

Consider Co-sponsoring a Refugee Family!

IRIS partners with community groups throughout CT to help newly arriving refugee families get off to a strong start and become self-sufficient. Co-sponsorship is an opportunity to participate in the mission of refugee resettlement and to do the welcome work that is vital to our communities. Multiple groups can work together. Below is an overview of the ideal features of a co-sponsoring community. If your group would have trouble meeting any of these recommendations, we will be glad to work with you to address challenges. We want every community to have the opportunity to co-sponsor a family.

Recommendations for Co-sponsorship

Location: Refugees tend to fare best in communities where they have access to public transportation, employment opportunities, ESOL resources, and affordable housing. If these are not available in your town, we ask that you to identify a nearby location with the following features:

- Accessibility to public transportation
- In an area that has adult ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes
- In a school district that provides support resources for English language learners
- Availability of entry-level jobs that do not require a high level of English: e.g., factory work, cleaning, service industry
- Close to an affordable grocery store that takes food stamps
- Close to a hospital or health clinic that takes Medicaid and provides interpreters
- Availability of clean, safe, affordable apartments.

If your group is unable to resettle a family in a town with these features, IRIS can work with you to find creative solutions.

Co-sponsoring Community Group

- Ability to raise \$6,000-\$12,000 to provide 3-6 months of assistance. (The amount varies according to cost-of-living in the location where the family is resettled. Most funds will be used for rental assistance. This is the total amount likely needed for the whole 3-6 months.
- Willingness to work *with* a refugee family to empower themselves to become independent.
- An excellent co-sponsorship team coordinator who can serve as a liaison with IRIS.
- A strong, well organized team with the skills necessary to help refugees access social services, assist with healthcare coordination, education, and employment. We recommend at least 30 volunteers who can, *as a group* devote a *total* of 40hrs/week for the first two months.

More information: see the [IRIS Co-Sponsorship Web Page](#) or contact Ashley Makar: amakar@irisct.org