

**DIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND MID-AMERICA  
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OUTSIDE RUSSIA  
IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE POLICY**

It is the policy of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia to follow both the letter and intent of all national, state and local laws that govern the civil, secular administration of our church. We have a Christian duty to provide assistance to our brothers and sisters in need, especially when these are extreme and/or of a temporary nature. However, religious institutions including churches are not exempt from legal requirements. It is against the law and contrary to Diocesan policy for any parish or mission to employ anyone who is not a legal resident of the United States. It is also against the law and Diocesan policy for any parish or mission to harbor or provide residence to anyone classified as an illegal alien except on a very short term basis where it can be reasonably demonstrated that there is an extreme need. It is the responsibility of the priest and parish council in every parish and mission to check the immigration status of all employees, tenants and subcontractors.

Violations are felony offenses under United States law and state and local authorities are required to assist in enforcement. Willful violations can result in fines, imprisonment and forfeiture of property. In such situations, the Diocese will not be able to assume any responsibility or provide any assistance to the local parish or mission, its officers or members.

Please contact your Diocesan Dean with any questions or guidance on specific situations.

*Adopted by the Diocesan Council November 13, 2008*