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## **Kent County Receives Two Refugee Resettlement Grants**

*Funding Will Provide Critical Services to Afghan Refugees*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (November 19, 2021)** – At its November 18 meeting, the Kent County Board of Commissioners approved two grants to meet the health and nutritional needs of newly arriving Afghan refugees.

- \$333,000 Refugee Resettlement Food Assistant Grant from the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services which will be managed by Kent County Community Action (KCCA)
- \$180,000 Refugee Screening Grant from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity which will be administered by the Kent County Health Department (KCHD)

“I am glad that KCCA can help during this time of need,” said KCCA Program Manager Rachel Kunnath. “I cannot imagine what these families have been through over the past few months, and it is my hope that these meals are a little taste of home that brings them comfort.”

Local resettlement agencies determine the needs of each family as meals are provided to those in temporary living quarters until permanent housing is established. To date, KCCA has prepared more over 1,000 meals which are packaged in boxes containing 20 culturally appropriate meals with four to five different varieties and pita bread.

Additionally, the KCHD will screen newly arriving refugees for contagious disease, review and document medical history, administer vaccinations, and provide referrals for primary care physicians.

“Kent County is expecting more than 350 refugees from Afghanistan and the responsibility to provide health screenings and immunizations for these new residents falls on local public health,” said KCHD Public Health Division Director Joann Hoganson. “These funds will allow us to provide screenings and other support services to the Afghan refugees and assist them in their transition to a new life in the United States.”

The KCHD will also provide health education services that include an introduction to the U.S. health care system along with information about nutritional healthy living and Medicaid health insurance coverage.