



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

March 18, 2016

The Honorable Sam Brownback
Governor of Kansas
Capitol Building
Room 241-South
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Governor Brownback:

Thank you for your December 31, 2015 letter. The Secretary has asked that I respond on his behalf.

Decisions on where to resettle refugees in the United States are coordinated by the Department of State, Department of Health and Human Services, and refugee resettlement agencies. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) does not play a role in such decisions. Therefore, requests for information on where refugees are being resettled should be made to the Department of State and the Department of Health and Human Services.

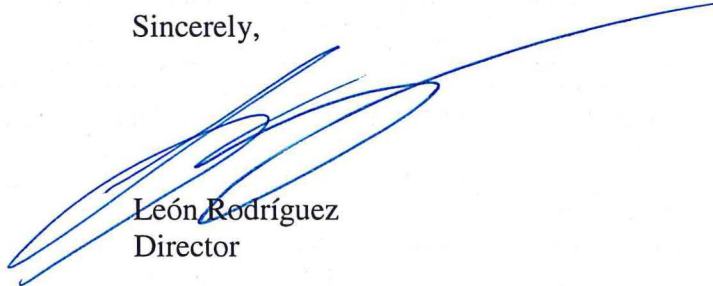
DHS policies protect the confidentiality of documentation and case files of refugees. The confidentiality of asylum applications is protected by regulation at 8 CFR § 208.6. This regulation generally prohibits the disclosure to third parties of information contained in or pertaining to asylum applications. As a longstanding matter of policy, DHS has applied the confidentiality and non-disclosure protections of asylum applications to DHS information pertaining to individual refugee applications.

Additionally, the Department of State's visa and refugee information, even that which is held by DHS, is subject to certain statutory restrictions on disclosure. The DHS policy generally prohibits the sharing of information regarding protected cases without the written consent of the individual. There are certain exceptions and waivers, including a waiver that permits DHS to share refugee information, upon request, with counterterrorism partners, provided certain conditions are met. These conditions stipulate that the need to examine the information or the request is made in connection with an authorized intelligence or counterterrorism function and that the information received will be used only for the authorized purpose for which it was requested.

DHS remains committed to continuing our Nation's strong history and tradition of accepting vulnerable refugees who fear persecution in their home countries. We are also mindful that this important humanitarian interest must be coupled with proper security vetting, the specific details of which were outlined in the November 30, 2015 letter you reference in your correspondence.

Thank you again for your letter and your shared commitment to protecting the American people. I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure our Nation lives up to its humanitarian heritage while keeping the American people safe. Should you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'León Rodríguez', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

León Rodríguez
Director

cc: Secretary of State John Kerry