



CWS Recommendations for Restoring the Cuban Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP) *March 2021*

For over thirty years, Church World Service (CWS) [administered](#) the Cuban Haitian Entrant Program (CHEP) on behalf of the Federal Government. CHEP provided reception, processing, and resettlement services to over 200,000 Cuban and Haitian individuals and provided support to the communities that served them throughout the US. These clients were guided by resettlement staff through procedures that are essential for beginning a new life in the US, such as applying for a Social Security Card, obtaining employment, and applying for a driver's license.

Program Background

CHEP provided resettlement for free cases; that is, those who did not have family or sponsors in the US were resettled throughout our affiliate network. CHEP participants received resettlement services, including employment orientation, referral to job counseling and training programs, referral to English classes, community orientations as well as initial housing assistance for free cases. These services resulted in a 95% rate of free case participants becoming economically self-sufficient within 180 days of enrollment in the program.

The CHEP affiliate network throughout the US collaborated with other social service providers and volunteer groups to enhance the positive outcome of the program. Additionally, CHEP provided rapid disaster relief response as in the case of the 2010 evacuation of 200 Haitian evacuees in a period of three days following the massive earthquake which severely affected the country. Funding for the program ended effectively in 2018.

The CHEP affiliate network was extremely responsive to the needs of clients and structured to receive and resettle individuals with minimal notice. As part of the various orientations that were provided to clients, community integration and becoming self-sufficient within the shortest period were always highlighted. The program had an outstanding evaluation system with 30, 90 and 180 reporting, ensuring the success of individual cases as well as family cases.

Policy Recommendations

We strongly recommend the reinstatement of CHEP. CWS still has a network in place throughout the US which could easily be reactivated to start resettling entrants with minimal lead time. Further, the success of CHEP can be replicated to assist other nationalities provided that they are granted the opportunity to acquire an Employment Authorization Document.

CHEP could be adapted to serve populations facing humanitarian crises, or for any relief efforts declared by DHS, including at-risk nationalities, such as Venezuelans and Nicaraguans. Any group which has been granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) could be helped by an expanded CHEP. The overall CHEP goals of facilitation of integration, self-sufficiency, and personal improvement could be applied to any entrant group in order to enhance the group's ability to succeed while reducing the social stress to local communities.

This program had excellent outcomes for its participants. It was seen very favorably by business entities in cities such as Syracuse, NY, Lancaster, PA, Louisville, KY, Harrisburg, VA. Employers in many of the cities where CHEP clients were resettled would often reach out to our CWS affiliates requesting our clients to work in their businesses. The program successfully minimized the impact of newcomers in local communities throughout the country by aiding entrants in integration and self-sufficiency.

For more information about CHEP, please contact Meredith Owen at mowen@cwsglobal.org.