



## **JVS Statement in Response to Stop-Work Order**

January 27, 2025

On Friday evening, JVS and resettlement agencies across the country were issued a stop-work order for the Reception & Placement program by the U.S. State Department. Effective immediately, we have been ordered to stop providing critical services to refugees already welcomed to Kansas City through the Reception & Placement program. This includes our comprehensive support for refugees in the first 90 days, including housing, food, healthcare, finding work, and enrolling their children in school. The stop-work order followed a Monday presidential executive order suspending future U.S. refugee resettlement.

This work doesn't just support our refugee clients. Our entire community benefits when our newest neighbors fill job openings, pay taxes, start businesses, thrive in school, and enrich our cultural economy. Without initial support as they build new lives, refugee families will face extreme hardship as they work to provide for their families and adjust to life in the United States.

While JVS is seeking more clarity from our governmental partners on precisely what these instructions mean, we are deeply alarmed by the harm that these abrupt mandates will have on vulnerable people who have already endured profound crises.

"This action is unprecedentedly cruel. We are outraged and devastated that our federal government is essentially telling us to abandon families already here in Kansas City that our country committed to support," said Hilary Cohen Singer, JVS Executive Director. "We know that with an initial investment of time and attention, refugees go on to make immense cultural and economic contributions to our communities – [in real dollars and cents](#) – far beyond the cost of resettlement programs. Beyond any humanitarian concern, this decision is not in the best interest of local communities."

JVS previously commented on the Trump administration's Executive Order halting refugee resettlement. You can read that statement [HERE](#). We remain undeterred in our commitment to refugee families and in our service delivery. We are proud to be part of a community of faith organizations, businesses, schools, social service agencies, and individuals who recognize the importance of embracing individuals fleeing hardship and the immense value they bring to our economic, civic and cultural life.

We strongly urge the Trump administration to reverse course on this action and to uphold its moral and legal obligations to communities our nation has promised to protect. By halting funding for these critical programs and services, the United States is betraying its values of welcome and weakening its presence as a global leader in protecting at-risk populations. The Trump administration should revoke these stop-work orders, and quickly resume refugee processing and admissions.