

Helpful Reference

Possible Documentation for U.S. Resettlement Applicants

Updated: 13 May 2025

Important Note: As of 12 May 2025, the United States Refugee Admissions Programme (USRAP) is officially accepting Statements of Interest from eligible South African applicants. While we still await full details of the documentation process, the list below offers practical preparation suggestions. This is not a guaranteed list of what will be requested. It is provided as a helpful guide to assist families in preparing relevant information in advance.

Eligibility Requirements (per U.S. Mission South Africa)

To be considered for resettlement, applicants must:

- Be South African nationals
- Be of Afrikaner ethnicity or a recognised racial minority in South Africa
- Be able to describe either a past experience of persecution or a fear of future persecution

Important Update: U.S. Refugee Programme Now Open

The first step is to complete the **Statement of Interest** form online.

Who should complete the form:

- The **Principal Applicant** (usually the head of the household) should complete one form for the entire family.
- The form includes a question asking **how many individuals** in your family, **including yourself**, are interested in resettlement.
- Each **child over the age of 21** must complete their **own form** as the Principal Applicant.

How to submit the Statement of Interest:

- Visit the official U.S. Embassy South Africa webpage: <https://za.usembassy.gov/refugee-admissions-program-for-south-africans>
- Complete the **Google form** titled **Statement of Interest** (10 Questions)

This replaces all previous emails to the Embassy.

Note: Not every document listed below will apply to every person or family. Please prepare only the documents relevant to your personal situation.

Identity & Civil Documents

1. **REQUIRED** Passport(s)

- A valid passport is required for each traveller, including infants and children.
- At the time of writing, there are no restrictions preventing South Africans from applying for or receiving a passport.
- **Important:** For children of divorced or separated parents, both parents are usually required to be present when applying at Home Affairs

2. **OPTIONAL** National ID Card

While a national ID card is not required for international travel or immigration processes such as refugee resettlement, it may still serve useful administrative or legal purposes, such as:

- **Future pension or retirement claims:** Pension funds might request an ID card for verification if a claim is made from outside South Africa.
- **Property or financial matters:** If an individual has bank accounts, property, or insurance policies in South Africa, an ID may be needed for administrative updates, access or cancellations.

3. **REQUIRED Unabridged Birth Certificates**

- Full birth certificates showing both parents' details.
- Required for all applicants to confirm identity, family links and legal relationships (**required to apply for a green card**).
- **Children cannot travel internationally without an unabridged birth certificate.**
- If the certificate is unavailable or delayed, a police affidavit confirming birth details may assist as supporting evidence, although it is not guaranteed to be accepted.

4. **REQUIRED Parental Consent Letter (if one parent is not travelling)**

- A signed and certified affidavit from the non-travelling parent granting permission for the child to travel.
- A certified copy of the non-travelling parent's ID or passport.

5. **REQUIRED Court Orders or Death Certificates**

- If one parent has full custody, a certified copy of the court order may be required.
- If a parent is deceased, a certified copy of the death certificate will be required as supporting documentation.

6. **REQUIRED Marriage Certificate**

This may be requested to confirm:

- The marriage relationship, particularly if applying as a couple.
- Differences in surnames between spouses or between a parent and child.
- Legal or financial matters in the host country, such as pensions, tax, or insurance.
- Proof of connection if one spouse is listed as a dependent on the application.

Additional Notes for Previously Married Women: Women who have been previously married, especially those who have remarried more than once, should be prepared to submit documentation for all prior marriages and divorces. Providing a clear history of name changes helps prevent delays during identity checks or application reviews. This includes:

- Copies of previous marriage and divorce certificates.
- Any name changes, including alias names or former surnames, as they may appear in supporting documents such as passports, birth certificates or financial records.

7. **RECOMMENDED** Police Clearance Certificate

- Issued by the South African Police Service (SAPS), valid for 6 months.
- Confirms whether the applicant has been found guilty of any offence.
- Often required for visa and resettlement applications.

Important: A police clearance certificate is different from the criminal background checks typically used for employment purposes. A police clearance will reflect whether you have a criminal record, meaning you have appeared in court and were found guilty of a charge. In contrast, employment-related checks often list any case opened against you, even if you were never charged or found guilty. These checks may flag past allegations as “illicit activity,” even when no court ruling was made.

8. **RECOMMENDED** Vaccination Records

- Proof of routine childhood vaccinations (applicable to children)

Refugee & Persecution Evidence

These documents are only relevant if the applicant is claiming protection on the basis of persecution or fear of harm. Not all applicants will require this type of evidence, but where applicable, it can support the claim.

1. **ONLY IF REQUESTED** Police or Government Reports

- If available, any documents relating to reported threats, harm, or persecution.
- May include: case numbers, screenshots of online threats or social media posts, photographs, messages, or videos.

2. **ONLY IF REQUESTED** Personal Statement Detailing Persecution (Recommended)

- A clear written explanation from the applicant about their experiences, fears, and reasons for seeking resettlement.
- This statement should match what is shared during any future interviews.

3. **ONLY IF REQUESTED** Witness Letters or Community Statements

- If possible, letters from people who can confirm the applicant's experience.
- This is not always necessary, but may help support the case.

4. **ONLY IF REQUESTED** Proof of Membership (Political, Religious, or Ethnic Groups)

- This could include membership to civil organisations such as Solidarity, AfriForum, or similar groups that are linked to cultural, social, or advocacy-based activities.

Administrative & Medical Requirements

1. **REQUIRED** Biographic and Biometric Data

- Applicants may need to complete forms from the U.S. Department of State or USCIS.
- Biometric screening might include fingerprints and photographs.
- Security and background checks may also be carried out.

2. **REQUIRED** Interview Process

- Interviews might be conducted by USCIS officials, possibly supported by the U.S. embassy or consulates.
- Interviews may include detailed questions about the applicant's background, family, travel history, and reasons for applying.
- Children aged 14 and older might be required to attend interviews

3. **REQUIRED** Medical Examination

- Medical screening may be required for all applicants who are approved for resettlement.
- This may include checks for communicable diseases, proof of vaccinations, and a general health assessment.
- Applicants will be informed which travel clinic or doctor to use if required.

IMPORTANT**NOTE**

This document is intended as a general guide to help refugee applicants prepare their personal documents. It does not guarantee that these are the final or complete requirements. The U.S. government might request different or additional information depending on the circumstances. We are assisting voluntarily, and at no cost to anyone, with no official capacity or authority. Each applicant remains responsible for their own process and documentation.