

Private Sponsor Group Welcome Plan

The Welcome Plan is a tool for Private Sponsor Groups to prepare to welcome refugee newcomers to their community through Welcome Corps. See additional information about the program and sponsor requirements [here](#).

This Welcome Plan offers guiding questions and resources to help you and your Private Sponsor Group members consider how you will support refugee newcomers your group welcomes during the initial sponsorship period of 90 days. Each community is unique, and this tool is intended to guide your group in identifying resources in your community. You may access other resources to support you in preparing and welcoming refugee newcomers [here](#).

All fields are required. [Submit your completed Welcome Plan with your Private Sponsor Group application.](#)



TIP: For a comprehensive list of Private Sponsor Group activities and responsibilities, see [Core Private Sponsorship Services](#).

A. Private Sponsor Group

Private Sponsor Group Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Private Sponsor Group Coordinator Name: _____

Private Sponsor Group Coordinator Email: _____

In a few sentences, briefly summarize your Private Sponsor Group's motivation to welcome:

Please note the number of individuals you are capable of sponsoring below.

Family size: _____



NOTE: You will need to demonstrate sufficient financial capacity to support each refugee newcomer in your Private Sponsor Group application.

B. Welcome Plan

a. Airport Reception

You will greet the refugee newcomer(s) at the airport and transport them to initial housing. **Use the space below to consider how you might support that transport.**

Once matched with a refugee newcomer or newcomer family, you will be able to refine your plans based on case composition and other case information. In the meantime, consider additional resources you may need to support the refugee newcomer(s) transport, such as securing child car seats, culturally appropriate snacks, or interpretation services.

 **TIP:** The refugee newcomer(s) will likely be exhausted following many hours of travel. Consider only having the Private Sponsor Group members who are driving or interpreting present at the airport.

b. Housing

You will need to ensure that the individual(s) you are welcoming has safe, sanitary, and affordable housing for the duration of the sponsorship period. It is important that the refugee newcomer(s) be able to assume the payment of rent at the end of the sponsorship period. **Use the space provided to describe your plans for housing and/or the resources you have identified within the community related to identifying and securing appropriate housing.**

 **TIP:** Factors you might consider are the anticipated number of rooms, estimated rental and utilities rates, landlord and local requirements to access housing (such as a security deposit, previous landlord references, credit score, or proof of income) and access to employment, education, transit and shopping. [Check out this tip sheet for guidance](#) on how to secure temporary and permanent housing for the refugee newcomer(s) you will support. If you need access to temporary housing credits through Airbnb.org, be sure to indicate this in your Private Sponsor Group application.

Please check to confirm your sponsor group will complete a home safety tutorial with refugees upon their arrival, using the Welcome Corps checklist.

c. Basic Necessities

You will need to ensure the refugee newcomer(s) have basic start-up necessities. **Use the space provided to describe your plans for purchasing or securing commitments for donated furniture and household goods, seasonally appropriate clothing, baby and/or children's items as needed, and pocket money for the first 30 days. Please also describe your plans for ensuring access to groceries and utilities (telephone, electricity, internet) until access to benefits is secured or refugee newcomer(s) are able to provide for themselves, e.g., through employment.**

These basic necessities would be purchased or resourced through in-kind donations as a part of the requirement to provide each refugee newcomer with basic financial supports of \$2,375 per sponsored individual.

d. Documentation

Social Security Cards are applied for overseas and arrive after the refugee newcomer lands in the United States. Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) are similarly applied for overseas through an I-765 form. EADs are expected to arrive within a month or more of the refugee newcomer's arrival. If the card does not arrive in that time frame, you may submit an inquiry with [USCIS](#). If the Social Security card does not arrive within 7-10 business days of the delivery of the EAD, it is recommended that you reach out to your local social security office, which you can find [here](#).

Please check to confirm that you have reviewed the Form I-765.

To ensure that the U.S. government is aware of a refugee newcomers' residence until they have obtained citizenship, refugee newcomer(s) must complete a [change of address form](#) and submit that form to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) each time they move.

Please check to confirm that you have reviewed the DHS change of address form.

Males ages 18 – 25 must [register for Selective Service](#). This does not mean that they will need to serve.

Please check to confirm that you have reviewed the Selective Service registration form.

Each refugee newcomer should be supported in obtaining a state ID and/or driver's license. Because this process varies by location and can be a pre-requisite to access certain benefits, we encourage you to research what this looks like in your community. **Use this space to detail the process.**

e. Services and Benefits

You will need to guide refugee newcomers through the process of accessing any available services and benefits for which they are eligible.

At minimum, you are required to assist the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing the following **essential** mainstream federal and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)-funded benefits as soon as possible after arrival. Eligibility may vary based on age, income, location, and other factors:

- **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE:** Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or Refugee Medical Assistance (as applicable)
- **INCOME AND CASH ASSISTANCE:** Refugee Cash Assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (as applicable)
- **NUTRITION ASSISTANCE:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Additionally, you should be prepared to assist the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing the following **supplemental** mainstream federal and ORR-funded benefits, given the needs and eligibility of the refugee newcomer(s) you welcome. Eligibility may vary based on age, income, location, and other factors:

- **ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE:** Supplemental Security Income, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), subsidized childcare

These benefits are administered by various departments and agencies, including local departments of social services and resettlement agencies.

The timeline for an agency to process benefit applications and for the refugee newcomer to access benefits is variable and can be lengthy (e.g. Medicaid rules allow agencies up to 45 days to adjudicate an application). It is essential to proactively research how you will guide the refugee newcomers through the process of applying for these essential benefits so that within a week upon their arrival in the US, their applications can be quickly and accurately prepared and submitted to the relevant agencies. Delays in applying for benefits can exacerbate delays in benefit adjudication and issuance.

You will also support the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing other available services for which they are eligible that support long-term integration. Services may include extended case management, women's empowerment programming, childcare, and other support services like Preferred Communities, Matching Grant, and the Survivors of Torture program. These services are often provided by local resettlement agencies or state health refugee coordinators; however, they may not have the resources to serve the newcomer(s) you will be welcoming.

Use the space provided on the next page to describe your plan to help refugee newcomers enroll in available benefits and services. Be specific about the benefits and services available in your area and the steps you have taken to identify available benefits and services as well as the process for applying for them, including those available through relevant local/state/federal authorities.

e. Services and Benefits continued

 **TIP:** Navigating available services and benefits can be a challenge. There are resources to support you. Depending on your state, you may find information regarding available benefits and services on your state government's website. You can also refer to <https://www.benefits.gov/> for information.

Other resources include United Way's 2-1-1 service ([find your local 2-1-1 here](#)), which can be a great place to start to learn about community resources in your area, and the USA Hello's [Find Hello service](#). Your State Refugee Coordinator's office may have public information available on resources in your area. You can find a list of all State Refugee Coordinators and State Refugee Health Coordinators [here](#). Note: State Refugee Coordinators, State Refugee Health Coordinators, and resettlement agencies are knowledgeable of available benefits and resources; however, given their other responsibilities, they should not be relied upon to guide your group. Utilize public resources to inform your Welcome Plan. If you have additional questions, contact your Private Sponsor Organization, or if unaffiliated, contact the Welcome Corps team before reaching out to the state or local agencies directly.

f. Health and Mental Health Services

You will need to guide the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing several different types of health and mental services.

Initial Medical Screening

Refugee newcomers receive an immigration medical exam prior to their arrival to the United States; however, they must also complete a medical screening after arrival. This **screening** is a separate medical examination from a routine primary care visit referred to below under Ongoing Medical Care. You will be responsible to support the refugee newcomer(s) you are welcoming in completing this screening. Since the screening can sometimes take up to 2-3 visits to complete, sponsors should connect newcomers to their screening within 30 days upon arrival.

Typically, medical screenings are conducted through a designated health clinic or designated provider. Your State Refugee Health Coordinator (SRHC) may have publicly available information on a state website that can assist you in determining the process for completing health screenings and identify locations where the screening is completed in your state.

In the space provided, describe your efforts to identify the location where the refugee health screening will be conducted. Please be as specific as possible, listing the name and address of the existing medical screening service provider, contact with the provider and an estimated timeline for booking the refugee health screening from the provider.

f. Health and Mental Health Services (Continued)

Ongoing Medical Care

You will also need to support the refugee newcomer(s) in identifying a primary care physician and other desired health and mental health providers covered through their medical assistance. **In the space provided, describe your plan to identify relevant health, dental, and mental health providers and to support the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing health care, including follow-up care and prescriptions, transportation, interpretation, and childcare considerations. Note that this will likely require you to first determine the healthcare plan available to refugees in your community (See Services and Benefits section).**

 **TIP:** Most refugee newcomers are eligible for Medicaid or Refugee Medical Assistance. These benefits are typically administered by a local department of social services. In addition, local community health care centers, also called **Federally Qualified Health Care Centers, or FQHCs**, are funded by the federal government to offer affordable health care in communities across the United States. FQHCs cannot turn anyone away for an inability to pay or for lack of insurance. **Search for what is most relevant for your community here. Local public health departments** may also have low or no cost resources available to all residents. Some states have navigators (e.g., health insurance navigators or benefits navigators) who can assist in the application and enrollment process for health coverage options.

Mental health resources are scarce in some communities. You may find relevant information for your location through **SAMHSA**, researching local crisis response resources, or on your state's office of mental health website.

f. Health and Mental Health Services (Continued)

Urgent Care and Emergency Medical Care

In the unlikely instance the refugee newcomer needs urgent care or emergency medical care, it is important for sponsor groups and refugee newcomer(s) to understand how to access these services, especially if health benefits have not yet been obtained. **In the space provided, describe your efforts to identify low cost or eligible urgent care providers and emergency medical care providers and how you plan to support the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing this care, including follow-up care and prescriptions, transportation, interpretation, and childcare considerations.**

g. Education and Childcare

Children are required by law to attend school (consult your local school district or state specific regulations for specific ages, requirements, and enrollment deadlines). You will need to support refugee newcomers in enrolling any school-aged children in the public education system. **In the space provided, list your district's local point of contact for school enrollment and briefly describe the enrollment process in your community, including any deadlines or needed immunizations.**

For families with young children, child development programs and affordable childcare are important. **Briefly describe available child development programs or affordable childcare options for your community as relevant.**

 **TIP:** Some school districts may have newcomer centers or community school programs that help students transition to a new learning environment. Many school districts offer school choice, which means refugee newcomer families can explore what learning environment may be best suited for their student's strengths and interests. Many state and county human service agencies can help refugee newcomer families understand options for child development programs and affordable childcare, such as [here](#). Information about Head Start and Early Head Start that provide low-income families with free learning and development services for their children from birth to age 5 is also available [here](#).

h. Language

You will support refugee newcomers in language acquisition, which may include English language learning opportunities in your community (e.g., English language classes, conversation circles at libraries, tutoring through local literacy council) and/or informal language learning through regular conversational practice. **Use the space provided to describe your plans to support language acquisition.**

 **TIP:** Federal and state governments fund English as a Second Language classes (ESL). Visit your state's adult education program online (commonly in Departments of Education) to get a list of providers in your area. USA Hello's [Find Hello](#) site is also a good resource.

i. Interpretation and Translation

You will need to ensure appropriate interpretation/translation when communicating with the refugee newcomer(s) regarding critical issues such as those surrounding health and core private sponsorship services. This will depend on the English skills of the refugee newcomer(s) you welcome. You will need to ensure that refugee minors are not relied upon in these instances.

Use the space provided to describe how you will communicate with the refugee newcomers you are supporting. If you intend to use professionals/volunteers, include the names of those individuals/companies and their contact information.

 **TIP:** : Potential sources of low-cost or free interpreters are colleges/universities, churches, and cultural groups. A best practice is to ensure professional and/or trained individuals are used for health and core services, whether in person, virtual, or telephonic. Note that agencies that receive federal funds, such as hospitals or health departments, are responsible for ensuring language access. If professional interpretation comes at a cost, you will need to budget for this in advance.

j. Cultural Connections

It is important to feel connected to one's culture. **Use the space provided to describe how you will facilitate cultural connections for refugee newcomers, including access to culturally appropriate foods, houses of worship, and/or compatriots.**

k. Community Orientation

Refugee newcomers will benefit from a basic introduction to their new home, community, and life in the United States. This will include a review of topics such as home and personal safety orientation, rights and responsibilities, employment, laws, navigating public transportation, banking and community supports. **Use the space provided to describe how you will provide this introduction including any resources you might use such as those listed below.**

 **TIP:** The [Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange](#) and [USA Hello](#) offer information for refugee newcomers about life in the United States. [United Way's 2-1-1 service](#) and the [FindHello app](#) can help you find resources in your area. County or state human services departments, local city offices for immigrants, and statewide Offices for New Americans can also be great first stops in your exploration of available services.

I. Employment

You will want to support the refugee newcomer(s) in preparing to enter the U.S. workforce. This preparation may include English language learning, orientation to the American workplace, connection to workforce development services in your community, development of short- and long-term employment goals, resume preparation, and interview practice. Once work authorization is received, you will want to support them in securing employment, but preparation should begin prior.

Use the space provided to outline employment opportunities and employment preparation services (including any offered through local resettlement agencies such as the Matching Grant program) in your community and personal networks you might leverage to support the securing of early employment.

 **TIP:** The [Job Readiness Curriculum](#) empowers newcomers to find and succeed in jobs and offers tools to help them understand their documents and their rights as workers, career path options, and personal finances. Employment opportunities are often listed through workforce services, your local library, and job boards such as [Welcome Employment](#).

m. Transportation

You will guide the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing and navigating available transportation in their community, identifying how the refugee newcomer(s) might travel (e.g., bus, metro, rideshare, taxi, walk) to and from possible employment, schools, healthcare, faith community, shopping, and grocery stores, and considering road safety and requirements for child safety seats.

Use the space provided to describe available transportation in your community.

 **TIP:** Some municipalities may offer discounts on public transportation passes. You will want to orient yourselves to any possible transportation benefits that might be available in the community.

We commit to ensuring refugees have access to adequate transportation to attend critical appointments.

n. Financial Support

You will provide each refugee newcomer with basic financial supports during the initial 90-day sponsorship period, \$2,375 per sponsored individual. Financial supports must include cash or other direct funding but may also include in-kind supports (e.g., donated housing). **Use the table below to calculate your Private Sponsor Group's minimum financial requirement and the total estimated expenses for the first 90 days.**

Minimum Financial Requirement

Family Size the Private Sponsor Group is Prepared to Support	
FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT (PER PERSON)	

Estimated Living Costs for the First 90 Days

If estimated costs are reduced due to the availability of in-kind donations, indicate by checking "in-kind" next to estimated cost.

ITEMS	ESTIMATED COSTS	IN-KIND?
Monthly Cost of Living in Welcoming Community		
Rent		
Utilities (electric, water, gas, oil as applicable)		
Food		
Phone and internet		
Transportation (public transit)		
Pocket money (\$40 weekly per adult suggested)		
Other costs		
Monthly Total		
TOTAL LIVING COSTS FIRST 90 DAYS (MONTHLY X)		
One-Time Start-Up Costs		
Furniture and household items		
Clothing		
Food staples and welcome meal		
Housing security deposit		
Hook-up costs for utilities, phone, and internet		
School supplies		
Other costs		
One-Time Total		
TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES FOR THE FIRST 90 DAYS		

n. Financial Support continued

You may find that you have sufficient income and resources or that you need to fundraise. To provide for basic supports during this period, you will likely want to have additional resources on hand. Use the space provided to detail how you will ensure adequate resources.

 **TIP:** Check out these [fundraising tips and tools](#).

o. Transition from Sponsorship

It will be important to plan for the transition from the initial 90-day sponsorship period. The Private Sponsor Group and refugee newcomer(s) will discuss the conclusion of sponsorship supports and plans for economic self-sufficiency and integration within the community. Part of this plan includes ensuring refugee newcomers have access to supports and services during the ongoing integration process. Consider what community services are available that may provide support following the initial sponsorship period, including through public social service programming, local non-profits or resettlement agencies. Also consider mentorship supports your sponsor group will provide if needed post-sponsorship. **Use the space below to describe how your Private Sponsor Group will plan for long-term integration and a transition from the initial 90-day sponsorship period.**

p. Reporting Requirements

Your group will be required to complete 30- and 90- day reports as well as 6- and 12-month surveys following the arrival of refugee newcomer(s). Refugee newcomer(s) will also be asked to complete surveys within the first month of arrival and at the 6- and 12-month marks after arrival. The purpose of the reports and surveys are to ensure your Private Sponsor Group is able to complete core private sponsorship services, to identify areas where you may need additional support and guidance, and to provide the program with feedback and data on program results. They will also provide opportunities to share information about the impact of sponsorship on your Private Sponsor Group and on the refugee newcomer(s).

Please check to confirm that you agree to complete the 30- and 90- day reports.

Please check to confirm that you agree to complete the 6- and 12- month surveys.

Please check to confirm that you agree to encourage the refugee newcomer(s) your group has sponsored to complete surveys (baseline within 30 days of arrival, 6- and 12-month post arrival surveys).

Use the space below to describe who will lead on reporting at 30 and 90 days, and plans to ensure your Private Sponsor Group has the information needed for required reporting and surveys.

q. Group Roles

While Private Sponsor Groups are encouraged to organize according to what makes sense for their Private Sponsor Group and the refugee newcomer(s), below are common roles and responsibilities. Beside each role or responsibility, write the name(s) of the member(s) leading, coordinating, or facilitating access in that area.

 **TIP:** The [Sample Private Sponsor Group Structure and Roles worksheet](#) provides a possible structure for sponsor group members to understand their various roles.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	PRIVATE SPONSOR GROUP MEMBER(S)
Private Sponsor Group Coordinator	
Airport reception	
Housing	
Food and clothing	
Furniture, household goods, utilities	
Documentation	
Services and benefits	
Health, dental, and mental health services	
Education and childcare	
Language acquisition, interpretation and translation	
Community orientation and cultural connections	
Employment	
Transportation	
Financial support and budget	
Transition from sponsorship	
Fundraising	
30- and 90-day reports, 6- and 12-month surveys	