

# *US Shuts Down Refugee Program for Central American Children*

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Washington, November 9 (RHC)-- The United States government has ended a refugee program for children fleeing violence in Central America.

The Central American Minors (CAM) program was initially started in 2014 by the administration of former president Barack Obama, in an effort to help children fleeing violence in Central America. The objective of the program was to help children and eligible family members gain refugee status legally without having to flee to the U.S. illegally through Mexico.

Most refugees under this special program came from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, and children were granted a special screening process to attain refugee status. However, they will now be subject to standard screening practices, which are intensive and time consuming.

The Trump administration announced that it would halt the program beginning fiscal year 2018, which began on Oct. 1.

In justifying the decision, the administration said it was closing the initiative “because the vast majority of individuals accessing the program were not eligible for refugee resettlement.”

The program, however, remained quite exclusive. Only around 1,500 children and other eligible family members had gained refugee status as opposed to 13,000 total applicants, according to State Department data.

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