

Resettlement Agency/Department of Social Services/Jobs First Employment Services

Refugee Customer Flow for Refugees who have Co-Sponsors

BACKGROUND

When a refugee arrives in Connecticut, they are assigned to work with a local Resettlement Agency (RA), however in addition some refugees also work with a “Co-Sponsor” group assigned and trained by the resettlement agency. In a Co-Sponsorship, the resettlement agency delegates most of the resettlement tasks to this group of Co-Sponsors to assist the refugee. For example, Co-Sponsors secure housing, collect furniture and other household items, and help refugees access public benefits such as Medicaid, SNAP, and cash assistance. Co-Sponsors also enroll children in school, facilitate job searches, and perform other necessary tasks. A refugee has a team of Co-Sponsors assigned to them and each member is tasked with assisting the refugee with each of these different needs.

JFES REFUGEES WHO HAVE CO-SPONSORS

As described above, refugees who are referred to the Jobs First Employment Services (JFES) program and who are assigned a Co-Sponsor group, will be assigned a Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison. The duties of the Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison include:

- Identifying potential employment opportunities before the family arrives
- Completes the ***JFES Refugee Service Needs Assessment (SNA) and Employment Plan*** with the refugee and complete an Employment Assessment
- Assist refugees with job search, creating a resume, complete an employment assessment, complete employment applications, preparation for job interviews, and accessing childcare and Care4Kids
- Once the refugee becomes employed, the Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison will offer job retention support to the refugee

CUSTOMER FLOW

In cases where a Refugee has a Co- Sponsor Employment Liaison, the following steps should be followed:

An application for Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) (cash assistance), is submitted to the Department of Social Services (DSS) by the client and co-sponsor team member that is acting as an authorized representative for the refugee/asylee family applying for cash. The co-sponsor team member must meet with the head of household and the other adults who are able to work in the family and review, complete, and obtain a signature for each on the ***JFES Refugee Service Needs Assessment (SNA) and Employment Plan***. The form(s) must be forwarded to DSS (preferably with the application) with all other required verifications. Note: It is recommended that a DSS MyAccount be created for each individual/family. This can be done by going online to the DSS Connect Portal at <http://www.connect.ct.gov/>. The new ***MyDSS*** mobile-friendly app

allows access to your DSS account anytime, anywhere, and on any device at <https://www.mydss.ct.gov/>.

- 1) DSS Eligibility Services Specialist (DSS ESS) reviews the application and supporting documentation, then contacts the client/or Authorized Representative (typically a co-sponsor team member) to complete the TFA interview by phone.
- 2) DSS enters the information from the Service Needs Assessment section of the JFES Refugee Service Needs Assessment (SNA) and Employment Plan into CT Hires for all adults who are determined to be mandatory participants with employment services (able to work and do not qualify for an exemption). A JFES orientation ***will not*** be scheduled in CTHires. If the interview is not completed and the JFES Refugee Service Needs Assessment and Employment Plan was received, please proceed with entering the information from the Service Needs Assessment (SNA) section into CTHires.
- 3) If all verifications have been received, DSS will process the TFA application. If additional information is needed, DSS will issue a *“Proofs We Need (W-1348)”* requesting the missing information.
- 4) If the TFA application is granted, DSS sends a secure email to the designated JFES liaison listed on ***Refugee Employment Services Contact List*** in the JFES region assigned to where the family resides to notify of the TFA grant. The subject line of the email will read *‘Refugee/Asylee TFA Grant’*. The body of the email will include the client’s name, case number, and client ID number. The DSS ESS will attach a copy of the ***JFES Refugee Service Needs Assessment and Employment Plan***. The Refugee will not be referred to any JFES orientation.
- 5) The JFES Case Manager reaches out to the client/or Authorized Representative to notify them of the TFA grant and schedules a meeting with the client, the JFES Case Manager and Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison.
- 6) The JFES Case Manager will complete the Work Readiness Assessment (WRA) in CTHires with the client and then enter the JFES employment plan information from the ***JFES Refugee Service Needs Assessment and Employment Plan*** form into CTHires as well.
- 7) At the JFES/ Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison / client appointment (translation provided by JFES Case Manager) the JFES Case Manager provides an overview of expectations and benefits available through JFES including how these benefits are accessed, reviews the individual employment plan, and schedules monthly check-ins with the Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison. The TFA recipient is eligible for the \$25 participation allowance for completing this step. Benefits that are available to the refugee family through the JFES program are processed, and the JFES Case Manager will make referrals to CCFSa (CT Council of Family Service Agencies) upon request of the RA, Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison, or TFA recipient.

8)The JFES Case Manager and the Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison meet at least monthly to share updates and monitor employment plan progress and compliance. If it is determined the client has not been compliant, action will be taken in accordance with the DSS sanctioning policy in place. The communication pertaining to the Refugee's progress with their job search will be between the JFES Case Manager and the Co-Sponsor Employment Liaison rather than the RA Case Worker in these cases where a "Co-sponsor" is involved.