

COMMUNITY ALERT – FEBRUARY 3, 2005

Resettlement of Hmong Refugees From Wat Tham Krabok, Thailand Will Resume After Enhanced Health Screenings

The U.S. Department of State temporarily suspended the travel of Hmong refugees from Wat Tham Krabok, Thailand to the United States on January 21, 2005 after observing a cluster of reports of Hmong refugees with active tuberculosis (TB). In conjunction with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the State Department is now completing and expanding screening and treatment guidelines in Thailand. Last January, after years of uncertainty, some 15,000 Hmong refugees from Wat Tham Krabok were allowed to resettle in the United States. Since then, approximately 9,000 have already resettled in the United States. The U.S. State Department will continue the resettlement process as the remaining 6,000 engage in, and pass, the enhanced TB screening.

The State Department has announced that travel to the U.S. for approved refugees will resume once these health issues are addressed and refugees undergo an expanded TB screening overseen by CDC. All refugees who pass the new medical screening will be moved to the United States as quickly as possible. Refugees who do not pass the initial screening will be provided the best possible TB treatment in Thailand and will travel to the U.S. when they have completed treatment.

Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) and Southeast Asian American Community Leaders Should Remind Community Members of the Following:

- Resettlement will continue after the enhanced health screening process. Those found to have TB will be treated and then resettled.
- All flights and scheduled departures for Hmong refugees have been temporarily halted.
- Refugees in Thailand should remain calm, continue to be engaged in the resettlement process, and comply with screening and treatment programs closely.
- TB is treatable. More information on TB can be found through the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/tb/faqs/qa.htm>
- Community members concerned about their extended exposure to individuals with TB should also be tested. More information can be found by contacting your State Refugee Health Coordinator at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/partners/hthcoord.htm>
- No one will be deported back to Thailand because of TB.

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Additional updates and information will be posted at <http://www.searac.org/new.html>.