

Report from Refugee Sponsorship Training November 14, 2015

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Helpful Hints

- [www. RSTP.ca](http://www.RSTP.ca)
- www.CIC.ca
- CIC form IMM5440 – budget,
- Manage expectations from the beginning.
- Be prepared for the unexpected.
- Have a process for working through disagreement.
- Avoid the word “refugee”; “newcomer” was the term suggested.

Refugee is a person who is:

1. outside of home country
2. cannot stay where s/he is .
3. is denied basic human rights including the right to work, children to attend school...
4. meets the UN High Commission on Refugees definition of refugee.

BEFORE ARRIVAL

Fundraising

50 – 60% in the bank before the family arrives.

Privacy and Security

- Keep details vague.
- Language matters. Be aware of power dynamics and avoid paternalistic terminology. Protect the dignity of newcomers ie. Not “our family” but “the family we are sponsoring”.

Be Prepared

- You are the best message.
- People don’t give unless you ask.
- Tap into your networks.
- Get your facts in place.
- Develop a 30 – 60 second pitch.
- Meet people where they are ie. phone, email, work, social groups....
- Decide how to use social media – facebook, website, crowdfunding...

Be efficient

- Make the result worth the effort.
- Tax receipts are available for donations but not for in kind donations or tickets

Be prepared for the unexpected

- Funds cannot be returned to donators.
- What happens if monies not used for the intended purpose

ARRIVAL AND SETTLEMENT

- Research your newcomers' home country, its language, political situation, culture...
- Be prepared to greet them with a few words in their own language.
- The newcomers are exhausted – travel, change...
- Language is the biggest barrier.
- Help to breakdown isolation – physically in Canada, emotionally in home country.
- Give the family a few months to adjust before going to work.
- Newcomers often feel guilty – they are safe, family members still in danger.

Settlement Plan

- Review/ adjust continually. Be flexible and compassionate.
- Include the family in the plan.
- Complete in the plan in detail with the family and with translation services.
- Make review of the Settlement Plan part of the routine.

Funding

- Set expectations – what the CG expects and what the family expects.
- Make support reasonable for the future when they are on their own.
- Be clear about:
 - How much and when.
 - What is covered and what is not covered ie. telephone, computer

Cultural Adjustment

- Trust is a big issue. Newcomers are wary of those in authority: police, transit authority, CG members...
- Unaware of Canadian norms, expectations and laws ie. Hitting children
- Newcomers can be very shy – afraid to ask.

Health

- Newcomers have medical coverage on arrival.
- Help them to set up doctor, dentist...
- Watch for signs of psychological health. Take care of the person's physical needs but **SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP** for trauma.
- Give the newcomers choice, voice and control whenever it is reasonable to do so.