*This document is a Sample Accompaniment/Welcome Team Checklist that such teams may use as a resource for their ministries. While by no means*

*required, we invite you to send your completed form to Allison Duvall,* [*aduvall@episcopalchurch.org*](mailto:aduvall@episcopalchurch.org)*, so we may use them as a resource to support others*

*in their work. Additions/changes you make to these forms may be reflected in updates to the* Supporting Asylum Seekers Toolkit.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A. BEFORE THE FAMILY ARRIVES** | **☑ & Date** | **Person(s) responsible** |
| **Preparation, 1-3 months in advance of knowing the individual’s or family’s arrival date:** | | |
| **GENERAL** | | |
| Identify members of your Team, define main contact person(s), organize smaller teams and define volunteer roles. | □ |  |
| Individuals who will be in direct communication with the family should download and be comfortable using WhatsApp, a preferred messaging/calling app used by many immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. | □ |  |
| Identify interpreter(s) to assist you in communicating with the compa(s). Ideally, interpreter(s) would be full member(s) of your team. | □ |  |
| Develop a list of volunteers, phone numbers/email addresses, and each volunteer’s availability (An online coordinating application such as Care Calendar or LotsaHelpingHands can be helpful: [www.carecalendar.org](http://www.carecalendar.org) or [www.lotsahelpinghands.com](http://www.lotsahelpinghands.com).) | □ |  |
| Ensure volunteers have all signed relevant Volunteer and/or Confidentiality Agreements, received Safe Church training, and received a background check. | □ |  |
| Asset-map your community and create a comprehensive list of service providers, organizations, and partners who you can look to for assistance and/or to whom you can refer the family if needed. Communities with refugee resettlement agencies may have such lists in place; consult the agency’s website or information line. | □ |  |
| Complete Welcome Team Planning Worksheet to determine the duration and type(s) of support you will provide. | □ |  |
| Download and print English and Spanish copies of LIRS’ e-book First Steps: <https://www.lirs.org/first-steps/>. Encourage team members to read. | □ |  |
| **FINANCE & FUNDRAISING** | | |
| Set-up an account/process by which to responsibly handle income/expenses for this work. | □ |  |
| Raise funds and create budgets outline how you will support the family for \_\_\_\_ months. | □ |  |
| There will be planned and unexpected costs that arise that your team members/volunteers may determine are reasonable to meet the needs of the family. (Example: Clothing purchases at local thrift shops; school supplies.) Determine how/whether your organization will reimburse reasonable expenditures. | □ |  |
| **LEGAL ACCOMPANIMENT** | | |
| Establish regular contact with the accompaniment network, organization, or attorney arranging the connection with the asylum seeker(s) in need of support. | □ |  |
| Identify local immigration attorney to take on the family’s case. If not pro bono, identify the sources of financial support to cover legal fees. | □ |  |
| **CLOTHING, FOOD, MATERIAL ASSISTANCE** | | |
| Identify low-cost and ethnic community grocery stores that the family is likely to use regularly (Aldi, Lidl, Middle Eastern/Mediterranean, African, Mexican/Central American groceries) and that are walkable or public transportation-accessible to their home. | □ |  |
| Identify a nearby laundromat, a Laundry Love ministry, or other place where the family will be able to do laundry at affordable rates. | □ |  |
| **EDUCATION** | | |
| If there are children in the family, make contact with the local public school family resource center to learn if the school is able to provide additional assistance to the children who will be enrolling (i.e. clothing for school, backpack, school supplies, etc.). | □ |  |
| **HOUSING** | | |
| Begin to identify possible rental properties that are affordable (family could reasonably assume costs of lease after securing employment) and identify and build relationships with sympathetic landlords, rental companies, or Air B&B/VRBO hosts who may be willing to consider a long-term rental. Make sure to consider accessibility and proximity to schools, grocery stores, public transportation, and community services. | □ |  |
| **MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH** | | |
| Identify medical and mental health care providers who offer pro bono or sliding scale services to low-income patients. Ascertain if they have medical interpreters on site or if they use a language line for interpretation. Make sure they provide trauma-informed care. | □ |  |
| **Once arrival date is known:** | | |
| **GENERAL** | | |
| Arrangements made for asylum seeker(s) to arrive. | □ |  |
| Transportation secured for arrival, if necessary. | □ |  |
| **HOUSING** | | |
| Housing secured, and if applicable, lease signed. | □ |  |
| Home/apartment set-up organized and completed. (This may be an event requiring many volunteers and management/coordination of the volunteers.) | □ |  |
| Contact local utilities company to set up accounts and start service. If utilities accounts are in the name of the person(s) you are supporting, which can be beneficial to assist them in establishing a credit history, you may be asked to pay an additional deposit if they do not yet have a social security number. | □ |  |
| Home Evaluation & Safety Checklist completed. | □ |  |
| Home Supply List completed, all goods secured.  Consider providing comfort or entertainment items, especially if children are expected. Almost everyone will enjoy a soccer ball or indoor basketball hoop! | □ |  |
| **CLOTHING, FOOD, MATERIAL ASSISTANCE** | | |
| Volunteers buy or prepare culturally appropriate food for day of arrival and day after arrival. | □ |  |
| Secure seasonal clothing as necessary. (Example: If it is winter and very cold where you are, secure coats/scarves/mittens for all members of the family, who may be coming from a warmer climate.) | □ |  |
| **B. ARRIVAL & WEEK 1** | **☑& Date** | **Person(s) responsible** |
| **GENERAL** | | |
| Meet family at airport or bus station and transport them to their new home. Have an interpreter present when family arrives. If there are small children, make sure car seats are available. | □ |  |
| During the first week, schedule time to meet with the family to establish rapport, discuss the role of the team and volunteers and the nature and duration of the support you will provide. If your team has adopted a volunteer agreement form and an agreement form for the asylum seeker(s), now is an appropriate time to discuss and sign these documents. | □ |  |
| Provide the family with a means by which to contact team members, like a phone calling card, a pay-as-you-go cell phone, etc. | □ |  |
| **HOUSING** |  |  |
| Visit the family the day after their arrival and complete the Next Day Home Visit Checklist, which includes housing and personal safety orientation. Make sure you have an interpreter present. | □ |  |
| **CLOTHING, FOOD, MATERIAL ASSISTANCE** |  |  |
| Culturally appropriate, ready-to-eat food, plus one day’s worth of additional food supplies and staples including baby food as needed (available on arrival) | □ |  |
| Appropriate seasonal clothing required for work, school, and everyday use, including proper footwear, and diapers for children (available on arrival). | □ |  |
| Furniture and household items in good condition (available on arrival) | □ |  |
| With the family, schedule time to go shopping for clothing at Goodwill/thrift store and for other necessities. | □ |  |
| A few days after arrival, schedule time to go grocery shopping with the family. If possible, use public transportation so the family begins to learn how to independently navigate.  Adults may or may not need the support/guidance of volunteers to navigate the store; they may not need any assistance at all if the store employees speak a common language.  If possible, provide pre-paid grocery store “gift cards.” | □ |  |
| **MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH** |  |  |
| If circumstances necessitate immediate medical/mental health attention, arrange to bring family to health care provider within first week after their arrival. | □ |  |
| **C. WEEKS 2-4** | **☑ & Date** | **Person(s) responsible** |
| **GENERAL** |  |  |
| Provide list of family members’ full legal names and birth dates *only to volunteers who would need this information* (for medical/mental health, school enrollment, etc). | □ |  |
| Orient the family to the local community (including post office and library) and to public transportation. Learn whether your public transportation authority provides free or low-cost bus/light rail/metro fares. Assist the family in registering for free/low-cost public transportation fares and accompany them as they learn to use public transportation independently. | □ |  |
| **LEGAL ACCOMPANIMENT** |  |  |
| Arrange meeting for family with their immigration attorney. If requested, assist by securing an interpreter for the meeting. If requested by the family and/or the attorney, members of the Legal Services/Support Team may attend the meeting. | □ |  |
| **CLOTHING, FOOD, MATERIAL ASSISTANCE** |  |  |
| As needed and in line with the commitments the Team has made (duration and types of support), volunteers should accompany adults in family to grocery stores, providing less guidance over time in order to facilitate the adults’ independence. Welcome Team should provide pre-paid grocery store cards, or other means of purchasing groceries, to the family until 1) they have received work authorization, secured employment, and are able to pay for groceries themselves; and/or 2) they have received asylee status and are eligible for SNAP (food stamps).[[1]](#footnote-1) | □ |  |
| Accompany adults to the laundromat you’ve identified and assist as needed as they navigate the space and do their laundry. (They may need assistance with the coin changer, getting a laundry “card,” etc.) | □ |  |
| **EDUCATION** |  |  |
| Enroll children in school 30 days after family’s arrival.[[2]](#footnote-2) As needed, schedule meetings with school officials. (Note copies of I-94 cards, other immigration papers, and proof of residence will likely be needed for the meeting.) Determine what services family can access through school family resource coordinator. | □ |  |
| Buy all needed school supplies. Consult the schoolteacher as to what is needed before making any purchases. | □ |  |
| Assist adults to enroll in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, and/or arrange volunteers to serve as English language tutors and conversation partners.[[3]](#footnote-3) | □ |  |
| **SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL NEEDS** |  |  |
| If it seems appropriate and natural, ask the family members if they would like to attend religious services of the faith/denomination they prefer, taking great care to ensure they understand there are no expectations on your part that they participate in any faith community or tradition. If they would like to explore a faith community, work with a local church, synagogue, mosque to assist with transportation for the family to attend. | □ |  |
| **EMPLOYMENT/JOB PLACEMENT** |  |  |
| If the family members have humanitarian parolee status at present, they may apply for work authorization and a social security card. *“If you are lawfully present in the United States and plan to apply for work authorization, you can apply for both work authorization from (USCIS) and request a Social Security card from Social Security at the same time. For more information on this process, read* [*Apply For Your Social Security Number While Applying Your Work Permit*](https://www.ssa.gov/ssnvisa/ebe.html)*.”* | □ |  |
| While awaiting work authorization, speak with the adults about their work history, their skills and interests. Provide coaching on preparing their resume, on American workplace culture, job interviews, etc. | □ |  |
| **MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH** |  |  |
| Provide a general health care system orientation to the adults in the family, follow-up on their questions. | □ |  |
| Schedule an appointment for adults and children at medical/mental health care provider(s) to determine any immediate health care needs. (Secure interpreter, as needed.) Bring copy of I-94 and any other immigration forms and identification cards/birth certificates to the appointment. Depending on the provider, allow ample time for appointments. Ensure that family members with acute health care requirements receive appropriate, non-discriminatory and timely medical attention. | □ |  |
| Take children to local Health Department for immunizations and TB screenings. Determine if any other health care appointments are needed to proceed with school enrollment and follow-up. | □ |  |
| If necessary, assist family members in accessing appropriate providers of continued therapy or preventive treatment for health conditions affecting the public health. | □ |  |
| Determine Medicaid eligibility; prepare to file appropriate paperwork. Team may wish to seek out counseling/advice from the immigration attorney as to how assistance such as Medicaid could/would affect family in future. | □ |  |
| **3. WEEKS 5-8** | **☑ & Date** | **Person(s) responsible** |
| Visit the family again in their home. Review the items in the Next Day Home Visit Checklist, and do any follow-up needed. Teach family how to request and/or perform home upkeep (contact landlord for fixing appliances, cut own lawn, etc.). | □ |  |
| Follow-up on any requests from the adults and/or from the immigration attorney | □ |  |
| If the family is interested, schedule fun outings (the library, the park, the pool, a community event or festival, etc.) | □ |  |
| Follow-Up: For any uncompleted tasks/activities from previous weeks, continue working with the volunteer teams and the family to complete tasks or discern whether or not they are necessary. | □ |  |
| **4. WEEKS & MONTHS TO COME** | **☑ & Date** | **Person(s) responsible** |
| Once the adults in the family receive work authorization, assist them with transportation to job interviews. Once adults secure employment, assist them in creating a transportation plan to get to and from work, ideally using public transportation (to avoid burning out volunteers and prevent a cycle of dependency upon the volunteers). | □ |  |
| Continue to orient the members of the family to the community. If adults are literate, provide written orientation materials in their native language, as possible. | □ |  |
| Use CORE (Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange)[[4]](#footnote-4) materials to discuss important topics before and as they arise.  Ensure that:   1. the family can navigate appropriate and relevant systems; 2. family understands where they can access ongoing support (food kitchens, community services, the type/duration of assistance the Welcome/Accompaniment Team will provide, etc.); 3. family understands their surroundings and their situation (reiterate legal information as provided by immigration attorney, as necessary). | □ |  |
| As needed and in line with the commitments the Team has made (duration and types of support), volunteers should accompany adults in family to grocery stores, providing less guidance over time in order to facilitate the adults’ independence. Welcome Team should provide pre-paid grocery store cards, or other means of purchasing groceries, to the family until 1) they have received work authorization, secured employment, and are able to pay for groceries themselves; and/or 2) they have received asylee status and are eligible for SNAP (food stamps).[[5]](#footnote-5) | □ |  |

1. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligibility/citizen/non-citizen-policy> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Children have the right to receive a public education regardless of their status. It is the family’s responsibility to ensure that their child enrolls in school. The government-issued Notice to Appear documentation is sufficient identification. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Online English as Second Language lesson plans and resources: <https://www.linguahouse.com/esl-lesson-plans> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [www.COResourceExchange.org](http://www.coresourceexchange.org) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligibility/citizen/non-citizen-policy> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)