

The Impact of the Housing Crisis on Refugee Resettlement

The U.S. is experiencing an unprecedented housing crisis, driven by an insufficient and inelastic supply of affordable rental housing. Housing costs have rapidly outpaced wage growth, particularly among low-income renters, inducing high rates of rent burden, housing instability, eviction, and homelessness.

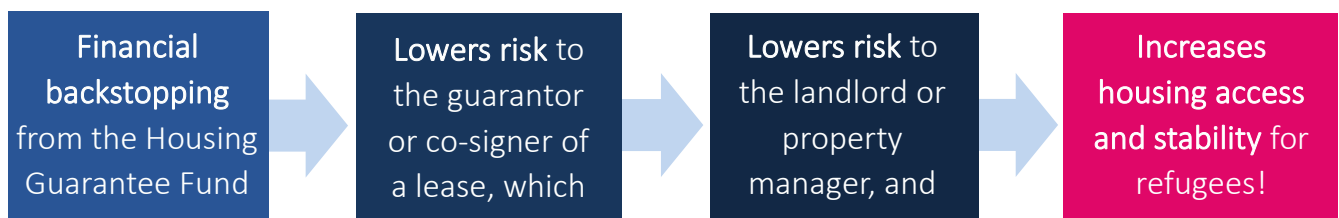
Amidst the national affordable housing shortage, arriving refugees have extremely limited access to housing opportunities. De facto exclusion from the rental market leaves refugees with scarce housing options, compels refugees to shelter in motels for months upon arrival, and exposes refugees to poor housing quality, housing insecurity, and homelessness. Refugees often have no choice but to accept low quality units that are far from transit, jobs, schools, and social services; over-priced; ill-suited for large families; and located in segregated neighborhoods with long histories of disinvestment. The housing crisis threatens the longevity of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program and reduces capacity to serve new arrivals in desperate need of safe refuge.

To address the obstacles barring refugees from safe, stable, and affordable housing, HIAS created the Housing Guarantee Fund in May 2022.

What is the Housing Guarantee Fund (HGF)?

The HGF financially backstops leases that are co-signed or guaranteed by HIAS affiliate agencies on behalf of recently arrived refugees who would otherwise be unable to qualify for rental housing.

Refugees, who arrive in the U.S. without social security numbers, rental or credit histories, or active employment, are highly disadvantaged when applying for rental housing, particularly when resettling in competitive, low-vacancy rental markets. A guarantor or co-signer can offer a landlord the requisite reassurance, enabling a refugee to secure a rental unit for which they would otherwise be unable to qualify. To mitigate the risk to the guarantor or co-signer, HIAS created the Housing Guarantee Fund, which offers up to six months of financial backstopping in case of rent nonpayment or property damage.



By providing a financial backstop to HIAS affiliate agencies that co-sign or guarantee leases for their refugee clients, the Housing Guarantee Fund reduces risk and increases access to housing options. In the second year, HIAS affiliate resettlement agencies brought on 54 new landlord partners through the HGF.

The Housing Guarantee Fund ensures that refugees have a safe place to call home. Stable housing provides the foundation for refugee resettlement and makes possible all other social and economic integration goals.

How does the Housing Guarantee Fund address the refugee housing crisis?



Increases access to housing opportunities, including more affordable, higher quality, and healthier options, in more amenity-rich neighborhoods



Decreases the need for high cost stays in hotels, making funding available for other essential needs and expediting resettlement into new communities



Ensures housing stability, by providing emergency rental assistance when needed to help a refugee family stay in their home



Protects vital housing partnerships, by providing coverage to housing providers, which ensures access to housing opportunities for future refugee arrivals



Success from Two Years of the Housing Guarantee Fund

A high degree of tenant success and a low rate of withdrawal enables HIAS to continuously redeploy the HGF to support new families in accessing housing. The cyclical reuse of funds to support many families year after year proves the HGF to be a highly efficient, sustainable, and low-risk model to increase housing choice, access, and stability for a very low-income population facing high barriers to housing.

1,220

In the first 2 years, 1,220 refugees secured safe, long-term housing with help from the HGF.

100%

Of households supported by the HGF remained stably housed throughout their lease.

1%

Only 1% of families needed to withdraw financial support from the HGF to cover their housing costs.

\$10

With a low rate of withdrawal from the HGF, the average cost per person to secure housing is just \$10.

Thank you for your support!

The Housing Guarantee Fund is made possible by generous contributions from donors like you. HIAS is fundraising an additional \$1 million to ensure that all refugees have safe, high quality, and affordable housing upon arrival. If you are interested in supporting our work, please contact Kate Poor at kate.poor@hias.org.

Donate [here](#) to support the Housing Guarantee Fund. Thank you!