

## Initial Sponsor Service Checklist

The following checklist is drawn from existing best practices and can be used by sponsors and refugee newcomers to develop plans and track activities. In addition to providing refugee newcomers with critical financial support, sponsors will need to connect them with relevant services (such as health care and education) and support their integration by assisting them as they learn English and secure employment.

The checklist below suggests activities and timelines for ensuring key services are provided for refugee newcomers and can serve as a guide during the initial period of a refugee newcomer's stay in the United States. For additional resources, refer to your Welcome Plan and [welcomecorps.org](https://welcomecorps.org).

### Prior to Arrival

#### Housing

Secure initial and/or permanent housing on behalf of the refugee newcomer(s).

#### Financial Support

Secure \$2,375 per individual refugee newcomer, which may include cash or other direct funding as well as in-kind supports (e.g., donated housing).

#### Basic Necessities

Connect utilities and internet on behalf of the refugee newcomer(s), including enrollment into plans discounted for low-income residents, where applicable.

Furnish the housing with recommended items.

Stock the pantry with initial food items.

Gather seasonally appropriate clothing for the airport greeting.

#### Interpretation and Translation

Identify appropriate interpretation/translation resources for communicating with the refugee(s) regarding critical issues, such as those surrounding health and core services.

### Day of Arrival

#### Airport Reception

Welcome the refugee newcomer(s) at the airport and transport them to secured housing.

#### Basic Necessities

Provide a ready-to-eat, culturally appropriate meal.

#### Orientation

Provide a brief orientation to new housing, including guidance on locks, smoke detector, fire extinguisher, and 9-1-1.

Provide initial emergency contact information and ensure refugee newcomer(s) are able to make contact (e.g., working phone and/or introductions to neighbors).

## Week of Arrival

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### Services and Benefits

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing benefits (e.g., Refugee Cash Assistance, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, Medicaid, Refugee Medical Assistance) from your local department of social services.

### Health

Ensure that refugee newcomer(s) with acute health care requirements receive appropriate and timely medical attention, including for prescription refills. Enroll refugee newcomers in discount pharmacy programs, as is applicable.

Coordinate with state and/or local health care providers to provide medical services to refugee newcomer(s) requiring medical care upon arrival.

### Documentation

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in printing form(s), such as the I-94 via the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website.

Submit changes of address with the Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Postal Service. Advise refugee newcomer(s) that this will need to be done each time the refugee newcomer(s) move(s).

As appropriate, support refugee newcomer males ages 18–25 in completing selective service registration. Advise refugee newcomer males ages 18–25 of the necessity of submitting changes of address forms with the Selective Service each time there is a change of address.

### Basic Necessities

Provide the refugee newcomer(s) with pocket money to support their independence. (You can talk with the refugee newcomer(s) about the amount that feels appropriate. \$50 per refugee newcomer is standard practice).

### Orientation

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing their mailbox. As necessary, support the refugee newcomer(s) in identifying bills, junk mail, etc.

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in going grocery shopping. Ideally, this should include a store with affordable staples, as well as one that offers culturally-specific foods.

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in shopping for clothing, footwear, and other necessities.

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in creating a household budget.

### Employment

Discuss short and long-term employment and educational goals with refugee newcomer(s); connect them with mentors and workforce resources.

# First Month After Arrival

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## Health and Mental Health

Ensure refugee newcomer(s) receive a Refugee Medical Screening.

Ensure refugee newcomer(s) are connected with affordable healthcare, for example through a community health care center.

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in selecting a primary care physician.

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in accessing mental health supports, as needed.

## Documentation

Once necessary documentation has arrived, support each refugee newcomer(s) in obtaining state IDs and/or driver's license(s).

## Education and Childcare

Support school-aged refugee newcomer children in enrolling to primary and secondary school.

Support refugee children in enrolling in after school, and summer school programming, as applicable and available

Support refugee newcomer(s) in identifying affordable child development/childcare options, as relevant.

Connect refugee parents of school-aged children to school and district staff, including district-supported family liaisons, to support their understanding of the U.S. educational system.

Support older youths' continued education by connecting them with local community colleges or higher education institutions to understand options and opportunities.

## Basic Necessities

Continue to provide pocket money as appropriate until other income is received.

## Orientation

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in setting up checking and savings accounts. Credit unions often have better abilities to open accounts for individuals who do not yet have Social Security Numbers than national banks.

Ride public transit with the refugee newcomer(s) to their points of interest (e.g., shopping, post office, library, grocery store, park, children's school, doctor's office, place of worship) and consider purchasing public transit passes.

Provide cultural orientation to the refugee newcomer(s), including federal, state, and local laws, safety, and healthcare, and purchasing public transit passes.

Continue to support the refugee newcomer(s) in connecting to available community benefits and services (e.g., mental health services and libraries), as well as extracurricular activities.

## Language

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in enrolling in English language training and digital literacy classes, as appropriate.

## Employment

Connect the refugee newcomer(s) to workforce services (e.g., American Job Centers or local community-based agencies) where they can access resume writing assistance and career navigation services.

Support the refugee newcomer(s) in applying to job and job training opportunities. Many job training activities do not require that the refugee newcomer has received their Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

## Cultural Connections

Facilitate cultural connections for the refugee newcomer(s) including access to houses of worship and/or people from the same cultural background, as desired.

## Second Month After Arrival

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### Documentation

If not yet received, follow up on social security card(s) and employment authorization document(s) (EADs) with Social Security Administration and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

### Financial Support

As appropriate, support the refugee newcomer(s) in paying their bills, managing their finances, and locating financial education resources.

### Employment

Continue to support the refugee newcomer(s) in finding career training opportunities and securing employment.

### Language

Continue to support the refugee newcomer(s) with language practice, including through conversation circles at libraries, tutoring and/or informal language learning through conversational practice.

### Orientation

Continue to support the refugee(s) in learning about their new community and life in the United States.

Continue to support the refugee(s) in connecting to available community benefits, services, and extracurricular activities.

### Housing

If not yet secured, secure long-term housing before the end of the sponsorship period. As appropriate, connect utilities and internet and furnish the housing with recommended items.

### Transition

Discuss the conclusion of sponsorship supports and attainment of economic self-sufficiency and long-term integration with the refugee(s). Include options for access of ongoing community services in your discussion.

## Ongoing Support

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### Employment

As relevant, continue to support the refugee(s) in finding career training opportunities and securing employment.

### Language

Continue to support the refugee(s) with language practice.

### Orientation

Continue to support the refugee(s) in learning about their new community and life in the United States, including by fostering connections between parents and schools (as applicable).

Continue to support the refugee(s) in connecting to available community benefits, services, and extracurricular activities.

### Transition

Ensure the refugee(s) understands their travel loan and payment options.

Ensure the refugee(s) knows requirements related to adjusting their immigration status, including connecting with qualified legal assistance or other support services, as relevant.

## Reporting and Feedback

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Complete 30- and 90-day reports.

Complete 6- and 12-month surveys.