

Sample Resettlement Team Structure

The below structure is just one example of how a group might organize, but it can be used as a guideline as your committees are formed. **The most important part of organizing a group is to ensure that team members in each functional area are responsible for carrying out their duties and tasks.**

Group Co-leaders: IRIS strongly recommends that each group have 2 co-leaders who:

- Ensure that all committees are established, fully staffed, and performing necessary duties
- Coordinate overlapping activities of the committees
- Serve as primary contacts with IRIS
- Check in regularly with the refugee family

Documentation Compliance Officer

- Ensures that each committee completes required documentation
- Collects required forms and submits them to IRIS
- Checks case notes entries to ensure that they are updated and complete

Volunteer Coordinator(s)

- Recruit, coordinate, and manage volunteers
- Ensure that all volunteers have done background checks through Sterling Volunteers, done youth protection training, and IRIS co-sponsorship training

IRIS recommends that each of the following committees have two co-leaders:

Fundraising Committee

- Spearheads the effort to raise \$15,000-\$20,000, primarily for 3-6 months of rental assistance

Housing Committee

- Identify neighborhoods that are accessible to public transportation and other resources

- Navigate the rental market to identify 2-4BR affordable apartments
- Identify landlords amenable to renting to a newly arriving refugee family
- Upon notification of family arrival date, negotiate a lease and secure the apartment
- Connect utilities
- Help the family develop a working relationship with landlord & address any issues that arise

Apartment Set-Up Committee

- Collect required furniture & household items (based on “R&P Permanent Housing Home Supply List”)
- Coordinate furniture delivery/move-in days
- Manage volunteers who will set up and prepare the apartment
- Stock fridge & pantry with groceries and staples prior to family’s arrival

Welcome Team

- Meet family at designated arrival point (IRIS office in New Haven, JFK, or Newark airport)
- Obtain and bring appropriate clothing for the weather
- Arrange for an interpreter to accompany you to the arrival point & the family’s apartment
- Arrange for preparation of a culturally appropriate hot meal for arrival day

Interpreter Point Person(s)

- Recruit interpreters who speak the most common languages among newly arriving refugees (currently, Pashto, Dari/Farsi, Swahili, & Arabic); do not need to be professional interpreters
- Determine if interpreters will serve on a volunteer basis or receive compensation
- Schedule interpreters for important meetings/appointments (required for arrival & initial case management intake; recommended for employment and financial meetings)
- List availability of interpreters, ensuring that at least one is available on weekdays, nights, and weekends
- Prepare the group to supplement in-person & phone interpreters with virtual interpreters, via the [Tarjimly](#) app or other interpretation apps . (secure subscription to the app and ensure that group members learn how to use the app.)

Healthcare Committee

- Identify primary care and mental-health providers in the area, who are accepting new patients with HUSKY/Medicaid and who provide interpreters.
- Ensure that each family member has a Refugee Health Assessment (RHA) within 30 days of arrival (through a Community Health Clinic (CHC) or other RHA provider in your area)
- Accompany refugees to RHAs, first appointments with primary care providers, and any specialists necessary for follow up

- Empower refugee adults to navigate the healthcare system and advocate for themselves as patients: make appointments, request interpreters with medical providers, take public transportation, or request rides when necessary
- Assist with urgent or emergency medical needs
- Coordinate with the Family Finance Committee and/or Employment Committee to ensure family members who need to transition from Husky Health Insurance to other types of insurance understand the process and requirements of these transitions

Finance Committee

- Identify an entity with 501c3 or 4 status to serve as a fiduciary for holding funds
- Identify an entity within the group or affiliated with the group to co-sign the apartment lease
- Develop a co-sponsorship budget, including funds raised by the co-sponsor group & federal “Reception & Placement” funds to be spent on behalf of the family.
- Oversee resettlement disbursements & reimbursement requests

Family Finance/Budget Committee

- Help family access public assistance, primarily through CT Dept of Social Services (DSS): food stamps (SNAP), HUSKY (Medicaid), Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)
- Identify & help family access local resources: e.g, food pantries, diaper banks, energy assistance programs etc.
- Develop and coach family on household budget & managing resources (for rent, utilities, food, transportation, & other living expenses); help family develop a system for paying bills
- Ensure the family understands banking procedures in the U.S. (e.g. direct deposit, writing checks, monitoring online accounts, electronic bill-paying options, etc.) and the importance of building a good credit score
- Coach the family on transitioning to full independence with regard to housing expenses: taking over the lease once the initial (co-signed) lease period has ended or what they will need in order to move to a different apartment (i.e., securing a new lease, recouping the security deposit on the first apartment to pay the security deposit on a second apartment, etc.)

Education Committee

- Learn the school registration process and school resources for English Language Learners before the family arrives
- Find free local ESOL classes for adults and help to arrange childcare (through Childcare Point Person) and/or early childhood education programs for toddlers
- Register kids for school and adults in ESOL classes
- Help families navigate public school bus pick-ups & drop-offs

- Act as liaison with schools while preparing parents to engage with school staff independently
- Ensure parents understand school procedures and routines (e.g. checking backpacks and email for notices, overseeing homework completion, attending parent teacher conferences, calling to report school absences etc)
- Arrange for volunteer tutors to supplement formal ESOL classes for adults and school instruction for children as needed

Transportation & Community Orientation Committee

- Research & learn to navigate local public transportation before family arrives
- Teach family how to use public transportation (fares, payment, entering and exiting procedures) and how to navigate routes
- If public transportation not available in your area or is not adequate to meet all of the family's transportation needs, devise a transportation plan (could include ensuring that apartment is walkable to resources, providing bikes and bike-safety instruction, ride shares & carpooling)
- Show family members how to get to important locations: ESOL classes, health clinics, grocery stores, laundromat, post office, food pantries, public library, etc.

Ride Coordinator(s) (for initial appointments and needs that cannot be met by public transit)

- Identify a list of volunteer drivers willing to take refugees to initial appointments (Refugee Health Assessment, DSS, Social Security office, DMV, job interviews, Cultural Orientation at IRIS, & locations not accessible by public transportation)
- Collect copies of drivers' licenses and insurance cards for all volunteer drivers
- Reach out to volunteer drivers when family or another committee identifies a transportation need. Obtain driver and notify requester

Cultural Orientation Point Person(s)

- Ensure family attends the federally required Cultural Orientation program (provided by IRIS)
- Encourage all committee chairs to attend CORE with the family and prepare to reinforce what is taught at CORE throughout the resettlement process
- Teach family the basics about living in the US: grocery shopping, laundering, etc.
- Teach family how to operate all mechanical aspects of their home including plumbing, electrical appliances and lights, security, maintenance expectations
- Discuss U.S. norms for hygiene and dress, especially as it relates to job interviews
- Introduce family to local parks and points of interest for recreational purposes
- Introduce family to local cultural or religious organizations they confirm an interest in

Employment Committee

- Identify potential employment opportunities before the family arrives
- Do an employment assessment with all employable adults and create a resume
- Assist with job searches, applications, and the interview process
- Once employed, offer support to foster job retention
- Coordinate with the education committee to arrange for tutoring sessions for interview prep and job prep

Childcare Point Person(s)

- Research & help family access regular childcare resources (e.g., Care4Kids)
- Develop a list of volunteers who will provide childcare during adult appointments and in emergencies
- Schedule & coordinate childcare volunteers as needs arise

Department of Motor Vehicles/Driver's Education Committee: (Many co-sponsor groups determine that it is essential for at least one member of a family to obtain a driver's license in order for a family to move toward independence, especially in communities where public transportation is not comprehensive. However, this is not a service mandated by the State Dept. and is **optional** for co-sponsor groups.) Volunteers on this committee would:

- Research the process of obtaining a driver's license on the DMV website.
- Educate appropriate family members on the process.
- Coordinate with the Education Committee for tutoring related to studying for the Learner's Permit Test.
- Assist the family in making appointments at the DMV as needed.
- Recruit volunteers to give driving lessons.
- Research local driving schools to enroll family members in the required 8 Hour Safe Driving Course and potentially give driving lessons.
- Accompany family members to DMV appointments as needed.
- Educate the family on best practices for purchasing a used car and obtaining insurance.

Notes

It is important that all volunteers share the mindset of prioritizing a family's move toward independence. Most tasks require co-sponsor volunteers to take charge at first, but the tasks should be completed in partnership with family members in a coaching or instructional manner. Gradually decreasing support for each task until family members are capable of completing them independently is not always a straight path forward. However, all volunteers maintaining this mindset is crucial for empowering families to gain back control over their lives.

It is also essential that co-sponsor groups ensure all the tasks associated with resettling a family occur in a timely manner. The above structure is an example of the way many groups chose to organize committees around these tasks. There is overlap between many committees' activities. Group leaders should ensure that committees are engaging in effective coordination and communication to facilitate these overlapping activities.

Here are two more Sample Cosponsorship Group Structures:

[Detailed Cosponsorship Group Structure 1](#)

[Detailed Cosponsorship Group Structure 2](#)