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Enhanced Medical Screening for Hmong Refugees

Working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of State has begun implementing enhanced health screening and treatment procedures for Hmong refugees in Thailand. Approximately 15,000 individuals were deemed eligible for resettlement in the United States, and the first refugees arrived in the United States in June 2004. Approximately 9,000 of the refugees have arrived in the United States to date.

Travel by Hmong refugees now at Wat Tham Krabok will resume as soon as the Department of State and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are satisfied that these measures are effective.

In January 2005, CDC observed a cluster of reports of Hmong refugees in the United States with active tuberculosis. CDC recommended a temporary halt in the movement of the refugees to the U.S. until further investigation is completed and expanded screening and treatment guidelines can be developed. The Department of State temporarily suspended the travel of Hmong Lao refugees from Wat Tham Krabok to the United States on January 21, 2005. The affected refugees in the U.S., as well as their families, are receiving appropriate treatment and counseling.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is working with state and local officials to address concerns raised by these findings. The CDC and the Department of State are working with the government of Thailand and others to ensure treatment and control of tuberculosis among the refugees still in Thailand.

All refugees migrating to the United States are required to have a medical screening examination overseas. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is responsible for providing technical guidance to the physicians who perform the overseas medical screening examination.

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