



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Community Orientation Specialist - Greater Hartford Area**

IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services, Inc., [www.irisct.org](http://www.irisct.org)) is a dynamic refugee resettlement agency with offices in New Haven and Hartford, CT. IRIS serves people from all over the world who have fled persecution in their home countries to start new lives and become self-sufficient, contributing members of their new communities. IRIS serves refugees, asylum seekers, asylees, undocumented neighbors and other immigrants as well.

#### **Job Summary & General Responsibilities:**

The Community Orientation Specialist (COS) supports the adjustment of refugee, asylee, and immigrant families to their new community by connecting them with ESOL classes, arranging for the delivery of Cultural Orientation, providing Community Orientation, and facilitating the process of obtaining a driver's license in the Greater Hartford area. An COS liaises with various IRIS staff and community members who represent the various institutions with which clients must interface in the community. The COS works in tandem with the entire Hartford office team and supports other departmental goals and programs as needed. This position will focus on serving and supporting families and students in the Greater Hartford Area.

#### **Specific Duties: ESOL Coordination**

- Connects newly arrived clients with community-based ESL programs
- Assists with the recruitment and training of ESL volunteers to assist clients with ESL enrollment, one-on-one tutoring, and small group activities
- Refers clients with accelerated skills to advanced ESL opportunities in the community

- Acts as a resource for adult students, providing resources and information to help them thrive in their new communities
- Maintains confidentiality of class records and personal information at all times
- Refers eligible clients to other career pathways and digital literacy programs in coordination with other IRIS departments
- Research and documents new and emerging ESL classes/resources in the community and online options

**Cultural Orientation Coordination:**

- Revises curriculum and materials for C.O. classes to adhere to changing program requirements, including linguistic requirements, and community information
- Plans and implements logistics for C.O. classes including: locating appropriate classroom space, scheduling class times, securing appropriate interpretation support, booking guest speakers, and notifying clients of upcoming classes
- Leads C/O class instruction and adjusts format to reflect client needs (i.e. in person, virtual, over the phone)
- Ensures all required topics in CORE curriculum are properly covered in classes, including, but not limited to: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency; Community Services and Public Assistance; Housing; Transportation; Employment; Safety, English & Education; Health and Hygiene; Budgeting and Personal Finance; Cultural Adjustment; U.S. Laws & Refugee Status
- Maintains class attendance and case notes client progress in class sessions, C/O topics covered, completing of classes, assessment, and follow ups, if needed
- Performs assessments on all clients attending the classes to ensure that the necessary information is communicated clearly, learned, and implemented. Adjusts curriculum as deemed necessary
- Enters assessment scores and tracks client progress in IRIS (CWS database)
- Provides follow-up and additional individual instruction to clients whose assessment scores show poor understanding of the subject matter or as case managers deem it appropriate based on client needs and observations
- Tailors and conducts C/O sessions in-home to accommodate clients with severe health issues and/or as needed
- Provides training support and assigns daily tasks to program interns

- Performs other duties as requested

### **Community Orientation:**

- Researches unique needs of each newly arriving family and provides comprehensive community orientation as needed in order for families to access basic needs (i.e., laundromat, grocery store)
- Provides a city bus orientation for each newly arriving family in order that they understand how to use the city bus and the route(s) taken for necessary services (i.e., laundromats, grocery stores, ESOL class)
- Provides clients with information as needed for local resources such as food pantries and thrift stores
- Provides clients with information about community resources and opportunities based on the unique characteristics of each family (i.e., religious institutions, community centers)

### **DMV Navigation:**

- Assists clients who want to pursue a driver's license in navigating the process of obtaining one through the CT Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Maintains up to date information regarding the CT licensing process and requirements pertaining to obtaining CT licensure
- Maintains up to date information regarding study and practice materials for use in clients' native language
- Takes a leading role in helping to advocate for improvements in licensure access and the licensure process with the DMV and other state agencies in collaboration with other IRIS staff members and community partners

### **General:**

- Updates and maintains the IRIS database as needed with full program and client information.
- Completes casenotes and enters necessary and appropriate physical documentation into case files.
- Confers with IRIS staff to understand special situations and needs of specific clients
- Collaborates with IRIS staff in general support of clients.

- Builds a volunteer team that can assist with processes.
- Attends regular IRIS Staff and HartfordTeam meetings.
- Supports other programs and initiatives as needed.
- Advocates for refugees and immigrants in the Greater Hartford Area.

**Candidates must have:**

- At least 2 years of experience in customer service, reception (or equivalent)
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English
- Ability to manipulate basic spreadsheets
- A demonstrated commitment to anti-racism and IRIS' mission
- A basic understanding of refugee resettlement
- Ability to quickly build rapport with new clients of diverse backgrounds
- Energy and enthusiasm for the work
- Experience and comfort using basic computing and spreadsheet software (Word, Excel, Google Docs)
- Driver's license, insurance, good driving record

**Candidates must be vaccinated against COVID-19 and comfortable coming into contact with other people.**

**In submitting an application for employment, the applicant grants IRIS permission to check references as well as question anyone who might be familiar with the candidate's job performance.**

**Ideal candidates will have:**

- Knowledge of Hartford area neighborhoods and bus routes
- Strong understanding of the refugee resettlement process
  - Ability to speak another language (especially Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Swahili or Pashto)

**Supervises:** Volunteers and Interns as required

**Reports to:** Hartford Office Director and Deputy Director of Resettlement Services

**Compensation:** \$49,600 annually, full-time, salaried

**Benefits:** Health, vision, dental insurance, Life insurance. Short- and long-term disability insurance. Vacation (3 weeks / year), Personal days (3 days/ year), sick leave (12 days/ year), holidays per IRIS schedule (currently 12 days/ year). 403b retirement plan after 1 year of employment.

IRIS is an affirmative action-equal opportunity employer.

To apply, send an email to [humanresources@irisct.org](mailto:humanresources@irisct.org) with the following:

Subject line of "Community Orientation Specialist - Greater Hartford"

A cover letter and resume.

Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received and until the position is filled.