

IRIS Volunteer Opportunities Summer 2020

Click on a volunteer position below to find out more:

- ❖ [Education and Wellness \(children and adults\)](#)
 - [Sewing Machine Repair Technician \(can be done remotely\)](#)
 - [Garden Club Gardener](#)
 - [English Conversation Group Leader](#)
 - [ESOL/ Parent Education Volunteer](#)
 - [Delivery Driver](#)
 - [Educational Video Editor \(remote\)](#)
- ❖ [Housing & Donations](#)
 - [In-kind donations Sorting/Processing](#)
 - [Food Pantry Volunteer](#)
- ❖ [Case Management](#)
 - [Housing Acquisitions Volunteer](#)
 - [Administrative Assistant](#)
 - [Earned Income Tax Credit Mentor](#)
- ❖ [Interpretation/Translation](#)
 - [Interpreter/Translator](#)
- ❖ [Development and Community Engagement](#)
 - [Development Volunteer](#)
 - [Data Collection & Impact Analysis Volunteer](#)
- ❖ [Employment Services](#)
 - [Employment Volunteer](#)
- ❖ [Transportation](#)
 - [Driver](#)
 - [Community Access Volunteer \(Driving\)](#)

Education and Wellness (children and adults)

Sewing Machine Repair Technician

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 1+ hrs per week
- ❖ Days/times preferred: any M-F 9:00-5:00
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Requirements: Sewing machine repair knowledge and skills for mostly older machines
- ❖ Duties: Test, troubleshoot, and repair sewing machines that come through donations. We have some spare parts and repair tools. This can be done with safe social distancing by picking up and dropping off.

Garden Club Gardener

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2.5 hrs per week
- ❖ Days/times preferred: April to mid-October
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to bend, lift, and participate in an outdoor gardening activity. Gardening knowledge and a desire to share skills with refugees.
- ❖ Duties: Participate in the activity of gardening with participants, and help participants take care of their garden plots. Garden club volunteers can also help plan activities in the garden such as a garden season kick-off party, garden picnic, and harvest celebration.

English Conversation Group Leader

Hours per week needed: approx. 2 hours per week

- ❖ Days/times preferred: 40 min. each during two of the following days: M-Th, 1:00-4:00; Th/F 9:00-10:30
- ❖ Commitment: June 29-Aug. 14
- ❖ Requirements: Access and familiarity with WhatsApp and Zoom. Ability to lead a group in discussion, focusing on listening and encouraging others to talk. Teaching experience preferred in ESOL/ Adult Ed. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Pro-active, reliable and flexible to the needs of the program. Enjoy working with mothers.
- ❖ Duties: Lead a small group of English language learners in a discussion group for extra practice outside of online English class. Correct pronunciation and grammar errors as needed.

Conversation group can be held via WhatsApp or Zoom. Record attendance, topics discussed, & instruction needed in a spreadsheet shared with program staff. A list of class topics will be provided, but discussion can be organic.

ESOL/ Parent Education Volunteer

Hours per week needed: approx. 3 hours per week

- ❖ Days/times preferred: anytime; class time is Thursdays 10:45-11:45
- ❖ Commitment: June 29-Aug. 14 ❖ Requirements: Access and familiarity with Google slides. Expertise in the health field, child development, parent education, or education or a strong ability to research topics. Ability to write for an audience of English Language Learning adults from diverse backgrounds or willingness to learn.
- ❖ Duties: create a slideshow on a Parent Education or Health topic for a volunteer-led English class and/or teach the English class via Zoom using the materials. Volunteers research the topics and draft slideshows appropriate for English language learners. The Family Literacy Project Manager works with volunteers to provide guidance and edit as needed and approves the slideshow for use in the class. You can stop there, or you can also teach the workshop via Zoom.

Delivery Driver

1.5 hours per week Thursday to Sunday. Deliver bags 7 times to clients before Mondays from June 29 to August 10. Duties: Pick up educational activity pack bags in East Rock, New Haven. Call clients to let them know when you will deliver. Deliver bags to doors. Your list of addresses will be within one or two areas. Call/text client when bag is at door. Report back if any bags could not be delivered.

Educational Video Editor (remote)

Hours per week needed: approx. 3 hours per week

- ❖ Days/times preferred: any time
- ❖ Commitment: June 29-Aug. 14
- ❖ Requirements: Access and familiarity with video editing, screencasting, Google Drive. Ability to create content for audiences of English Language Learning adults from diverse backgrounds or willingness to learn.
- ❖ Duties: Edit educational videos created on computers, phones, and through screen casting. Add intro segments and text for keywords in videos.

Housing & Donations

In-kind donations Sorting/Processing

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2-3 hrs/week
- ❖ Days/time preferred: Monday to Thursday, 9:30am to 3pm
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month approx
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to do some moderate lifting and moving. Those with a knack for organizing are always welcome!

- ❖ Duties: Sort in-kind donations and organize them in our storage areas so we can use in new apartment to resettle refugees.

Food Pantry Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 2-3 hours per week
- ❖ Days/time preferred: Tuesdays 9:30-11:00am and/or Wednesdays, 8:30-11:00am
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month approx
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to do some moderate lifting and moving of food. Patience and a sense of humor.
- ❖ Duties: On Tuesdays, help receive food delivery of ~2,000 pounds from CT Food Bank truck by moving boxes into the food pantry and stocking shelves. On Wednesdays, supervise the distribution of food and household items to up to 100 households, in a fair and equitable way. Volunteers who can drive on Wednesdays especially needed.

Case Management

Housing Acquisitions Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible
- ❖ Commitment: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: High energy and positive attitude, good communication skills including with limited English speakers, access to a vehicle. Ideal candidate will have knowledge of New Haven neighborhoods and rental market, ability to research housing units online and network with various rental agents.
- ❖ Duties: Help IRIS staff and clients identify housing units for new arrivals and people who need to move. Conduct research online, make phone calls to agents, visit apartments, conduct basic safety evaluations, show apartments to interested clients, help coordinate paperwork and payments with landlords.

Administrative Assistant

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-15
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: High energy and positive attitude, good communication skills, attention to detail, ability to manipulate basic Excel sheets and Word documents. Ideal candidate will take pride in efficiently accomplishing administrative tasks.
- ❖ Duties: Support Director of Case Management in maintaining information systems and various administrative projects as needed, may include: taking meeting notes, updating spreadsheets, writing letters, filing, organizing, etc.

Earned Income Tax Credit Mentor

- ❖ Hours per Week: Not a weekly commitment

- ❖ Days/Times preferred: To be arranged with the client you are mentoring
- ❖ Commitment: A few weeks for each assignment
- ❖ Requirements: Ability to understand form letters from the State of CT Dept. of Revenue Services; Patience and persistence in helping a newcomer gather and mail necessary papers
- ❖ Duties: Be available to be assigned to a refugee who claimed the CT Earned Income Tax Credit, but who is being required to send in additional documentation before receiving that large payment. Assist your “mentee” to identify and find useful documents they already have, and possibly request additional documents (such as a letter from their child’s school). Assist in photocopying documents and mailing them to DRS in accordance with instructions found in mentee’s letter from DRS.

Interpretation/Translation

Interpreter/Translator

- ❖ Languages most needed: Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Arabic, Tigrinya, Amharic, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Massalit, French, Spanish
- ❖ Hours per week needed: 1.5-30 based on assignment, see below
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Flexible, see below
- ❖ Assignments:
 - **Legal Interpreters- in person:** Interpret in-person during refugees' appointments regarding Green Card, Citizenship, and Family Reunification cases in our Immigration Legal Services office. Volunteers must be willing to be contacted directly by refugee clients to ask for their interpretation help, since IRIS staff are not involved in making legal interpreter appointments.
 - **Legal Translators- remote:** Translation of legal or identification documents needed for Green Card, Citizenship, and Family Reunification applications. Volunteer translators will be contacted by the legal office as needed, and translations can occur remotely by email.
 - **Employment, Health, Education, and Case Management Interpreters:** Flexible time commitment. Interpretation needs include interpreting during Case Management meetings or employment assessments. Staff can work around your schedule and will typically call you on an as-needed basis each week. Additionally, you can greet and welcome a newly arrived family on their first night in New Haven! Accompany and translate for a case manager and the family at their new apartment, and review basic safety information before they rest after a long journey.

Development and Community Engagement

Development Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 8-10
- ❖ Schedule: Flexible

- ❖ Requirements: Must be **exceptionally detail-oriented** and highly skilled at all aspects of computer work (including Excel, Word, data entry, Gmail, and mail merge functions) as well as not opposed to folding letters and stuffing envelopes. Experience in development is extremely helpful but not necessary.
- ❖ Duties: IRIS is looking for a volunteer to help our Development team process charitable gifts and thank our amazing donors.

Data Collection & Impact Analysis Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5-10
- ❖ Schedule: Flexible
- ❖ Requirements: Fluency with MS Excel, Google Sheets, and MS Word. Use of other database software and programs ideal. Ability to liaise effectively with a broad range of staff and volunteers
- ❖ Duties: Work with IRIS's grants management and program teams to track down and record key output and outcome data needed for completion of grant reports to funders. Meet with key program staff on a regular basis understand what new program data is being produced and collected (e.g. program attendance records, English language test scores, etc.). Review data produced by program teams, ensuring quality and completeness. Work with the Grants & Donor Relations Manager to generate narrative text from the data collected. Help aggregate data and develop key insights and take-aways from the data collected

Employment Services

Employment Volunteer

- ❖ Hours per week needed: 5 to 15 hours
- ❖ Days/times preferred: Tuesday - Thursday, mid/late morning to end of day
- ❖ Commitment: 6 months
- ❖ Duties: Includes but is not limited to: developing skills assessments, resume building, assisting with online applications, and interviews. Interns log case notes and maintain employment databases. Helping a client find and secure their first job allows refugees the opportunity to become financially independent, find fulfillment with their skill sets, and build upon their goals and dreams.
- ❖ Requirements: A driver with car willing to drive clients is strongly preferred. Experience with cross-cultural communication, anti-oppressive practices, and language skills in one of our clients' languages (listed at the top of this document) also desired.

Transportation

Driver

- ❖ Commitment: weekly or monthly basis- flexible (**urgently needed**)

- ❖ Requirements: Car, license, insurance, clean driving record. Timeliness, patience and willingness to call clients, knock on doors, and problem solve in order to make sure clients come to class on time and/or are taken home successfully. Must know how to install car seats or be willing to learn.
- ❖ Duties: On a weekly or monthly or weekly basis. Assist the health and wellness team, legal department, & IRIS staff in getting high-need refugee clients to and from their appointments. You can help newly arrived refugees navigate with rides to an urgent doctor appointments, cultural orientation classes, vital immigration appointments, school enrollment appointments, job interviews. You can drive children home (5:-5:30pm M-F) when our After School Program is over
 - The volunteer will be working with a variety of refugee clients each time and receiving directions from the case manager or supervisor who arranges all the details of the appointment. The opportunity requires occasional daytime, weekday availability and can be done as your schedule - As much as multiple times a week or as little as once a month. No Medical experience is required. Must be willing to drive clients in your personal vehicle.
 - (CLIENTS HAVE THEIR OWN CAR SEATS AND VOLUNTEERS CAN BE REIMBURSED FOR MILEAGE)

Community Access Volunteer (Driving)

- ❖ Hours per week needed: flexible
- ❖ Days/times preferred: One or more days M-F between 8:00-5:00; mornings most needed
- ❖ Commitment: 3 month minimum
- ❖ Requirements: Knowledge of bus systems preferred, but will be trained. Applicants must have strong interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, and cross-communication skills and be comfortable meeting and assisting clients one to one. Enjoy being around mothers and young children (under 5 years old).
 - Ability to communicate in one or more languages in addition to English (especially Kiswahili, Arabic, Dari, and Pashto) is a plus!
- ❖ Duties: Volunteers are paired with clients to teach the empowering skill of navigating New Haven public transportation. Many clients do not yet have driving licenses so this essential volunteer role enables them to get to appointments, accept job opportunities, attend English class, or take their children to school. At the IRIS office, volunteers call clients with interpreters to set up times to provide bus orientations. Volunteers then modify a template to print out step by step pictorial and simplified English instructions on how to use the bus in general and from point A to B. At the set time, volunteers meet clients and help them follow the instructions to successfully get to their destination and gain confidence in using public transportation. Volunteers often may need to wait at the place and travel back with the client as well. Can be combined with other Family Literacy Program volunteer opportunities as well.