Application, background check, hours resources:

www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org

Background check code: sgww6kq

Facebook support group: http://tinyurl.com/hh2fffc

Cultural Mentoring and Exchange

A TEAM APPROACH TO CARING FOR NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES
Cultural Mentoring

Thank you for your interest and desire to assist refugees resettling in a new life in a new nation.

The purpose of this manual is to prepare groups (cultural mentors) that have made the commitment to welcome a newly arrived refugee family. It is intended as a guide as they walk with a refugee family during their adjustment to a new life in a new place.

Mentors play a key role in the successful resettlement of newly arrived refugees in the United States. By providing a warm welcome, basic needs, and practical help, mentors help see that the newcomers become self-sufficient and independent as quickly as possible.

Cultural mentorship helps in various ways to meet the practical, emotional, and logistical needs of a newly arrived refugee family. It is a commitment to welcome and embrace others by providing assistance with resettlement. It is not a matter of financial commitment, but rather of time and energy that often bring life-changing friendships and a greater understanding of uprooted people around the world. It is a cultural exchange and most importantly a friendship!

The Refugee & Asylee Programs of Lutheran Family Services are committed to equipping volunteers that choose to support a newly arrived refugee family during their first few months in the United States.

Let’s Talk About YOU

There is a lot to learn about refugees, this program, and your role as a cultural mentor before you meet the refugee family.
But before we begin with anything else, let’s talk about you.

Volunteering in this cultural mentoring program benefits refugees and our community, but we also want this time to benefit you. This program allows you to connect with other people, make new or deepen current friendships through meaningful, shared experience, a cultural exchange that builds your communication and social skills, and it can also help build your self-confidence interacting and working with people from other cultures.

We do not want you to go into this feeling that you’re not ready, don’t have the proper resources, and are being asked to do too much. You can feel prepared, ready, and equipped to participate in this program. You just need to start with the right perspective. Ask yourself:

- **Are my expectations reasonable?** Why do you want to be involved? When the busyness of life sets in, you’ll need to go back to your “why.” If you’re volunteering, you want to see change in the world, you want to make a difference, but you also need to take care of yourself, your family, and your responsibilities. Make sure you can do all of these things well.

- **Can I be a self-directed learner?** We need our volunteers to be just as self-sufficient as we’re asking refugees to be. To do so, you must be a self-directed learner. We have tons of resources available for you, but you’ll have to take initiative. Accessing available resources will ensure that you will have the optimal volunteering experience.

- **Am I ready to have my life impacted by a refugee family, no matter what that entails?** You will carry these people with you for a long time, even if you don’t become best friends. Their lives & their stories will and should change your life. They will invest in you, too. Be ready for a change.

*Ready, set – let’s go!*
Our family has now been in the States for 8 months. Their children are all signed up for school, the father has a job...they have a bank account and have managed their finances very carefully, and they have a circle of friends. They are still poor and life will continue to be complicated, but they have plans for the future and they are off to a good start.

“We were excited to see the father in our family obtain a job, and eagerly practice his English speaking skills. We have been pleased to see how connected they have been with others who have been here longer, learning together. And yet, some of the smallest things (banking, medical visits, and landlord issues) would be great challenges without the help of mentors.”

Want more information? Have questions? Need advice on what to do with your refugee family?
Go to www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/resources-for-mentors

Follow Us!
facebook.com/RockyMtnRefugee
twitter.com/RockyMtnRefugee
# Table of Contents

## Section 1: Who is a Refugee?
- Section 1.1: Defining a Refugee 2
- Section 1.2: Journey from Home to Denver 2
- Section 1.3: Refugee Family Levels 4

## Section 2: What is this program?
- Section 2.1: Objectives 6
- Section 2.2: How it Works: Partnership 6
- Section 2.3: The Incentive Program 7

## Section 3: What do I do?
- Section 3.1: Being a Cultural Mentor 9
- Section 3.2: Mentor Roles 12
- Section 3.3: Tasks/Projects 15
- Section 3.4: Communication Protocol 20

## Appendices:
- Appendix A: Additional Projects 22
- Appendix B: The Money 24
- Appendix C: More on LFS and DRM 28
- Appendix D: The Incentive Program 29

---

**Don’t have time to read the whole thing right now?**  
**The ESSENTIAL information is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 2.1: Objectives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3.1: Being a Cultural Mentor</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3.2: Mentor Roles</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3.4: Communication Protocol</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1: Who is a Refugee?

In this section, we will address the following questions:

- What is the definition of “refugee?”
- How does a person become a refugee?
- How do refugees end up in Denver?
- What might my refugee family be like?
Section 1.1: Defining a Refugee

A refugee is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries. (unrefugees.org)

Section 1.2: Journey from Home to Denver

How One Becomes a Refugee:

- Live in a place where people are persecuted because of their race, religion, ethnicity, social group, or political belief. Belong to one of these groups.
- Flee your country when your life or way of life is threatened. Take only your immediate family members and the clothes you are wearing.
- Find your way to the relative safety of a neighboring country.
- Apply to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for legal refugee status.
- If the UNHCR recognizes your need for protection, you may be given a card and allowed to live in a country or in a refugee camp. You may not even be safe there, especially if you are a woman or child.
- Will we get there safely? Will they let us in? What if they catch us?
- I don’t like it here. There are too many people and we don’t get enough food.
How a Refugee is Admitted to the United States:

You go through a rigorous interview, security, and medical clearance process.

As a last resort you are referred by the UNHCR for third country resettlement.

You are approved! ...you wait.

Your case is assigned to a National Voluntary Agency (like LIRS) in the United States who then hands the case over to a local resettlement organization (like LFS).

I don’t think it is moving.

You wait some more.

FINALLY, the time comes for you to travel to the United States!

Hurray!

We made it!

First night in a new country.

You are connected with a cultural mentor who helps you to adjust to your new life.

Chart adapted from one made by Maurine Huang at the Sacramento Refugee Ministry, as seen in the 2002 LIRS Processing Manual.
Section 1.3: Refugee Family Levels

Refugees come to the United States with many different experiences, cultures, languages, and educational backgrounds. As a result, some have more to their advantage coming to America than others. Depending on these variables, you would be assisting a family that would resemble, or be a combination of, the following two examples:

Example 1:
- Needs a lot of help
- Communication will be a challenge
- Minimal to no English ability
- Minimal to no formal education
- Low employability
- May not have any family/ethnic community in the city that can help them resettle

Example 2:
- Needs some help
- Communication possible with effort and patience
- Low to high levels of English
- Some to a lot of formal education
- Moderate employability
- Has family/ethnic community that can help them resettle

Burmese and Bhutanese, Somalis and Eritreans – all are as varied and diverse as the melting pot of people and personalities we have in the United States. Life in the camps in Nepal is different than coming from the cities of Iraq, just as growing up in New York City is as different from growing up in Kansas. While there is a wide spectrum, the main thing to keep in mind is that your primary role is to be a welcoming friend and to help the family become self-sufficient, regardless of the family’s background and ability.

For more information on specific countries/cultures:
https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/refugee-demographic-info
Section 2: What is this program?

In this section, we will address the following questions:

- What are the program objectives?
- How do LFS, DRM, and I fit together in this program? Please note: about 45 families per year are part of the DRM + LFS partnership. Not all families are in the incentive program.
- What is the incentive program?
Section 2.1: Objectives

Synergy is two or more things functioning together to produce a result not independently obtainable.

Lutheran Family Service’s mission is to help refugees be resettled into a secure, stable environment, on their way to self-sufficiency. We cannot do our jobs without the support of volunteers. We rely heavily on local support – volunteers, churches, and community organizations – to accomplish our mission. However, we have to keep our client’s best interests first. A volunteer’s role is to support the staff and help them achieve this mission.

In working together, it is important to keep focused on some key objectives:

Objective 1: The basic needs of refugees will be met.

Objective 2: Refugees will improve in their English ability.

Objective 3: Refugees will be economically stable by gaining and maintaining employment, and if employment is not immediately feasible, be in compliance with all cash assistance requirements.

Objective 4: Refugees will gain practical, social, and cultural life skills.

Objective 5: Refugees will be financially literate.

Section 2.2: How it Works: Cultural Mentorship

In order to provide the best services possible for each refugee family, we partner with other organizations and people from the community. Caring for a refugee family is a difficult task alone, but by joining our strengths together we can help every refugee family to have a great start at life in America.
**The Mentors and Their Roles:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lutheran Family Services:</th>
<th>Denver Rescue Mission:</th>
<th>Cultural Mentor Teams:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Apartment set-up</td>
<td>• Provide furnishings</td>
<td>• Provide furnishings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Airport pick-up</td>
<td>• Provide initial basic</td>
<td>• Provide initial basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Find housing</td>
<td>clothing and necessities</td>
<td>clothing and necessities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide furnishings</td>
<td>• Provide cash assistance</td>
<td>• Assist in financial literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide initial basic</td>
<td>in the amount of $750.</td>
<td>• Community orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clothing and necessities</td>
<td>• Provide additional cash</td>
<td>• Assist adults in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist in financial literacy</td>
<td>incentives, up to $300.</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community orientation</td>
<td>• Assist in financial literacy</td>
<td>• Prepare adults to obtain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Apply for government</td>
<td>• Community orientation</td>
<td>and retain employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assistance programs</td>
<td>• Assist adults in learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transportation to initial</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health screening</td>
<td>• Prepare adults to obtain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Register kids in school</td>
<td>and retain employment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist adults in learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prepare adults to obtain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and retain employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required By Request of LFS

**Section 2.3: The Incentive Program**

Denver Rescue Mission provides an initial $750 in cash assistance for housing and after 6 months, up to an additional $300 to the families that are being mentored. Please note, participation is limited to 45 families per year. The purpose of this money is to help refugees to keep their housing while looking for employment or gaining skills and also to encourage growth in employment, finance and budgeting, English, and life skills. For information about how this program works (particularly the extra $300), see Appendix D.
Section 3: What do I do?

In this section, we will address the following questions:

- What is my role?
- How can I best help my refugee family?
- What should I NOT do?
- Who do I contact if I have problems?
Section 3.1: Being a Cultural Mentor

A cultural mentor team is a group of 4 to 6 volunteers who come together in order to befriend and help and new refugee family. They are a personal guide to a culture that is new and often strange. Most importantly, mentor teams are trustworthy and caring friends. Being a cultural mentor is not easy, but it is very rewarding.

What to Expect from Mentoring:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Develop lasting relationships</td>
<td>• Miscommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn a lot</td>
<td>• Having to repeat yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be challenged</td>
<td>• Experiencing conflict because of cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Try new foods</td>
<td>• Not a language barrier but a language challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn about a new culture</td>
<td>• Setting a schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Truly make a difference in a refugee family’s lives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Time Commitment:

- 6 months
- We are asking for Four hours, per person, per month or 16 hours per team per month. You are welcome to give more should it work for you and the family!

If you ever need a refresher, go to the LFS Care Guide:
https://sites.google.com/site/lfsrefugees/the-program/cultural-mentors
Timelines:

**Mentor Training** ---- DAY 0 ---- Attend and fill out forms
Background Check ---------------- Fill out waiver

(Optional) Pre-Arrival Activities -------------- See Appendix A

**Linkage Visit** (Meet the family) ------- DAY 1 ------- Attend and ask questions

**Mentoring** 6 MONTHS
Monthly follow-ups with MARC
Monthly Q&As with LFS Staff

**Incentive End Evaluation** ---- MONTH 5 ---- Help arrange meeting

**Closure Meeting** ---- MONTH 6 ---- Meet with MARC, give feedback

**Post Closure Meeting** ---- BEYOND ---- Continue to mentor family, stop, and/or mentor a new family

**The Team Leader:**

One member of each mentor team will be the team leader. He or she is the point person for communication. The team leader is the main avenue for DRM and LFS to contact the team. He or she is responsible for passing along information from DRM and LFS, sending updates to the MARC intern, and in general organizing and motivating the other team members.

**Linkage Visit—What is it?**

- Meet and get to know the refugee family
- Meet the MARC intern/volunteer from Denver Rescue Mission
- Set boundaries and expectations
- Ask the family questions while an interpreter is present to translate
- Discover needs and desires
- Schedule your next visit
**Follow-ups and Timesheets:**

Every month or so the MARC intern will e-mail or call the team leader to find out what you have been doing with the family and to ask how everything is going. Please respond briefly to the questions and ask any questions that you may have.

In addition, every month each team member will be asked to submit their volunteer hours, mileage, donations, and feedback. You can do this online at [www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org](http://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org) This record is EXTREMELY important to keep the program running. **PLEASE be sure to submit your hours every month! This is how we are able to remain informed about the family.**

**Closure Meeting:**

At the end of your 6-month mentoring commitment, we will request to meet with the team (at minimum the team leader) to talk about your experience, what was difficult, things that worked well, advice for future mentors, your feedback on how we can make the program better, and what your next steps might be. The closure meeting does not involve the refugee family, and teams are encouraged to continue their relationship with them. The only thing that changes is that we will no longer ask you for updates or time sheets.
Section 3.2: Mentor Roles

Check Your Understanding

What you would do in the following three scenarios?

1. You go to visit the family on a Friday afternoon and they have no food.

2. The mother tells you that the little girl has a fever and asks for your help.

3. The father tells you someone in his apartment complex will sell him a phone for $300 and asks you to help him pay for it.

A helpful note: Before refugee families meet their mentors, they sign an agreement acknowledging what they can expect from their mentors.

Once we get through Sections 3.2 - 3.4, let’s come back to see if you’ve learned how to navigate these types of scenarios. Remember, you must be a self-directed learner. Use your resources, follow the protocols, and if you do, you can’t go wrong! It’s a slam dunk!

Let’s Start At the Very Beginning

Before understanding your role as a mentor, it helps to know first what staff are paid and expected to do for refugees when they arrive.

Because LFS provides the following services to our clients, mentors can better understand the roles they are not expected to play.
## Core Resettlement Services

### Case Management
- meeting clients upon arrival
- referral to initial health screenings
- physicals and immunizations
- ensuring access to social service programs
- orientation to the culture and laws of their new country
- assist clients, other service providers and the community with unanticipated needs or emergencies that may arise

### Employment Services
- meet with newly arrived refugees to assess language proficiency, educational and vocational background, and formulate a plan to achieve economic self-sufficiency
- transportation, interpretation for job interviews or work-related health appointments
- continued job coaching
- employer/employee mediation

### Housing
- location/placement assistance
- assistance with the application process
- supply of basic household furnishings
- establishment of utility services

### Community Services
- after school tutoring
- adult job club
- develop and implement specialized programs that respond to the needs of newly arrived refugees

### Limited Immigration Services
- assists in completing applications for family reunification
- assistance in citizenship
- legal permanent residence assistance
- various other limited services
Fundamental Mentor Roles:

- Being a friend (with professional boundaries)
- Having fun with the family
- Valuing and seeking understanding of family’s culture
- Practicing English
- Teaching financial literacy
- Teaching practical life skills
- Teaching about American culture
- Informing DRM or LFS about any problems or concerns
- Dressing comfortably and modestly
- Submitting the time and donations record to LFS monthly

Optional Mentor Roles:

- Providing transportation for medical appointments, grocery shopping, etc.
- Teaching how to use the Denver RTD bus system
- Giving food, clothing, furniture, and other items
- Helping to create resumes, practicing for interviews, and finding jobs
- Taking family to do activities in the city like going to the zoo, park, library, museums, and sporting events
Prohibited Mentor Roles:

- Encouraging a move to a different apartment
- Transferring children to new schools
- Communicating directly with LFS case managers
- Giving money, medicine, or medical advice
- Sharing medical or financial issues with people outside of the program
- Applying for or attempting to answer questions regarding R&P, TANF, Matching Grant, CARES, Medicaid, or food stamps
- Being alone with children or a refugee of the opposite gender
- Transporting refugees without a valid driver’s license and auto insurance
- Anything that gives the family a crutch rather than working towards self-sufficiency
- Inviting refugees to your place of worship without their own initiative (they ask to go/be involved)

Section 3.3: Tasks/Projects

Refugees come with a spectrum of skills and levels of ability. Along with building relationships, the following are resources to assist in helping refugees earn incentives and engage in activities that promote self-sufficiency. These activities should be driven by the refugees’ desires to learn and attain self-sufficiency, so some activities may or may not be applicable to the family you mentor.

To start, read the R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment: http://goo.gl/jmJR09
This is the measuring tool we recommend to keep on track with mentoring.
Financial Literacy

**Preliminary reading:** Download the Financial Workbook (look to see if the family’s language is offered).

*Online Resource: https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/financial-literacy

**Session 1** – Financial literacy handbook, Section 1.0. Discuss, when your [name of initial assistance program] ends, how will you/your family get money? See Appendix B. (Question 6 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment)

**Session 2** – Financial literacy handbook, Section 2.0. Discuss, what might happen if you do not pay your rent? (Question 9 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment)

*Online Resource: http://goo.gl/u9Z2Ck

**Session 3** – Financial literacy handbook, Section 3.0. Discuss how the family feels about having a bank account. Was it safe to have a bank account in their home country? Do they have any concerns about the American banking system?

**Session 4** – Financial literacy handbook, Section 4.0. Discuss matched savings programs. If they are interested in saving, they can qualify to have their savings matched with the following programs.

**Community Enterprise Development Services, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).** A 1-1 (total of $2,000) matching program for:
- Purchasing a house
- Start, rehabilitate and/or expand a business
- Help fund post-secondary education tuition and fees
- Purchase a vehicle for employment/list items

*Online Resource: http://www.cedsfinance.org/programs/ida/

**Mile High United Way IDAs.** 4-1 matching program (total of $5,000) for:
- Purchasing a home
- Start, rehabilitate and/or expand a business
- Help fund post-secondary education tuition and fees

*Online Resource: http://www.unitedwaydenver.org/individual-development-accounts-ida-program

**Session 5** – Set up a bank account. Check with the bank first to see what requirements they have. Free checking and savings accounts are recommended. First make sure they have a Colorado ID.
**English**

**Preliminary reading:** General tips for teaching English.

https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/resources-for-mentors

**Session 1** – Discuss with the family why it is important to learn English? (Question 1 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment)

If they do not already know, work on making sure the family knows how to write and say their address and phone number in English (Question 2 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment).

**Session 2** – Make sure that your family is utilizing their free ESL tuition from Emily Griffith. All of our refugee community is eligible for FREE ESL classes from Emily Griffith. If they are not enrolled, they will need a referral from their employment counselor. Helping a refugee learn how to get to and from Emily Griffith is an important life skill. For general ESL inquiries you may contact learnenglish@emilygriffith.edu or 720-423-4750

**Note:** Parking downtown will require extra planning. If you will be there 2 hours or less, you can try to find on-street parking. The Justice Center garage is $5 for 4 hours. Emily Griffith Technical College (EGTC) will be located at 1860 Lincoln starting in August 2014.

**Session 3** – Check out an Oxford English Picture Dictionary at the library (it looks like the picture to the left; you may also be able to find the language the family speaks). Teach 25-50 new English words to the family.

**Session 4** – Cook a meal together using English (ingredients, measurements, cooking utensils, etc.). The meal can be either American cuisine or food the family eats. Make sure to learn some of the family’s language as well. Labeling things in the home with post-it notes is useful!

**Session 5** – Pick a website, any website. Choose something to do from one of these great resources linked from the LFS Denver Refugee Care Guide.

Emily Griffith offers a free **in-home tutoring** program for refugees. You can also be trained to be an English tutor (this is a separate Emily Griffith volunteer opportunity!)

See: www.refugee-esl.org
**Employment**

Work Wise video: “Work Wise service learning video-CWSK”
*Online Resource:  [http://youtu.be/B_E1jmCSjP4](http://youtu.be/B_E1jmCSjP4)*

**Session 1** – Discuss, what are two things a refugee can do to become employed (Question 7 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment). Ask if they know what LFS is doing to help them become employed and what they are doing themselves to become employed. If they don’t know, suggest they make a meeting with their Career Counselor. Write down their Career Counselor’s name and phone number.

**Session 2** – How to do well in an interview. Download the packet. Practice! Practice! Practice!
*Online Resource:  [https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/resources-for-mentors](https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/resources-for-mentors)*

**Session 3** – Have the refugee get familiar with available programs available to help with employment. Ask if they are attending these programs.

**Job Club:**
- Offered at the LFS Downing office
- Monday-Thursday, in-takes on Friday afternoons from 1:00-3:00 (refugees must do an in-take before they can start Job Club)
- Morning classes for Upper Level: 8:30am-10:30am
- Walk-ins: 10:30am-11:30am
- Afternoon classes for Lower Level: 1:00pm-3:00pm

**Session 4** – Building a resume. Ask if they have already made a resume in Job Club. Can they improve/update it?

**Session 5** – If the refugee you mentor has a degree from their home country, check to see if they can have their degree transferred.

If they do not have a degree, ask if they would want to pursue one. Have them ask their Career Counselor about the Lucky Scholarship at EGTC. **Remember, although education is important in the long run, most refugees will need to get a job first to meet their basic need**
Practical Life Skills

Preliminary reading: The Activity Ideas page on the LFS Refugee Care Guide.
*Online Resource:  www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org

Session 1 – Download the Welcome to Your New Home booklet in English and in the family’s language, if it is available. Go through the booklet with the family. Discuss pictures that show something unsafe and describe what is unsafe in the pictures (Question 10 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment).

*Online Resource:  https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/housing-orientation

Session 2 - Discuss, for each health concern listed, indicate whether you should A), care for it yourself, B), make an appointment with the doctor’s office, or C), go to a hospital or emergency room (Question 4 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment).

Chest/heart hurts; causing pain
Runny nose
Earache for three days
Small cut on finger
Broken ankle
A large, red rash that covers your entire back

Session 3 – Discuss, if you were at a hospital and needed an interpreter, what would you say or do to ask for one? (Question 5 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment)

Session 4 – Discuss, how would you tell a friend how to get from your home to the grocery store? (Question 8 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment)

Session 5 – Discuss, how do you use the RTD bus system? (Question 11 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment) Discuss, what are two services provided by LFS that help refugees resettle or adjust to life in the U.S.? (Question 3 in R&P Cultural Orientation Assessment)

For additional resources, activities, and websites:
Go to the LFS Refugee Care Guide:
https://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/resources-for-mentors
Section 3.4: Communication Protocol

Please follow these steps if you have a problem or questions.

**STEP 1:** Look for answers on your own!
- Look in this training manual
- Go to [www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org](http://www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org) and search for answers
- Google it

**STEP 2:** Ask the Mentors and Refugees Coordinator (MARC) at DRM.
- E-mail: MARC@denrescue.org

*Only move on to Step 3 if the MARC does not respond within 36 hours (excluding weekends).*

**STEP 3:** Ask someone else.
- **Second contact:** The LFS Volunteer Coordinator (EMAILING IS THE QUICKEST WAY!)
  - E-mail: refugeevolunteer@lfsrm.org
  - Call: 303-225-0199

*Only contact if there is no response for 48 hours (excluding weekends).*

- **Third contact:** The DRM Family Refugee Services Coordinator
  - E-mail: jkabeya@denrescue.org
  - Call:

**NOTE:** At no time should anyone contact a case manager or other LFS staff member directly unless otherwise permitted by one of the above personnel.
Appendices

- Appendix A: Additional Projects
- Appendix B: The Money
- Appendix C: More on LFS and DRM
- Appendix D: The Incentive Program
Appendix A: Additional Projects

Pre-Arrival Opportunities:

If you are fortunate enough to be matched with a family that has not arrived in the States yet, there are some things that you can help with before they get here. LFS always welcomes help with these tasks even if you will not mentor the family that you help!

**Apartment Set-Up:** Help to move and arrange furniture and other items to make a house/apartment a home! Donations of household items are welcomed.

**Airport Pick-Up:** Join the case manager at the airport to welcome the family as they get off of the plane. Show your support for them, and also possibly help with transportation from the airport to their new home.

**First Meal:** Prepare the first meal that the refugee family will have in America! You can also help LFS to shop for groceries for their first few days here.

**Donations:**

Donations from mentor teams are welcomed, but not at all required. Please keep in mind that our main goal in this program is for the refugees to attain self-sufficiency. If a gift may foster dependency rather than giving a helpful hand up, be cautious about giving it.

**Helpful items that most families do NOT initially have:**

- Vacuum
- Rice cooker
- TV and DVD player
- Computer
- Additional furniture
- Bikes
- Winter clothing
- School supplies
These and other items can sometimes be found for free or cheap through community resources. See the “Free/Cheap Stuff” page on our website (https://sites.google.com/site/lfsrefugees/free-cheap-stuff).

**What families already DO have:**

These items are provided through donations to LFS or a family’s R&P money (See Appendix B). LFS gladly accepts donations of any of these items for future refugee families.

- **Furnishings:**
  - Mattresses
  - Box springs and bed frames
  - Drawers
  - Kitchen Table
  - Kitchen chairs (one per person)
  - Couch
  - Lamp (one per room unless there is already lighting)

- **Kitchen Items:**
  - One fork, knife, and spoon per person
  - One plate, bowl, and cup per person
  - Pots and pans (at least a sauce pan, frying pan, and baking dish)
  - Mixing/serving bowls
  - Kitchen utensils (spatula, wooden spoon, knife, serving utensils, etc.)
  - Can opener
  - Baby items as needed

- **Linens and Other Household Items:**
  - One towel per person
  - One set of sheets per bed
  - One blanket per person
  - One pillow and pillowcase per person
  - Alarm clock
  - Paper
  - Pens and pencils
  - Light bulbs
  - Phone with answering machine

- **Cleaning Supplies:**
  - Dish soap
  - Bathroom/kitchen cleaner
  - Sponges or cleaning rags/paper towels
  - Laundry detergent
  - Two waste baskets
  - Mop or broom
  - Trash bags

- **Toiletries:**
  - Toilet paper
  - Shampoo
  - Soap
  - One toothbrush per person
  - Toothpaste
  - Personal hygiene items as appropriate
Volunteering Opportunities:

Cultural Mentoring

1-on-1 or Couple Mentoring

Transportation

Recruitment Volunteer

Office Volunteer

On Call Volunteer

Fundraising

Welcome Baskets/Baby Baskets

Donations

SPREAD THE WORD!
Appendix B: The Money

Refugees do receive funding from the government, but it is a small amount and doesn’t last for very long. It is important for mentors to stress the need to seek out employment as soon as possible, as the refugee family cannot rely on this funding for very long. Each refugee family receives funding according to the following formula:

**Timeline:**

**Reception and Placement (R&P)**
- [about $1000 per person, one-time]

**DRM cash assistance for housing**
- [$750 one-time, an additional $300 possible]

**Matching Grant**
- [$200 per adult and $40 per minor, per month]

**OR**

**TANF**
- [See chart on pg. 22 for amounts]

**OR**

**CARES**
- [See chart on pg. 22 for amounts]

**Food Assistance**
- [See pg. 22 for amounts]

**AND (maybe)**

**WIC**
- [See pg. 23 for amounts]

**Medicaid**

**One-Time Funding**

**Continuous for 4 months to 5 years**

**Timeline:**

- **R&P**
  - (housing covered)

- **DRM**
  - (maybe)

- **MG**
  - (Up to 5 years)

- **TANF**
  - OR

- **OR**

- **CARES**
  - OR

- **OR**

- **F. A.**
  - (if qualified)

- **WIC**
  - (maybe)

- **Med.**
  - (if qualified)

**Arrival Linkage Visit**
- Month 1
- Month 2
- Month 3
- Month 4
- Month 5
- Month 6 (Closure)
- Month 7
- Month 8
- Month 9
- Month 10
- Month 11
- Month 12
Defining the Programs:

**Reception and Placement (R&P):**

**Source:** The Department of State – BPRM

**Amount:** (on average)
- Family size: 1 $/person: $1,500
- Family size: 2 $/person: $1,300
- Family size: 3 $/person: $1,000
- Family size: 4+ $/person: $925

**Duration:** One-time

**Note:** R&P varies by agency. LFS may change amounts depending on government contracts.

**DRM cash assistance for housing:**

**Source:** Denver Rescue Mission

**Amount:** $750, one-time the at beginning of mentoring relationship
- Up to $300, one-time at the end (see Appendix D)

**Matching Grant (MG):**

**Source:** Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Refugee Resettlement (Federal)

**Amount:** $200 a month per adult and $40 a month per child

**Duration:** 120 to 180 days (4-6 months), beginning on arrival or 1 month after being employed

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):**

**Source:** Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Refugee Resettlement (State)

**Amount/Requirements:** (per month)

**Duration:** Up to 5 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Caretaker Relatives</th>
<th>Number of Children on TANF Case</th>
<th>Each Addl. Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None (Child Only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross income limit</td>
<td></td>
<td>$128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Caretaker</td>
<td>$278</td>
<td>$364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross income limit</td>
<td>$253</td>
<td>$331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Caretakers</td>
<td>$392</td>
<td>$483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross income limit</td>
<td>$357</td>
<td>$439</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CARES:**
*Source:* Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Refugee Resettlement (State)

**Amount:** (per month)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payment</td>
<td>$335</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 8 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Food Assistance Program (Food Stamps):**
*Source:* Colorado Department of Human Services

**Amount:** (per month)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>Addl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Gross Monthly Income</td>
<td>$1180</td>
<td>$1594</td>
<td>$2008</td>
<td>$2422</td>
<td>$2836</td>
<td>$3249</td>
<td>$3663</td>
<td>$4077</td>
<td>$+414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Net Monthly Income</td>
<td>$908</td>
<td>$1226</td>
<td>$1545</td>
<td>$1863</td>
<td>$2181</td>
<td>$2500</td>
<td>$2818</td>
<td>$3136</td>
<td>$+319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Monthly Allotment</td>
<td>$189</td>
<td>$347</td>
<td>$497</td>
<td>$632</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td>$900</td>
<td>$995</td>
<td>$1137</td>
<td>$+142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Medicaid:**
*Source:* Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (State and Federal funding)

**Amount:** For specifics, go to: [www.colorado.gov/hcpf](http://www.colorado.gov/hcpf)

**Duration:** No time limit

**WIC (Women, Infants, and Children):**
*Source:* Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE)

**Amount:** Changes on a case-by-case basis. Amounts of items from several food categories are

**Others:**
There are other financial assistance programs like LEAP and Section 8 that refugees may qualify for. See the LFS Care Guide for more information.
*Figures and requirements should serve as a reference only. Much of the information is greatly summarized and simplified. For official information contact the county, state, or LFS.

See the “Finances” pages on https://sites.google.com/site/lfsrefugees/ for more information and links to official websites.
Example Situation:

Family Size: _____Caretakers _____Children
Rent/Utilities: $_____/mo.
R&P: $ _______  DRM: $_______  =  Total $_______
MG (4-6 months)/TANF (Up to 5 years): $_______/mo.
Food Assistance: $_______/mo.
WIC: Yes  No
Medicaid: Yes  No
Self-sufficient (employed): Yes  No

Mo.1  Mo.2  [ ] Mo.3  [ ] Mo.4  [ ] Mo.5  [ ] Mo.6  [ ]  [ ]
Mo.7  Mo.   [ ] Mo.  [ ] Mo.  [ ] Mo.  [ ] Mo.  [ ]

Where do refugees access their funds?

- Reception and Placement (R&P)
  - DRM cash assistance
  - Matching Grant
  - CARES

- Food Assistance
  - TANF

Lutheran Family Services
1600 Downing St., Suite 600
Denver, CO 80218

Colorado Quest Card
www.coloquestcard.com
1-888-328-2656
Appendix C: More on LFS and DRM

**Lutheran Family Services:**

The Refugee & Asylee (R&A) Programs are one of seven programs within Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM). The R&A Programs are an affiliate of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) based in Baltimore, Maryland. LIRS was organized in 1939 to resettle refugees fleeing the Nazi advance in Europe. Since then, LIRS has become recognized as a premier leader among refugee resettlement agencies in the U.S. and is the second largest such organization in the U.S. The R&A Programs are based on the east side of downtown Denver and maintain sub-offices in Colorado Springs, Greeley, Ft. Morgan, and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

*About 45 families per year are eligible to participate in our collaborative program with Denver Rescue Mission who provides rental support and incentives. Not all families are in the program*

**Denver Rescue Mission:**

Founded in 1892, the Denver Rescue Mission is the oldest full service Christian charity in the Rocky Mountain region. Its motto is “Changing lives in the name of Christ,” which it seeks to do through meeting basic needs and providing rehabilitation and transitional programs. Started in 1988, Family Rescue Ministry (FRM) is the Family Services branch of the Denver Rescue Mission. It seeks to place homeless families in the Denver area into housing and match each family with mentors to help guide them towards success and self-sufficiency. Seeking the opportunity to aid more international families, Family Refugee Services began a partnership with the Refugee & Asylee Programs of Lutheran Family Services in 2003. The two organizations shared a similar vision, that refugee families could best be served by mentor teams who were willing to meet the family’s needs at a personal and relational level. FRS helps recruit and support mentor teams, and provides additional resources and cash incentives for each refugee family.
Check out www.denverrescuemission.org.
Appendix D: Incentive Program

Mentor teams may help refugee families to achieve the goals of the incentive program but should NOT feel obligated to do so. It is the responsibility of the refugee family to be motivated to meet the requirements and efforts to do so should be initiated and driven by them.

Purpose: To motivate refugee families to meet the program objectives.

Procedure: As of fiscal year July 2014 to June 2015 refugee families in the Cultural Mentorship Program of DRM and LFS receive $750 in rent and deposit assistance from DRM when a family is matched with a mentor team. The family can receive up to $300 in additional rent assistance at the conclusion of their 6 month mentoring period based on assessment by DRM.

In the fifth month of the mentoring relationship, DRM will evaluate the progress of the refugee family in the following areas: employment, finance and budgeting, English, and life skills.

Employment: Can earn up to $100
- Main Goal: PA (Principle Applicant) or spouse has a full-time job
  - Full-time job: $100
  - Part-time job or job readiness: $75
- Actively seeking a job: $50
- Not interested in a job or training: $0

Finance and Budgeting: Can earn up to $75
- The goal is that the family would be economically stable and know how to use their money.
  - Having a working budget and sticking to it.
  - Understanding applicable assistance programs (TANF, MG, Food Assistance, etc.) and common financial knowledge (credit cards, loans, paying bills, savings vs. checking, etc.)
  - Having and using a bank account to save money
- They will be given all, half, or none of the $75 based upon these actions and knowledge.

English: Can earn up to $75
- English ability is evaluated at the linkage visit and fifth month, focusing primarily on the PA.
- They will be given all, half, or none of the $75 based upon:
  - Their efforts to learn English (faithfully attending classes at Emily Griffith, showing effort when the mentor team assists them with English, etc.)
  - Improvement in their English language ability

Life Skills: Can earn up to $50
- The goal is that the family will gain practical, social, and cultural life skills/aptitude.
  - Career development (job training, learning new skills, etc.)
  - Health (how to get to the hospital, when to stay home from school or work, etc.)
  - Male/female relationships (understanding domestic violence, gender equality, etc.)
- Culture (the list is endless)
- School systems (interacting with teachers, grades, importance of attendance, etc.)
- Transportation (RTD, traffic laws, etc.)

- They will be given all, half, or none of the $50 based upon knowing of many of these topics.

**Note:** On a case-by-case basis, the requirements for the incentive program can be adjusted. Family situations where adjustments may occur could include but are not limited to having: elderly person(s), disabled person(s), or many small children in the home. These and other situations will be left to the discretion of Denver Rescue Mission.

This Speaking and Listening Evaluation Rubric is used during the linkage visit by the MARC intern to generally determine the English language level of the family members, particularly the Principle Applicant (PA). During the fifth month when the family is evaluated again, and scores are compared.

### Speaking and Listening Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The candidate is almost unintelligible, uses words wrongly and shows no sign of any grammatical understanding.</td>
<td>The candidate is unresponsive and shows no sign of understanding what is said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The candidate is able to transmit only very basic ideas, using individual words rather than phrases or fuller patterns of discourse. Speech is very hesitant and the pronunciation makes intelligibility difficult.</td>
<td>The candidate seems to understand basic words and ideas like greetings and numbers. He or she is somewhat attentive to the speaker but only occasionally seems to grasp a word or phrase that is spoken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The candidate transmits basic ideas in a fairly stilted way. Pronunciation is sometimes problematic and there are examples of grammatical and lexical misuse and gaps which impede communication on occasions.</td>
<td>The candidate understands basic conversations and instructions. There are often misunderstandings, but they can usually be resolved by repeating, rewording, and acting out the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The candidate transmits ideas moderately clearly. Speech is somewhat hesitant and there are frequent lapses in grammar and vocabulary use. Nevertheless, the candidate makes him/herself understood.</td>
<td>The candidate is able to understand most conversations about everyday topics. Concepts beyond the norm are confusing and need a lot of extra explaining if they are able to be understood at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The candidate speaks fairly fluently, showing inability to communicate ideas with not too much trouble. There are some problems of grammatical accuracy and some words are inaccurately used.</td>
<td>The candidate is able to understand almost everything that is said. He or she still needs to pay close attention to new ideas, but normally the concepts are understood with little clarification needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The candidate speaks fluently with few obvious mistakes and a wide variety of vocabulary and expression. Pronunciation is almost always intelligible, and there is little difficulty in communicating ideas.</td>
<td>The candidate is able to understand everything that is spoken with no difficulty. He or she does not need to devote his or her full attention to fairly complex ideas that are being talked about to understand them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Family: __________ Mentor Team: __________

Linkage Date: __________ Second Evaluation Date: __________

Evaluated By: __________ Evaluated By: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA (Required):</td>
<td>Evaluation #1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse:</td>
<td>Evaluation #1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 2:</td>
<td>Evaluation #1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 3:</td>
<td>Evaluation #1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 4:</td>
<td>Evaluation #1:</td>
<td>Evaluation #2:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>