

Sponsorship TOOLKIT

RESOURCES FOR
WELCOMING



**COMMUNITY
SPONSORSHIP
HUB**



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GUIDANCE ON SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS

Sponsorship is a powerful—and direct—way to welcome newcomers. By doing airport pick-ups, making grocery runs, sharing meals, offering advice on day-to-day decisions like schools, sports, and more, you can help a new neighbor build a life in your community.

Being part of a sponsor team is the ultimate neighborly act. Together with a team, you'll be welcoming people to a new place, walking with them in their first days of this next chapter. It's important work—work that will include learning some new things for everyone involved. **But you won't be alone! Each group will work together to share responsibilities, with Alight as a key member of the team.**

Through sponsorship, you're helping create a better system for newcomers by providing supplemental support that goes beyond traditional resettlement routes. Neither Alight nor Sponsor Teams are expected to play the role of resettlement agencies. There, we defer to the experts! **Rather, sponsor teams z the services given by these agencies and help make our welcome truly warm. Sponsor support runs in tandem to traditional programs, bolstering support, filling gaps, and helping ensure a strong start for the newcomer.**

Establish a Team: Sponsorship is most successful when responsibility is shared. Consider pulling together a group of at least five people, with one person serving as sponsor team lead. If you don't have a group (or would like to be matched with additional members, let Alight know! You can *always* think of Alight as a member of your team; we're here to answer questions, fill gaps, and ensure newcomers get off on the right foot.

Create a Budget: Ukrainians who are granted humanitarian parole will be eligible to apply for employment authorization and assistance programs like Matching Grant Program (MGP) or Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA). However, the newcomers enroll in these programs and apply for work authorization only after arrival. **As a sponsor, you will be especially helpful in offering day one support.** You will assist them in securing initial temporary housing and ensure they have essential household goods, food, and transportation while they get set up. Create a budget to estimate the resources you will need to provide this support.

Fundraise to Meet that Budget: Fundraising can help you generate the financial and in-kind resources needed to support newcomers. Members of your community are likely eager to give!

Make a List of Early Tasks: In addition to providing the newcomer with critical financial support, you will also need to connect them with relevant services (such as MGP or RCA benefits, health care, and education), and support their integration, by assisting them as they learn English and secure employment. You'll find a detailed list at the end of this document.

Keep Going! Supporting someone who is adjusting to a new environment can take time and rarely unfolds as expected. Newcomers have unique journeys and may seek to achieve different goals on different timelines. Sponsorship is hard work. But it's worth it!

Resources Available to You

You will have access to a growing collection of tools, including the following resources:

Initial Sponsor Service Checklist - Supports preparation for the newcomer's arrival by having an easy reference for what critical services are typically needed within the first 90 days of arrival.

Sample Sponsor Group Structure - There are many ways to structure a sponsor group. This resource offers a template structure, with typical a and responsibilities outlined.

Sample Budget Template - Helps capture initial and ongoing estimated living costs and supports a newcomer in establishing a balanced budget.

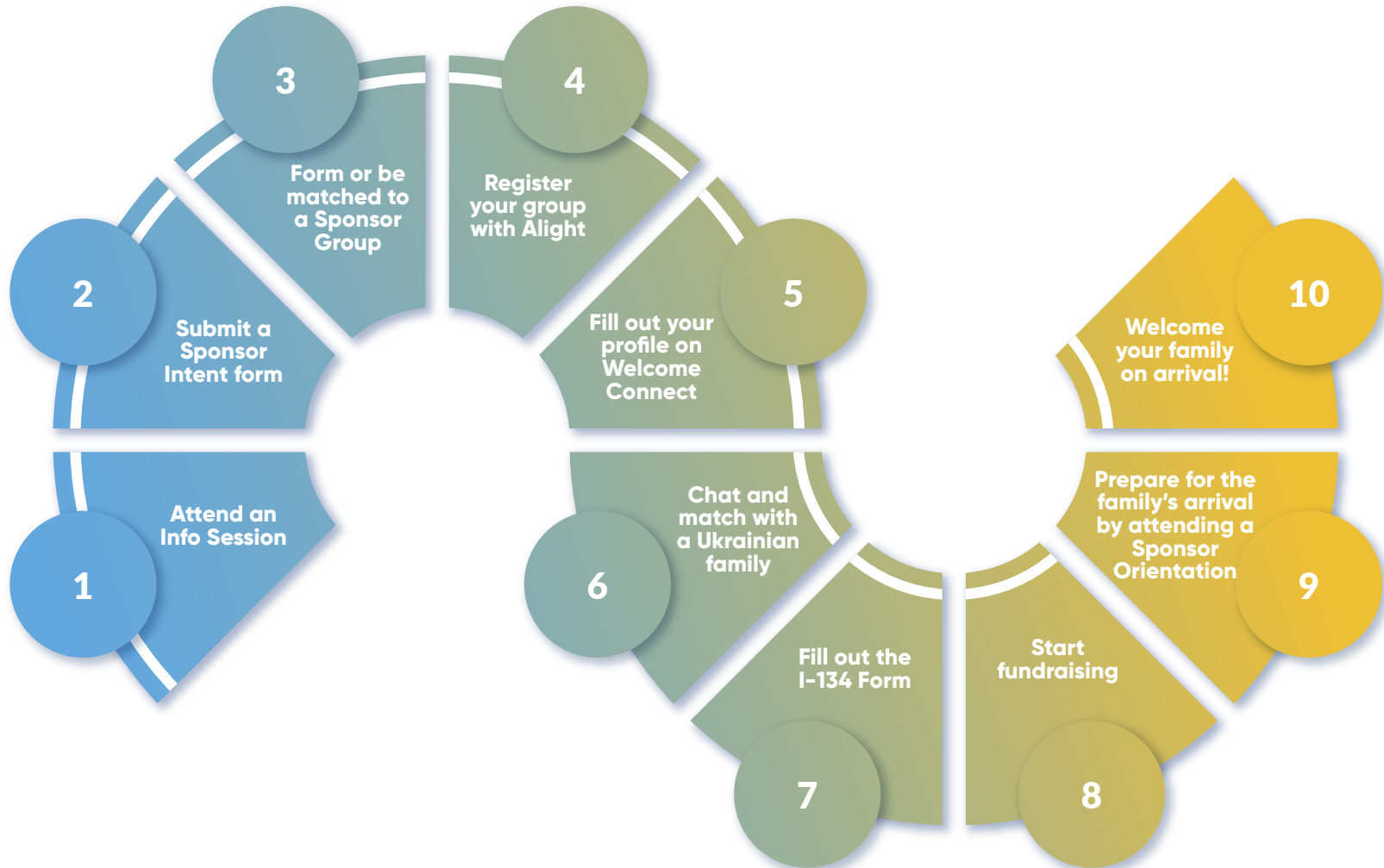
Sponsor Fundraising Tips and Tools - Provides guidance for groups in raising necessary resources for the newcomer.

Tips for Securing Housing - Provides guidance on how to secure temporary and permanent housing for the newcomers.

Sample Home Supply Checklist - Helps sponsor groups prepare the home for the arriving newcomers.

Sample Pantry Checklist - Lists items recommended to be included in the newcomer's pantry upon arrival.

THE PATH TO UKRAINIAN SPONSORSHIP





SAMPLE SPONSOR TEAM STRUCTURE AND ROLES

The United States has a rich tradition of welcoming newcomers through sponsorship. Following are some best practices, drawn from this experience, that can set you and the newcomer you are welcoming up for success.

Experience with sponsorship has shown that sponsorship is most successful when the responsibility is shared. Consider pulling together a group of at least five people, with one person serving as sponsor lead. You can see a sample sponsor team structure below.

There are several local organizations and resettlement agencies that provide services for new arrivals, especially those with refugee and humanitarian parole status. Think of these agencies as a complement to team roles. Connect with 2-1-1 to learn more. And, as always, you can count on Alight as a member of your team; we're here to answer questions, fill gaps, and ensure newcomers get off on the right foot.

Sponsor Group Lead:

Ensures guidelines are followed, tasks are completed, program documentation is submitted, and facilitates group meetings and communication. Some of their tasks may include:

Ensuring that the conditions of a newcomer's status (e.g. parole) are met and that required documentation (such as Social Security cards or state IDs) are submitted

When appropriate, ensuring newcomers are connected to free or affordable legal assistance to explore options for changes to immigration status.

Finance & Employment Team:

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading fundraising efforts, developing a budget, and navigating newcomers' access to employment services (if applicable). Some of their tasks may include:

- Facilitating fundraising efforts
- Overseeing group funds disbursements
- Developing a budget for the sponsor group
- Collaborating with newcomers to create a family household budget
- Locating local workforce services (including options for career training) and online employment exchanges
- Facilitating an informal job search

Housing & Basic Necessities Team:

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading the housing search and ensuring basic necessities are provided. Some of their tasks may include:

- Securing and furnishing clean, safe, affordable housing
- Arranging for utilities to be installed
- Providing food staples
- Providing seasonally appropriate clothing

Benefits & Healthcare Team:

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading connections to healthcare and eligible benefits. Some of their tasks may include:

- **Connecting the newcomer to healthcare providers**
- Where appropriate and available, enrolling individuals and families in services and benefits, such as Affordable Care Act plans, Children's Health Insurance Plans (CHIP), or other available health insurance plans, depending on what is available in each state.
- Connecting the newcomer to mental healthcare resources as appropriate
- Connecting the newcomer to local, state and community-based nonprofit services (food pantry, town social services, etc.)

Welcoming & Local Orientation Team

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading initial welcome efforts and community orientation. Some of their tasks may include:

- Meeting newcomers at the airport & transporting them to secured housing
- Orienting newcomers to community resources (library, youth services/clubs, recreational, etc.)
- Orienting newcomers to public transportation (bus, train, rideshare, etc.)
- Orienting newcomers to laws, personal and home safety
- Facilitating connections to local ethnic based community organizations and/or faith communities as appropriate.

Education & Language Team

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading school enrollment and connection to English language learning services. Some of their tasks may include:

- Enrolling children in school, afterschool, and/or summer school programming
- Exploring community college or higher education options for older youth
- Providing interpreter and/or translation services for communication with newcomers
- Connecting to formal, free or affordable language and digital literacy classes, as necessary
- Providing informal language training partners
- Connecting parents to family or community liaisons in local schools or school districts to build awareness about navigating the U.S. educational system



SAMPLE SPONSOR SERVICE CHECKLIST

The United States has a rich tradition of welcoming newcomers through sponsorship. The following checklist is one resource, drawn from existing best practices and can be used by sponsors and newcomers to develop plans and track activities. Although this checklist may support anyone welcoming newcomers, some of the services listed may be specific to newcomers arriving through the Uniting for Ukraine program.

Sponsors, in addition to providing newcomers with critical financial support, 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 newcomers and can serve as a guide during the initial period of a newcomer's stay in the United States.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

- Complete Declaration of Financial Support (Form I-134) and other program specific requirements.
- Receive approval of Declaration of Financial Support (Form I-134) from Department of Homeland Security.
- Research state, local and community based organizations that offer services to refugees and other immigrants, as well as faith and cultural institutions that may be relevant to the newcomer(s). **Alight will help you identify and connect with these resources.**
- Connect with state and city offices of immigrant affairs or local human services departments to learn what benefits are available to individuals granted humanitarian parole. While you provide essential support, we do not want newcomers to miss out on benefits they are entitled to that support their journey.
- Secure initial and/or permanent housing on behalf of the newcomer(s). Permanent housing may be available through programs available to newcomer(s) (MGP, for example), but Day One accommodations are critical for Sponsor Teams to arrange and prepare.
- Ensure access to/connect utilities and internet on behalf of the newcomer(s), including enrollment into plans discounted for low-income residents, where applicable.
- Furnish temporary housing with recommended items, including disposable items such as diapers that a newcomer may need. Permanent housing furnishings may be included with housing options depending on program.
- Stock the pantry with initial food items.
- Gather seasonally appropriate clothing for the airport/station greeting.
- Connect with resettlement agency to set appointment for the day after the newcomer arrives.

DAY OF ARRIVAL

- Welcome newcomer(s) at the airport or station and transport to secured Day One housing.
- Provide a ready-to-eat, culturally appropriate meal.
- Provide a brief orientation to new housing, including guidance on locks, smoke detector, fire extinguisher, and 9-1-1.
- Provide initial emergency contact information; ensure newcomer(s) have the ability to make contact (e.g., working phone and/or introductions to neighbors).

WEEK OF ARRIVAL

- Accompany newcomer(s) to appointments with resettlement agencies, where they will learn about relevant benefits available and enroll in a program.
- Ensure that newcomer(s) with acute health care requirements receive appropriate and timely medical attention, including for prescription refills. Enroll newcomers in discount pharmacy programs, as is applicable. This may be supported by resettlement agency
- Provide the newcomer(s) with pocket money to support their independence. (You can talk with the newcomer(s) about the amount that feels appropriate. \$50 per newcomer is standard practice.)
- Support the newcomer(s) in accessing their mailbox. As necessary, support the newcomer(s) in identifying bills, junk mail, etc.
- Support the 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 newcomer(s) in shopping for clothing, footwear, and other necessities.
- Support the newcomer(s) in creating a household budget.
- Discuss short and long-term employment and educational goals with newcomer(s); connect them with mentors and workforce resources. Resettlement agencies will assist with Work Permit applications and may provide support in finding employment depending on program.
- Apply for social security card(s) and employment authorization document(s). Newcomers paroled will need to submit an I-765 Application for Employment Authorization. This may be completed at resettlement agency.
- Ensure other conditions of newcomer's status (e.g. parole), such as vaccination requirements, are met.
- Support the newcomer(s) in printing form(s), such as the I-94 via the US Customs and Border Protection website.
- Submit changes of address with the Department of Homeland Security and US Postal Service. Advise newcomer(s) that this will need to be done each time the newcomer(s) move(s).
- As appropriate, support newcomer males ages 18 – 25 in completing selective service registration. Advise 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.
- As appropriate, support the newcomer(s) in accessing benefits and services, such as Affordable Care Act health insurance plans through federal or state exchanges or enrollment of young children into Head Start programs.
- If appropriate, coordinate with state and/or local health care providers to provide medical services to newcomer(s) requiring medical care upon arrival.
- Connect the newcomer(s) with qualified legal assistance to ascertain future immigration options.

FIRST MONTH AFTER ARRIVAL

- Ensure newcomer(s) are connected with affordable healthcare, such as at a community health care center, and receive vaccinations and health screenings through a provider visit or an appointment at a local public health department.
- Support the newcomer(s) in selecting a primary care physician.
- Support school-aged newcomer children in enrolling to school, after school and summer school programming, as is available.
- Connect parents of school-aged children to school and district staff, such as family liaisons, to support their understanding of the U.S. educational system.
- Support older youth's continued education by connecting with local community colleges or higher education institutions to understand options and opportunities.

- Once necessary documentation has arrived, support the newcomer(s) in obtaining state IDs and/or driver's license(s). Some states have different processes for newcomers with temporary immigration statuses.
- Continue to provide pocket money as appropriate until other income is received.
- Support the 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 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 bus passes.
- Support the newcomer(s) in enrolling in English language training and digital literacy classes.
- Connect the newcomer(s) to workforce services at American Job Centers or local community-based agencies where they can access resume writing assistance and career navigation services.
- Support the newcomer(s) in applying to job and job training opportunities. Many job training activities do not require that the newcomer has received their Employment Authorization Document.
- Continue to support the newcomer(s) in connecting to available community benefits and services (e.g., mental health services and libraries), as well as extracurricular activities.
- Provide orientation to the newcomer(s) regarding such things as safety, health care, and US and local community laws.

SECOND MONTH AFTER ARRIVAL

- If not yet received, follow up on social security card(s) and employment authorization document(s) with USCIS.
- As appropriate, support the newcomer(s) in paying their bills, managing their finances, and locating financial education resources.
- Continue to support the newcomer(s) in finding career training opportunities and securing employment.
- Continue to support the newcomer(s) with language practice.
- Continue to support the newcomer(s) in learning about their new community and life in the United States.
- Continue to support the newcomer(s) in connecting to available community benefits, services, and extracurricular activities.

ONGOING SUPPORT

- Continue to support the newcomer(s) in finding career training opportunities and securing employment.
- Continue to support the newcomer(s) with language practice.
- Continue to support the newcomer(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 newcomer(s) in connecting to available community benefits, services, and extracurricular activities.



SPONSOR FUNDRAISING TIPS AND TOOLS

The United States has a rich tradition of welcoming newcomers through sponsorship. This guide provides some best practices, drawn from this experience, to support you with your fundraising goals.

You will likely need to fundraise to generate the level of resources needed to support the newcomer(s) you are welcoming as they integrate into their new community. Often members of your community will be eager to give. This fundraising guide can serve as a useful support.

It is strongly encouraged that the sponsors stay within budget. This ensures that newcomers understand the limits of the support the sponsor can provide and helps newcomers transition past the support period.

General Considerations:

- **Unused funds:** Create a clear plan for any funds raised beyond your goal that you are confident will not be used. Communicate this plan to donors in your fundraising message. Excess funds may be held for your next newcomer sponsorship or donated later, if appropriate, to a community organization supporting the same population or a local refugee resettlement organization.
- **Before transferring any funds to the newcomer family,** sponsors should determine whether the funds transferred will affect the newcomer's benefits in a way that jeopardizes their stability and/or have income tax implications that the family cannot anticipate independently at this early stage. Sponsors can consult with a tax advisor (such as VITA) for any state specific or federal guidelines.

Fundraising Tools:

- **Promotion:** Create a one-page overview about your role in supporting and welcoming a newcomer family. Remember, people are far more likely to give to a person than they are to a cause. Once you have completed the overview, email/text it to your network, and link them to your online donation tools (see below).
- **Online Donations:** Online fundraising has become a common practice over the past decade. There are several fundraising sites (e.g. GoFundMe) and social media platforms that you can use to promote your fundraising. Visit <https://www.gofundme.com/c/fundraising-tips> for more tips on online fundraising.
- **Online In-Kind Donations:** You can use online collection and organizing tools to facilitate in-kind donations. One commonly used resource is Sign Up Genius (<https://www.signupgenius.com>).

- **Individual, Corporate, or Faith Donors:** Local businesses, faith groups, schools, and universities may be interested in supporting newcomers but are unsure how to help. A request for money or an in-kind donation is best made over the phone or in-person. Be prepared and carefully consider how you will handle offers of non-monetary support, such as in-kind donations or job opportunities for the newcomers.
- **Special Events:** Special events can be time-consuming and costly forms of fundraising, however there are ways to make them manageable: 1) Consider your target group and what event would appeal most to them; 2) Create a budget in advance, anticipating what you will spend and what you will raise; 3) Secure in-kind contributions for supplies rather than purchasing them.

Language Tips and Examples:

- **Explain the urgency of your mission:** While we expect many Ukrainians will choose to remain in Europe close to family and their homeland, the United States announced plans to welcome up to 100,000 Ukrainians fleeing the current conflict. We are grateful to sponsors who are able to provide a place of safety and security at an extraordinarily challenging time for the Ukrainian people.
- **Highlight how your community has responded to the crisis so far:** In response to this critical need, a group of neighbors and community members came together to welcome a Ukrainian family to our area. With our collective knowledge and passion, we are confident in our ability to provide the support required for a family and then some, but we need your help.
- **Explain how you will use the funds raised:** 100% of the received funds will be spent on supporting the family's start-up and living expenses during a transition to independence in our community. Most of it will go toward housing-related costs.
- **Respond to questions regarding deductible charitable contributions:** Sponsors are not able to provide receipts for charitable contributions. While you may not receive a tax benefit for your charitable gift, your generosity will greatly benefit the lives of newcomer(s). If donors have additional questions, their tax advisor or IRS Publication 526 can provide helpful guidance.
- **Send "Thank You" notes promptly and keep donors informed:** Consider a personal, handwritten note. Explain the impact of the donation. Provide an update on your efforts (do not include personal information about the newcomer family).

Maintaining Fundraising Records:

- While fundraising, make sure to keep an accurate record, tracking the donor's name, donation received/amount given, and date received. If the donor has any restrictions about how the money can/should be used, make sure to note this and honor it - if you cannot honor it, then do not accept the money.
- Make sure to hold any money raised in a secure account/location, such as in a GoFundMe account, a group bank account (if one exists), or a faith group or foundation that has offered to hold it.
- Develop an accounting structure: Track income, expenditures, and copies of receipts. This will help you monitor spending and provide transparency to donors and potentially to your newcomer family.



SAMPLE BUDGET TEMPLATE

It may take time for the newcomer to get employment authorization and to find a job. As a sponsor, you will offer critical financial support in the first months after arrival, assisting them in finding housing, essential furniture and household goods, and food. Consider creating a budget to estimate the costs and guide you as you fundraise. This budget template tool was developed from existing best practices and can help you get started.

ITEMS	ESTIMATED COSTS
Monthly Cost of Living in Welcoming Community	
Rent	
Utilities (electric, water, gas, oil as applicable)	
Food	
Phone and internet	
Transportation (public transit)	
Pocket money (\$50 weekly per adult suggested)	
Other costs	
Monthly Total	
One-time Start-up Costs	
Furniture and household items	
Clothing	
Food staples and welcome meal	
Housing security deposit	
Hook-up costs for utilities, phone, and internet	
School supplies	
Other costs	
One-time Total	



TIPS FOR SECURING HOUSING

The United States has a rich tradition of welcoming newcomers. Drawing from this experience, this resource provides best practices to guide sponsors as they find and secure housing for newcomers. Newcomers may receive housing assistance from programs administered by resettlement agencies, but enrollment in these programs begins only upon arrival. Day One housing is especially important for a sponsor to provide; learning about the rental market for longer term housing can help you act as an advocate and supporter for the newcomer.

The uncertain arrival date for the newcomer family may create a need for temporary Day One housing. Potential temporary or short-term housing options may include:

- Hotels (with accessible kitchen)
- Airbnb (<https://www.airbnb.com>)
- Separate living space attached to private home
- In some instances, hosting within the sponsor’s home. We recommend this only in situations where privacy for the newcomer(s) is possible.

General Guidelines:

Before arrival, talk with local resettlement agencies.

Programs like Matching Grant Program (MGP) and others available to the newcomer based on immigration status may provide subsidized housing and/or assistance finding affordable, safe options. Consult these Twin Cities agencies before arrival:

- International Institute of Minnesota – St Paul, MN
General Line: 651-647-0191
- Minnesota Council of Churches – Minneapolis, MN
Refugee Services General Line: 612-874-8605
- Catholic Charities Winona Diocese – Rochester, MN
General Line: 507-287-2047
- Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota – Minneapolis, MN
General Line: 612-871-0221

Get to know your local housing market! It is important to find housing that a newcomer family can afford, even after you are no longer supporting them. Housing should be clean, safe, and affordable, preferably near shopping, employment, schools, and accessible to public transportation. Research affordable apartment buildings and ask about availability, unit sizes, and lease agreement details.

Identify Potential Housing:

- Use Online Search tools:
 - Zillow (<https://www.zillow.com>)
 - Apartments.com (<https://www.apartments.com>)
 - Craigslist (<https://www.craigslist.org>)

- Use your Networks: Seek potential housing through your own contacts. Create a one-page overview of your search criteria and circulate to your networks, including on social media.
- Consult with a Real Estate Professional: Real Estate professionals know their local housing markets well. Typically, there is no fee for this service to the renter.

Tips for Securing Housing

Due to the national housing crisis, securing affordable housing can be competitive. Be prepared!

- Educate the landlord on the opportunity to welcome a newcomer.
- Ensure that they understand your role as sponsor and support to the newcomer.
- Questions for landlords should include confirming:
 - Average monthly rent
 - Maximum occupancy of the housing
 - Cost of security deposit and associated utilities
 - Terms for return of security deposit
 - Co-signer requirements (if applicable)
 - When/if co-signer can be removed from lease
 - Process for early termination of lease, and associated penalties
 - Possibility of shorter-term lease or month-to-month option



SAMPLE HOME SUPPLY CHECKLIST

Below is a list of recommended home supply items to be provided to newcomers upon arrival and/or when they transition to permanent housing. A tracking column is included to help with fundraising and donation requests.

Furniture Items	Quantity	Donated or Purchased
Mattress (and boxspring, if needed) Note: Only married couples and young children of the same gender should be expected to share beds.		
Bed frame		
Set of drawers, or unit for storage of clothing (unless each bedroom has adequate shelving)		
Couch or equivalent seating		
Lamps & light bulbs (at least one per room unless installed lighting is present)		
Kitchen table & chairs		

Kitchen Items	Quantity	Donated or Purchased
Tableware (at least one fork, spoon, knife per person)		
Dishes (at least one plate, bowl and cup per person)		
Pots and pans (at least one sauce pan, frying pan and baking dish per family)		
Mixing/serving bowls		
Kitchen utensils (spatula, wooden spoon, knife, serving utensils)		
Can opener		

Linens & Other Household Supplies	Quantity	Donated or Purchased
Bath towel (one per person)		
Sheets (at least one set per bed)		
Blankets (at least one per bed)		
Pillows and pillowcases (at least one set per person)		
Alarm clock		
Paper, pens and/or pencils		

Cleaning Supplies	Quantity	Donated or Purchased
Dish soap		
Laundry detergent		
Sponges and paper towels		
Waste baskets (2 per family)		
Trash bags		
Mop & bucket		
Broom		

Toiletries	Quantity	Donated or Purchased
Toilet paper		
Shampoo		
Soap		
Toothbrush (at least one per person)		
Personal hygiene Items (deodorant, feminine products, razors)		

Other Items and Food	Quantity	Donated or Purchased
Appropriate seasonal clothing (for work, school and everyday use, including proper footwear, for each member of the family, can be new or gently used)		
Baby items (including baby food, clothing, car seat, diapers, crib)		
Food upon arrival (culturally appropriate, ready to eat food, plus several days worth of additional food supplies)		