



## **Alert: DHS Announces Family Reunification Parole Processes for Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras**

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Dear State Refugee Health Coordinators and Refugee Health Partners:

In April 2023, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a [new family reunification parole program](#) for persons from Latin America. The new processes are for nationals from Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras whose family members are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents and who have received approval to join their family in the United States. Specifically, nationals from these countries can be considered for parole on a case-by-case basis for a period of up to three years while they wait to apply to become lawful permanent residents. The purpose of the program is to provide additional, legal pathways for persons from Latin America to enter the United States.

This new program is separate from existing parolee programs ([Uniting for Ukraine](#) and the [Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans](#)), which required applicants to attest to receiving a blood test for tuberculosis (TB) infection and specific vaccines following arrival in the United States. There have been challenges with these requirements being fulfilled, including limited capacity for TB testing in many receiving jurisdictions.

Given these challenges, DHS is integrating a requirement for an overseas medical examination into the new Latin American parolee program for family reunification. On [July 31, 2023](#), the Department of State began issuing invitations for parole applicants from Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras who are seeking to enter the United States for the purposes of family reunification will receive an overseas examination conducted by a panel physician prior to travel to the United States. Panel physicians will conduct these examinations in accordance with the [Technical Instructions](#) for tuberculosis, vaccinations, and mental health. Of note, these parolees will not be required to undergo testing for syphilis or gonorrhea. The results of the exam will be captured in the eMedical system and shared with state and territorial health departments via the Electronic Disease Notification system when public health follow-up is recommended. The requirement for an overseas examination is intended to help prevent the importation of infectious tuberculosis and vaccine-preventable diseases into the United States, and to protect parolees against various vaccine-preventable diseases during movement to the United States.

### ***Health Considerations***

While these individuals are being screened overseas for tuberculosis and mental health issues, and will be required to receive select vaccinations, they are not eligible for Office of Refugee Resettlement benefits.

While individuals processed through this program are not eligible for a domestic medical screening, they might present for care in community health centers, hospitals, or other settings. Individuals arriving from Latin America have unique health profiles, and may be different from other refugee, parolee, and migrant groups. CDC [guidance](#) and [health education and communication tools](#) may be useful resources during health care encounters with this population. The CDC's [Central American Minors Refugee Health Profile](#) may also contain some relevant information for providers. Of note, this profile was written specifically for refugee minors who came from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

The Domestic Team will continue to provide further guidance for these populations as new information becomes available.

Sincerely,

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