one corrective action specific to serving Ukrainians and obtained information from ORR on its follow-up regarding this corrective action.

The selected monitoring reports included all available reports for Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Medical Assistance, and Refugee Support Services for the four selected states (five reports); all reports for Preferred Communities and Matching Grant for national resettlement agency headquarters that had been allocated at least \$5 million Ukraine supplemental appropriations (cumulative) per program as of December 31, 2023, according to ORR data (13 reports); and the report for a replacement designee that administered Refugee Medical Assistance in several states. We also generally included reports for local affiliates providing Preferred Communities and Matching Grant assistance in the four selected states that served at least 100 Ukrainians in fiscal year 2023, according to ORR data (12 reports).

To determine if findings from single audits existed that were relevant to assistance to Ukraine, we reviewed the text of findings from single audits that included Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance, Refugee Support Services, and the Matching Grant program that were conducted in fiscal years 2022 through 2024. We identified no instances of fraud, nor findings specific to serving Ukrainians in the single audits we reviewed.

We conducted this performance audit from September 2024 to March 2026 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

List of Addressees

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman
The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chair
The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
United States Senate

The Honorable James E. Risch
Chairman
The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

The Honorable Rand Paul, M.D.
Chairman
The Honorable Gary C. Peters
Ranking Member

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
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The Honorable Christopher Coons
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
The Honorable Brian Schatz
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Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Mike Rogers
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The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable Jodey Arrington
Chairman
The Honorable Brendan Boyle
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
House of Representatives

The Honorable Brian Mast
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The Honorable Gregory Meeks
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Affairs
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The Honorable James Comer
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The Honorable Robert Garcia
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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The Honorable Ken Calvert
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The Honorable Betty McCollum
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Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chairman
The Honorable Lois Frankel
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and other interested parties. In addition, the report is available at no charge on the GAO website at <https://www.gao.gov>.

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Endnotes

¹Pursuant to the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, the Secretary of Homeland Security has discretionary authority to “parole into the U.S. temporarily under such conditions as [the Secretary] may prescribe only on a case-by-case basis for urgent humanitarian reasons or significant public benefit any alien applying for admission to the U.S.” 6 U.S.C. §§ 251, 557; 8

U.S.C. § 1182(d)(5)(A). We refer generally to the exercise of this parole authority as “humanitarian parole” throughout this report. DHS documentation we reviewed for this report used the terms “alien,” “migrant,” and “noncitizen” interchangeably. For readability, we generally use the term “noncitizen,” except when quoting language in statute, regulation, or executive orders that used the term “alien.” See 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(3) (defining “alien” as “any person who is not a citizen or national of the U.S.”).

²We previously reported on the different immigration statuses that some Ukrainian and other parole beneficiaries applied for, such as temporary protected status and asylum. See GAO, *Humanitarian Parole: DHS Identified Fraud Risks in Parole Processes for Noncitizens and Should Assess Lessons Learned*, GAO-26-107433 (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 11, 2025).

³Most Ukrainians forced to migrate due to the Russian invasion migrated internally within Ukraine or to other countries in Europe. We previously reported on U.S. assistance to support these populations. See GAO, *Ukraine Assistance: U.S. Coordinated on a Broad Range of Aid to Displaced Persons and Refugees Amidst Various Challenges*, GAO-25-107535 (Washington, D.C.: July 29, 2025).

⁴According to information from DHS on Uniting for Ukraine, Ukrainian citizens with valid passports and their immediate family members were eligible to seek parole if they were physically present in Ukraine as of February 11, 2022; displaced as a result of the Russian invasion; cleared security screenings; and met other requirements. Additionally, supporters needed to lawfully reside in the United States and demonstrate sufficient financial resources to support the prospective beneficiary for the duration their stay in the United States, among other requirements. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans, *Uniting for Ukraine: Process Overview and Assessment: Fiscal Year 2023 Report to Congress* (Nov. 4, 2024).

⁵GAO-26-107433.

⁶This is an estimate based on available DHS data on the approximate number of Ukrainians granted humanitarian parole at and between ports of entry along the southwest land border outside of the Uniting for Ukraine process. (GAO is conducting ongoing work on DHS’s use of parole at the southwest border, to be issued in fiscal year 2026.) Many of these paroles occurred in February through April 2022—the months following the Russian invasion—and were the main driver for establishing the Uniting for Ukraine process, according to DHS officials. When DHS established the Uniting for Ukraine process, it strongly encouraged Ukrainians seeking entry to the United States who were not eligible for a visa to do so through Uniting for Ukraine. Department of Homeland Security, *President Biden to Announce Uniting for Ukraine, a New Streamlined Process to Welcome Ukrainians Fleeing Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine* (Apr. 21, 2022).

⁷The three Ukraine supplemental appropriations providing refugee assistance funding to HHS were the Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2022, Pub. L. No. 117-128, 136 Stat. 1211; Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, which contains Additional Ukraine Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023, in Div. M; Pub. L. No. 117-328, 136 Stat. 4459; and Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2024, Pub. L. No. 118-50, 138 Stat. 895. We previously reported on the status of Ukraine supplemental appropriations government-wide. See GAO, *Ukraine: Status and Use of Supplemental U.S. Funding, as of First Quarter, Fiscal Year 2024*, GAO-107232 (Washington, D.C.: May 30, 2024).

⁸In addition to Ukrainian parole beneficiaries, ORR administers refugee assistance to other eligible populations, such as refugees and asylees, which may include some Ukrainian citizens. This review focuses on Ukrainian parole beneficiaries, whom we also refer to as “Ukrainians” for simplicity.

⁹Specifically, the law indicated that funds are available to serve Ukrainian citizens, nationals, or certain other individuals who habitually resided in Ukraine. Pub. L. No. 117-128, 126 Stat. at 1217-18. For reporting purposes, we refer to all of these individuals as “Ukrainians.”

¹⁰Pub. L. No. 118-50, 138 Stat. 895.

¹¹National resettlement agencies administered these initial resettlement services.

¹²Those paroled through the Uniting for Ukraine process between November 21, 2022, and September 30, 2024, were authorized to work without having to apply for employment authorization. “Uniting for Ukraine,” Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed October 4, 2024, <https://www.uscis.gov/ukraine> (site discontinued).

¹³Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Ukrainian Arrivals Needs Assessment: A Synthesis Summary of Cross-cutting Findings From a Qualitative Needs Assessment of Ukrainian Arrivals in Five Highly Impacted States* (April 2023).

¹⁴We noted that while supporters must agree to financially support a prospective beneficiary during their parole period, the supporter application form did not include a provision giving DHS the authority to enforce this. We also reported that DHS identified fraud risks in its supporter vetting process and other vulnerabilities, such as potential human trafficking. We made recommendations to DHS to mitigate such risks for future programs. Additionally, we noted that HHS referred possible cases of human trafficking of Ukrainian beneficiaries to DHS, and that DHS developed a set of questions that its human trafficking hotline staffers could use with potential Ukrainian victims. GAO-26-107433.

¹⁵In February 2024, DHS began accepting re-parole applications for certain Ukrainians and their immediate family members originally paroled into the United States on or after February 11, 2022. In February 2025, DHS placed an administrative hold on all immigration benefit requests filed by beneficiaries of Uniting for Ukraine and other supporter-based parole processes, pending further screening and vetting. In May 2025, a federal court issued a stay on the February 2025 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) memorandum that placed an administrative hold on benefit applications filed by parole beneficiaries, and it directed USCIS to ensure that officers were authorized to adjudicate all pending benefit applications as well as re-parole applications. See *Doe v. Noem*, No. 25-CV-10495 (D. Mass. May 28, 2025) (order granting in part plaintiffs' emergency motion for preliminary injunction and stay of administrative action).

¹⁶Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *ORR-Authorized Legal Assistance Using AUSAA Funds*, PL 23-05 (June 23, 2023; revised Sept. 19, 2023).

¹⁷ORR guidance authorized the use of Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance and Refugee Support Services funding to provide virtual delivery of selected services to maximize state and agency capacity. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Virtual Refugee Service Delivery and Elements of Program Administration*, PL 22-04 (Oct. 25, 2021).

¹⁸Pub. L. No. 117-128, 136 Stat. 1211, 1217-18; Pub. L. No. 117-328, 136 Stat. 4459, 5195; and Pub. L. No. 118-50, 138 Stat. 895, 912-13. Other populations eligible for ORR services include Cuban and Haitian entrants, refugees, asylees, Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants, Amerasians, victims of human trafficking, and Afghan humanitarian parolees. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *Documentation Requirements for the Refugee Resettlement Program*, PL 16-01 (Oct. 1, 2015; revised May 20, 2024).

¹⁹Specifically, the law indicates that funds are available to serve Ukrainian citizens, nationals, or certain other individuals who habitually resided in Ukraine. Pub. L. No. 117-128, 126 Stat. at 1217-18.

²⁰Pub. L. No. 117-328, 136 Stat. at 5195; and Pub. L. No. 118-50, 138 Stat. at 912-13.

²¹ORR allocated \$1.65 billion to Refugee Support Services and \$1.51 billion to Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance.

²²This included \$418 million for the Preferred Communities program, \$186 million for the Matching Grant program, and \$5 million for the Ethnic Community Self-Help program (a competitive grant for community-based organizations to provide services such as employment assistance, English classes, and college preparation).

²³Although ORR did not conduct monitoring reviews specific to Ukrainian beneficiaries as a population, ORR produced a Ukrainian needs assessment in April 2023. This internal document identified trends in Ukrainians' needs and challenges. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Ukrainian Arrivals Needs Assessment*. ORR officials said they used the findings to provide technical assistance, such as a June 2023 webinar on cultural and practical considerations for working with Ukrainian clients.

²⁴ORR requires grantees to submit quarterly spending reports for Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance, Refugee Support Services, and Matching Grant and semi-annual reports for Preferred Communities, according to officials.

²⁵Specific reporting requirements varied by program. For Refugee Support Services and Preferred Community programs, ORR required grantees to report spending separately. For Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance, ORR required grantees to report unspent balances separately. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Refugee Support Services: Supplemental Federal Financial Report (SF-425) Instructions*, DCL 23-24 (June 7, 2023); and *Cash and Medical Assistance Program: Quarterly Report on Expenditures and Obligations (ORR-2) Instructions*, DCL 23-31 (July 28, 2023).

²⁶ORR monitoring guidance varies among programs but can include activities such as interviews of grantee leadership and front-line staff, program participant casefile reviews, and in-person observations. ORR reports its findings and any recommendations (optional) or corrective actions (required) and follows up with the grantee to address them.

²⁷We searched 31 selected monitoring reports from fiscal years 2022 through 2024 for findings specific to Ukrainian beneficiaries and instances of fraud overall. We did not identify findings related to fraud in the reports. Additionally, our review of selected single audits—another form of oversight provided by third-party auditors—identified no instances of fraud nor findings specific to serving Ukrainians in fiscal years 2022 through 2024.

²⁸For example, see Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees Eligible for ORR Benefits and Services*, PL-22-13 (revised July 25, 2024); *Clarification Related to Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees' Eligibility for RCA and RMA*, DCL 22-20 (June 21, 2022); *Eligibility for Refugee Resettlement Program Benefits and Services - Parolees from Afghanistan or Ukraine*, DCL 24-01 (revised May 8, 2024); and *Continued Services for Humanitarian Parolees from Ukraine with a Pending Re-parole Application*, PL 24-01 (May 9, 2024).

²⁹"Switchboard," International Rescue Committee, accessed February 26, 2026, <https://www.switchboardta.org/>.

³⁰In January 2025, agency leadership implemented a temporary pause on certain communications, according to ORR officials. In July 2025, officials said ORR had resumed providing technical assistance and responses to individual inquiries. Officials said they had stopped convening group calls because Ukrainians were no longer considered a new population, and the calls were no longer needed.

³¹Officials from New York did not respond to our request for information.

³²We interviewed representatives of Church World Service, Global Refuge (formerly named Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service), International Rescue Committee, the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.