



CATHOLIC
CHARITIES
FORT WAYNE + SOUTH BEND

CATHOLIC CHARITIES'

REFUGEE COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP KIT



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Since 1975, Catholic Charities has resettled refugees from 20+ countries. We are the only resettlement agency in northern Indiana. Working with community organizations, we effectively deliver the core services required for arriving refugees, including: housing, transportation, health screenings, ESL classes, cultural orientation, job placement, and education. In addition to these services, the goal of the resettlement program is to develop a self-sufficiency plan with the family and facilitate successful community integration.

Volunteers bring a wide range of skill sets, experience, and their own networks to find and furnish housing, help refugees land their first job or adapt to school. Teams include internal oversight—volunteer coordinators, fundraising, finances, and communications.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS: CATHOLIC CHARITIES

As the local resettlement agency, Catholic Charities is responsible for the following to ensure a successful support group experience for volunteers and program beneficiaries (refugees):

1. Match support group with refugee (individual/family) based on an assessment of refugee interests, needs, and family composition.
2. Deliver group support training on agency policies and code of conduct; support group planning and implementation; and best practices for resettlement activities that support groups are expected to perform.
3. Provide support group with tools, educational resources, and operating procedures.
4. Offer ongoing support and assistance through the Catholic Charities community sponsorship coordinator.
5. Ensure compliance with federal, USCCB, and internal agency regulations through regular communication with and oversight of support groups during the R&P period and the duration of the agreement.

SETTING UP YOUR VOLUNTEER NETWORK TIPS:

How to structure your volunteer committees:

There are many things needed when welcoming a family into the community. Breaking down the tasks into committees makes it more manageable by allowing people to utilize their skill set. All volunteers that will have client interaction, must go through [Catholic Charities' Background Check](#) and the [Safe Environment Training](#). Those transporting clients must also fill out the [Volunteer Vehicle Use](#) form.

SUGGESTED COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES...

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEES

VOLUNTEER COORDINATION & POINT PERSON

Help recruit volunteers for the cohort and keep track of their contact information and hours volunteered. By daily communication with the case manager, oversee and link volunteer assignments to the appropriate refugee support committees. Be the point person between the committees and Catholic Charities for the refugees.

GROUP FUNDRAISING & FINANCES:

Catholic Charities receives a per-person allowance from the government for direct services provided to the refugee family. Depending upon the family circumstances, our experience is that the allowance is exhausted within 4-6 months. Although the allowance is spent, the family is usually still in need of financial or medical assistance for a period of time. At that point, we welcome and encourage your group to organize and execute a fundraising plan to support the ongoing needs of the refugee family.

Develop a strategy, organize and execute fundraising efforts, and outreach to potential funding sources in order to support the family your cohort is resettling.



MATERIAL NEEDS COMMITTEE:

HOUSING

Scout out affordable housing in neighborhoods with access to public transportation, food, and other key needs. Connect utilities, wi-fi/internet. Be available to help with any landlord issues during the first 6-12 months. Factors you might consider are the anticipated number of rooms, estimated rental and utility rates, and access to employment, education, transit, and shopping.

HOME FURNISHINGS

Set up housing with required furnishings (donated and new). Catholic Charities provides a list of furniture, appliances, household cleaning and personal care items (see appendix A for full list). Provide an initial pantry of culturally appropriate foods and staples. Committee volunteers are responsible for cleaning, staging, and transportation for "Move-In Day!"

CLOTHING

Provide initial clothing and weather-appropriate needs for each family member. Assist with meeting "growing" needs, diapers, etc. Arrange thrift store visits or other occasional clothes shopping as needed.

MENTORING COMMITTEE:

COMMUNITY ORIENTATION

Help the family by identifying key locations they will need to be able to find and research public transportation options. Teach the family the basics about living in the US: grocery shopping, specialty/halal grocery markets, clothes laundering, banking, library card system, recycling & garbage collection. Teach the family how to operate all mechanical aspects of their home including plumbing, electrical appliances and lights, security, and maintenance expectations. Instruct family how to use public transportation (fares, payment, entering and exiting procedures) and show family members how to get to important locations: schools, jobs, markets, place of worship, and hospitals. Discuss hygiene and dress, especially as it relates to job interviews and general community acceptance.



EDUCATION

Assist families to enroll children in school and school buses. Interface with the school system to obtain needed support, provide advocacy in some areas if needed, and maintain interaction with involved teaching professionals, if necessary, as a liaison. Arrange for at-home reinforcement and after-school programming, as needed. Help to arrange childcare and/or early childhood education programs for toddlers, if applicable.

ESOL & ADULT ED

Provide one-on-one conversation tutoring to improve the family's English proficiencies. After obtaining permission, help the family read mail and communications upon their request.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE:

RIDE COORDINATORS & DRIVERS

Identify drivers cleared with driving background checks via Catholic Charities. Establish a point-person that will be in charge of communicating with the family and volunteers about weekly transportation needs. Identify a list of drivers willing to take family members to initial appointments (for example, medical, Social Security office, BMV, job interviews, school meetings, and emergencies) and general errands (i.e. groceries). Commitment to drive more than one time is required and preference is for drivers who can participate over a 4-6 month period. Alert volunteer drivers when the family or another committee identifies a transportation need. Obtain driver contact details and provide the driver with details of the appointment, and confirm with the requester the volunteer contact/telephone number. Car seats are required for the transportation of children.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Transport family members to the local Social Security Office. Answer questions as they will apply for and follow up on Social Security cards at the local Social Security office. Govt services available to refugees can include Medicaid, SNAP, APA or Resettlement & Placement Funds, MatchGrant or Cash assistance, and WIC.



HEALTHCARE

Transport the family to necessary health appointments. Assist with an orientation about the healthcare system and help the family navigate the medical insurance system/Medicaid; Medicaid is retroactive to the day of arrival. In most cases, Catholic Charities will (usually) sign clients up for Medicaid. Accompany the family members to the required Refugee Health Assessment (RHA) within 30 days of arrival. Identify primary care and mental health providers in the area who are accepting new patients with Medicaid and help connect the family to appropriate providers. Schedule and bring the family for first appointments with primary care providers, dentists, and any specialists necessary for follow-up. ALL MEDICAL PROVIDERS ARE REQUIRED TO OFFER INTERPRETERS. Manage/assist with family medical issues, urgent, or emergency medical needs that may arise. Help family make appointments and arrange transportation (public transportation or rides from Ride coordinator), as needed. Car seats are required for the transportation of children.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS: COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP

Volunteers provide scaffolding support around families for up to 12 months following their arrival. Below is the 90+ day checklist. Using the check boxes, volunteers can select duties:

PRE-ARRIVAL (PICK ONE):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Good Neighbor Kit:
Make a donation of all items found on the Essential Household Items List upon arrival. This support ensures that the cost of these items is not deducted from a family's limited resettlement stipend. <i>[list in appendix a]</i></p> <p>Minimal season clothing for the family, as well as coats are also encouraged.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Amazon Wishlist: Make a donation of at least 15 items from our Refugee Amazon Wishlist.</p> <p>Fort Wayne:</p>  <p>South Bend:</p>  | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing Setup:
Before the family arrives, the facility must be cleaned and furnished.</p> <p>Gather a group of volunteers that can clean, organize, and move furniture for 1-2 days.</p> <p>Due to unknown arrival dates or delays, groups may only get a weeks notice before the setup is scheduled.</p> |
|---|--|--|

WEEK ONE

- **Airport Arrival:** Greet and welcome the individual or family at the airport upon arrival, along with a Catholic Charities case manager.
- **Welcome Meal:** Offer a culturally appropriate hot meal, ready for the individual or family to enjoy immediately upon arrival to their new home.
- **General Transportation:** Provide general transportation for everyday needs, i.e. classes, grocery shopping, other appointments, etc.
** car seats may be needed*

FIRST 90 DAYS

- **Health Appointment Transportation:** Within 14 days of arrival, families must make an appointment with the local Department of Health for a Refugee Health Assessment. Volunteers can help set up the appointment and provide transportation. Additional health appointments may be necessary.
** car seats may be needed*
- **Transportation to Social Security Office:** Within 7 working days of arrival, families can apply for their social security card and public benefits at the local Social Security Office.
- **General Transportation:** Provide general transportation for everyday needs, i.e. classes, grocery shopping, other appointments, etc.
** car seats may be needed*
- **Community Guide:** Introduce the family or individual to their new community. Take them site-seeing and plan trips to important places (grocery stores, community centers, library).
- **School Enrollment:** The family's case manager will aid in enrolling the children in school within 30 days of arrival. Volunteers can help answer questions about the education system, bus system, teacher communication, homework help, etc.
- **Setting up Banking Account:** Aid the family in setting up a banking account.
- **ESL:** Help the adults enroll in an English as a Second Language class.

90+ DAYS

- Rental Support:** Make a financial contribution to help cover a deposit and one month's rent. Housing is one of the most challenging expenses for individuals to cover during the first few months.
- School Assistance:** Help the parents and children with teacher communication (as needed) and homework help.
- Seasonal Clothing:** Provide seasonal clothing and shoes for work, school, and everyday use for each family member, including diapers for infants and toddlers.
- General Transportation:** Provide general transportation for everyday needs, i.e. classes, grocery shopping, other appointments, etc.
** car seats may be needed*
- Conversation:** Help develop written and spoken English skills. This activity can include helpful discussions about the education system, finances, American culture, etc.
- Education:** Assist adults with registering for ESL classes.
- Mail:** With their permission, assist adults with reading mail so they can pay their bills, etc.
- Job Coaching:** With the case manager, help individual(s) with resume building, interview practice, job search.

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Discrimination: Neither party to this agreement will discriminate against individual support group members or in the operation of its program on the basis of race, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or on the basis of a disability.

Proselytizing: Parties in this agreement shall not disseminate religious materials or promote adherence to a particular religion to program beneficiaries (refugees), including the distribution of religious books or other materials, as well as mandating or encouraging refugees to participate in worship events or other religious observances.

Direct financial assistance: Support groups may not provide financial assistance directly to a refugee individual or family. If a program beneficiary has specific concerns regarding finances, they should be referred to Catholic Charities' Community Sponsorship Coordinator.



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READY TO MAKE THE COMMITMENT?

We are entering into this partnership thoughtfully and prepared to perform the activities checked or otherwise indicated above to the best of our ability. We understand that Catholic Charities is ultimately responsible for the provision of all core resettlement services, and that this is not a legally binding agreement. Thus, in the best interest of the clients, we enter into this partnership committed to our responsibilities to assist Catholic Charities and to respect the regulations and guidelines set by the federal government and USCCB/MRS.

Volunteer Group Name: _____

Supported by: _____

(parish/community group name if applicable)

Number of volunteers: _____

Volunteer Group Representative:

This person will act as the point of contact for the larger group. They will assume the role of volunteer coordinator and will be in weekly communication with the case manager. By signing this, the representative is committing to a minimum of 12 months of support.

Name (Printed): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

NEXT STEPS...

After you have signed and returned your commitment paperwork, you can expect the following:

1. **Refugee Services Orientation:** a Catholic Charities representative will reach out to schedule a time for an orientation. Ideally, the volunteer network you have put together will be able to attend, but at a minimum, the volunteer representative must be present.
2. **Family Match:** Catholic Charities will match you with a family. You will be given the family's description and arrival date.
3. **Meet Case Manager:** Once matched with a family, you will meet with the case manager to discuss the pre-arrival process and get your volunteer network started!

APPENDIX A

All of the following items must be placed in the home upon arrival of the family.

1. FURNISHINGS

- Mattress(es) appropriate for age and gender composition of family. Only married couples or small children of same sex may be expected to share beds.
- Box Spring or equivalent for each bed
- Bed Frame or equivalent for each bed
- Closet in each bedroom
- In each bedroom: set of drawers, shelves, etc. for clothing storage (N/A if closet has adequate shelving for clothes)
- Kitchen table – 1 per family
- Kitchen chair (one per person)
- Couch or equivalent seating (in addition to kitchen chairs)
- Lamp (one per room unless installed lighting is present and adequate)

2. KITCHEN ITEMS

- One place setting of tableware (fork, knife, spoon) per person
- One place setting of dishes (plate, bowl and cup) per person
- Pots & pans; at least 1 sauce pan, 1 frying pan, 1 baking dish
- Mixing/serving bowls
- One set of kitchen utensils (such as a spatula, wooden spoon, knife, serving utensils, etc.)
- Can opener
- Baby items as needed

3. LINENS AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

- One towel per person
- One set of sheets and blankets for each bed
- One pillow and pillowcase for each person
- Alarm clock (cell phone alarm is acceptable)
- Paper, pens and/or pencils
- Light bulbs

APPENDIX A CONTINUED...

4. CLEANING SUPPLIES

- Dish soap
- Bathroom/kitchen cleanser
- Sponges or cleaning rags and/or paper towels
- Laundry detergent
- Two waste baskets
- Mop or broom
- Trash bags

5. TOILETRIES

- Toilet paper
- Shampoo
- Body Soap (bar or body wash)
- One toothbrush per person
- Toothpaste
- Personal hygiene items as appropriate
- (May include but is not limited to deodorant, nail clipper, shaving supplies, comb/brush, and feminine hygiene products)

6. FOOD

- Culturally appropriate, ready-to-eat food, plus one day's worth of additional food supplies and staples including baby food as needed
- Food or food allowance until receipt of food stamps or family is able to provide food for themselves

7. CLOTHING

- For each case member: appropriate seasonal clothing for work, school, and everyday use for all members of the family
- Diapers for young children (approx. 3 ½ years or younger)
- Proper footwear for each member of the family