Who Is My Neighbor?

A TEAM APPROACH TO CARING FOR NEWLY ARRIVED REFUGEES

Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains
Refugee and Asylee Programs
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E-mail: laura.liibbe@lfsrm.org
While every refugee's story is different and their anguish personal, they all share a common thread of uncommon courage – the courage not only to survive, but to persevere and rebuild their shattered lives.

-- Antonio Guterres, U.N.

Imagine yourself dropped down in the Sudanese grasslands with no tools or knowledge about how to survive. . . . Unless a kind and generous Sudanese takes you in and helps you adjust, you would be a goner.

– Mary Pipher, The Middle of Everywhere

Want more information? Have questions? Need advice on what do to with your refugee family?

www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org

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**Don’t have time to read the whole thing right now?**

The **ESSENTIAL** information is:

- Section 2.1: Objectives  
- Section 3.1: Being a Cultural Mentor  
- Section 3.2: Mentor Roles  
- Section 3.4: Communication Protocol
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 Colorado Springs?
- 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 Colorado Springs

How One Becomes a Refugee:

They don’t like us. Our religion is different. They bomb our churches and put us in prison.

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.

HELP!

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:

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

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

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).

You wait some more.

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

First night in a new country.

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

I don't think it is moving.

Hurray!

We made it!

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:

Go to culturalorientation.org

or read The Middle of Everywhere by Mary Pipher
Section 2: What is this program?

In this section, we will address the following questions:

- What are the program objectives?
- How do LFS and I fit together in this 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. If the mission is impeded by volunteers, LFS may need to assess their involvement with the program.

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: Partnership

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

**Required**

**Optional**
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 10 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 loving friends. Being a cultural mentor is not easy, but it is very rewarding.

**Time Commitment:**

- 6 months
- Around **16 hours** every month per team is the goal. With this number of hours, LFS and the family can take full advantage of the Matching Grant program. This number will change depending on the family size and their level of need.

**Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event:</th>
<th>What you need to do:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Training</td>
<td>Attend and fill out forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Check</td>
<td>Fill out waiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Optional) Pre-Arrival Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkage Visit (Meet the family)</td>
<td>Attend and ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Visit the family, teach English, do fun things together, and submit time sheets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly emails with LFS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Closure Check-In</td>
<td>Continue to mentor family, stop, and/or mentor a new family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linkage Visit—What is it?

- Meet and get to know the refugee family
- Set boundaries and expectations
- Ask the family questions
- Discover needs and desires
- Talk with LFS staff about medical appointments
- Schedule your next visit

Follow-ups and Timesheets:

Every month you will be expected to email or deliver a time and donations record for yourself or your team to the Volunteer Coordinator. Please include any important details as well as any receipts you may have. This record is EXTREMELY important for LFS’s funding and the money that refugee families in the Matching Grant program receive. PLEASE submit your hours every month.
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 LFS to contact the team. He or she is responsible for passing along information from LFS, sending updates to LFS, and in general organizing and motivating the other team members.

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>• To experience conflict because of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Try new foods</td>
<td>cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn about a new culture</td>
<td>• A refugee’s survival skills can kick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Truly make a difference in a refugee family’s lives</td>
<td>in an he or she can become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>manipulative, untruthful, or try</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to pit a mentor against LFS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3.2: Mentor Roles

**Fundamental Mentor Roles:**
- Being a friend (with professional boundaries, not “touchy-feely”)
- Having fun with the family
- Valuing and seeking understanding of family’s culture
- Teaching English
- Teaching financial literacy
- Teaching practical life skills
- Teaching about American culture
- 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 bus system
- Registering children for school
- 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

YES

MAYBE (but very helpful)
**Prohibited Mentor Roles:**

- Encouraging a move to a different apartment
- Transferring children to new schools
- Communicating directly with the case manager
- 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)

(please ask if you are unsure)
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.

For additional resources, activities, and websites:
Go to our wiki page: https://sites.google.com/site/lfsrefugees/

Home Orientation:

*Ideas*

1. Walk through the home with your family to make sure they understand how to use everything, how to store their food, etc.
2. Go through their mail and help them to see what is important
3. When a problem arises with their home, show them how to contact their landlord and resolve the issue
4. Help them to do their laundry and clean the house (check for bedbugs and cockroaches!)

Practicing English:

*Ideas*

1. Use the *Oxford Picture Dictionary* to teach words and concepts
2. In all casual conversation, be attentive to teaching opportunities
3. Go somewhere (shopping, a park, the zoo, around the block, etc.) and use it as an opportunity to teach about the surroundings and practice in real-life contexts

Helpful Book: *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...Or Yourself* by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert
Cultural Orientation:

*Idea 1:* Help to register children in school
*Idea 2:* Show how to use the bus
*Idea 3:* Take them to the park, the zoo, a sports game, a festival, etc.
*Idea 4:* Go to the post office, library, and grocery store
*Idea 5:* Teach American idiosyncrasies/unwritten rules
*Idea 6:* Teach about gender equality and domestic violence
*Idea 7:* Take them to the closest hospital or clinic and talk about appropriate times to go there
*Idea 8:* Expose them to an activity or hobby that you really enjoy
*Idea 9:* Help to get driver’s license

Financial Literacy:

*Idea 1:* Teach simple budgeting (keeping track of expenses, anticipating expenses, understanding income, etc.)
*Idea 2:* Teach the value of USA currency (in comparison with home currency, what a dollar can buy, how much work it takes to earn a dollar, etc.)
*Idea 3:* Help to open a bank account, how to write checks, and use an ATM
*Idea 4:* Teach about needs vs. wants, loans, credit cards, etc.
*Idea 5:* Go shopping and show how to find the cheapest items (off-brands, per ounce price, etc.) and to avoid expensive extras like soda and candy

Job Readiness:  Make sure to talk with LFS about what the family has done so far in job search

*Idea 1:* Help to make resumes
*Idea 2:* Show how to search for jobs and fill out applications
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
- Google it

**STEP 2:** Ask the Volunteer Coordinator at LFS
- E-mail: laura.liibbe@lfsrm.org

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

**STEP 3:** Ask someone else.
- **Second contact:** The LFS Program Director, Floyd Preston
  - E-mail: Floyd.preston@lfsrm.org
  - Call: 719-227-8899

*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.*
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
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
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:

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

**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]

**OR**

**Medicaid**

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**Timeline:**

**Continuous for 4 months to 5 years**

- **R&P**
  - (housing covered)
- **MG**
- **TANF**
- **CARES**
- **F. A.**
- **WIC**
  - (if qualified)
  - (maybe)
- **Med.**

Arrival 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

(Up to 5 years)
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, allocated to the family (usually through housing payments and initial basic needs) over their first 90 days in America

Requirements: None

Use: Housing and personal expenses

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

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

Requirements: Having a high chance of being employed within the first 6 months. Volunteer time and donations are sufficient to fulfill matching requirements. Submitting your volunteer time to us is VERY IMPORTANT this funding source!

Use: Housing and personal expenses

Bus Passes: Participants in MG can receive bus passes from their LFS employment specialist.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):

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

Amount/Requirements: (per month)

<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>$128 $269 $404 $539 $646 $746 $832 $913 $995 $1076</td>
<td>+$72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross income limit</td>
<td>$117 $245 $386 $490 $587 $678 $755 $830 $904 $977</td>
<td>+$67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Caretaker</td>
<td>$278 $364 $462 $561 $665 $767 $847 $929 $1012 $1092 $1172</td>
<td>+$72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross income limit</td>
<td>$253 $331 $421 $510 $605 $697 $770 $844 $920 $992 $1065</td>
<td>+$67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Caretakers</td>
<td>$392 $483 $586 $691 $787 $865 $947 $1032 $1111 $1190 $1271</td>
<td>+$72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gross income limit $357 $439 $533 $628 $716 $861 $937 $1009 $1082 $1155 +$67

**Duration:** Up to 5 years

**Requirements:** Family fulfills required work activity hours based on family makeup (see wiki). Gross income does not exceed limits according to family makeup (see chart above). For 12 months after finding employment, 2/3 of their income is disregarded.

**Use:** Housing and personal expenses

**Bus Passes:** Requested by LFS and money to purchase the passes is put on their Quest card.

**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>
</tbody>
</table>

**Duration:** Up to 8 months

**Requirements:** Single or childless married couples; be a refugee; income: subtract $90 plus mandatory withholdings from gross income; if less than CARES amount, receive the difference

**Use:** Housing and personal expenses

**Bus Passes:** Depending on funding, CARES participants may receive bus passes from LFS

**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>$200</td>
<td>$367</td>
<td>$526</td>
<td>$668</td>
<td>$793</td>
<td>$952</td>
<td>$1052</td>
<td>$1202</td>
<td>+$150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Duration:** No time limit

**Requirements:** Must meet the above income requirements

**Use:** Food

**Reference:** www.colorado.gov

**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 listed on a WIC check. See wiki for allowable foods.
Requirements: Be a pregnant or postpartum woman, an infant, or a child up to 5 year of age and do not have income in excess of 185% of the federal poverty level (see below).

<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>Each Addl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>185% Poverty Level</td>
<td>$1,723</td>
<td>$2,333</td>
<td>$2,944</td>
<td>$3,554</td>
<td>$4,165</td>
<td>$4,777</td>
<td>$5,368</td>
<td>$5,996</td>
<td>+$611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use: Supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health screenings for pregnant and new mothers and children under 5 years old.

Medicaid:

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

Amount: Changes depending on program. For specifics, go to: www.colorado.gov/hcpf

Duration: Probably at least 8 months, but possibly more under alternative programs

Requirements: Changes depending on specific program. See table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons in Family</th>
<th>1931, Qualified Pregnant Women and Children, or Rubicoff</th>
<th>Expanded Pregnant Women and Children</th>
<th>CHP+ or CICP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>100% Poverty Level $931</td>
<td>133% of Poverty Level $1,239</td>
<td>$2,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$1,261</td>
<td>$1,677</td>
<td>$3,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$1,591</td>
<td>$2,116</td>
<td>$3,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$1,921</td>
<td>$2,555</td>
<td>$4,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$2,251</td>
<td>$2,994</td>
<td>$5,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$2,581</td>
<td>$3,433</td>
<td>$6,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$2,911</td>
<td>$3,872</td>
<td>$7,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$3,241</td>
<td>$4,311</td>
<td>$8,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addl.</td>
<td>+$330</td>
<td>+$439</td>
<td>+$825</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 1931: Up to 18, unless graduate before 19
- Qualified: Up to 6
- Rubicoff: 6 or under 19
- Pregnant women and children up to 6
- CHP+: 18 and under and pregnant women 19 or above
- CICP: Not qualified for CHP+ or other Medicaid programs

Reference: www.colorado.gov/hcpf and www.medicaid.gov

Others: There are other financial assistance programs like LEAP and Section 8 that refugees may qualify for. See the wiki for more information.

*Figures and requirements current as of November 2012.

**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.

Example Situation:
A two-parent, three-child family initially receives $4,625 from R&P used by LFS to pay for beginning food and household supplies not provided through donations, the first four months of rent and utilities, and other miscellaneous expenses like a cell phone. After 90 days, LFS distributes the remainder of the R&P money ($925) by crediting it toward their future rent. The receive $793/month in food stamps which is enough to buy all of their food. Starting around 15 days after they arrived, their TANF is approved and they start receiving $691/month.

Since for the first four months they did not need to pay their own rent, they use this money to buy a rice cooker, microwave, and other things they think they want. Fortunately, after being advised by their mentor team to do so, they start to save some of the money and accumulate $1,000 from the leftover TANF money. The family has to begin paying their rent the sixth month and find that they have to use some of their savings to pay for it because their TANF money is not sufficient. After six months they are down to $300 in savings, but the father has found a job that is enough to pay their rent and food with help from TANF and food stamps.

Good job mentor team! This family was able to get through a tough time financially because they budgeted their money well—not spending too much on things that they did not need and saved enough for when money was short.

Where do refugees access their funds?

- Reception and Placement (R&P)
- Matching Grant
- CARES
- Food Assistance
- TANF
**Appendix C: More on LFS:**

**Lutheran Family Services:**

The Refugee and Asylee Program (RAP) is one of seven programs within Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM), 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 Refugee and Asylee Program is based on the east side of downtown Denver and maintains sub-offices in Colorado Springs, Greeley, Ft. Morgan, and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Check out www.lfsrm.org.
Up until 14th week:
- Join athletic leagues
- Continue saving money
- Summer jobs
- School year is ending
- Prepare budget

15th - 16th week:
- Read a local map
- Begin applying for jobs
- Develop a budget
- Create a bank account
- Pay bills, mail letters
- Independently use the bus
- Become familiar with public transportation
- Receive SSN

17th - 20th week:
- Save money
- Understand the savings account
- Begin learning to drive
- Attend events in town (church, etc.)
- Learn all chores around apartment
- Assist with resume, application
- Receive jobs

21st - 27th week:
- Attend ESL
- Apply for SSN
- Food stamps
- American culture
- Operate stove, showers, etc.

(31st - 41st week):
- House cleaning/laundry
- ESL classes
- Understand post office
- Get box
- Learn the transportation and bus
- Learn to grocery shop

11th - 12th week:
- Have a meal with sponsors
- Visit stores
- Learn a restaurant
- Library
- Develop an understanding of American culture

Family is saying our car
- Children excel in school
- Work begins and routine is set

(11th - 12th week):
- Has collected all items the family needs

ARRIVE IN AMERICA

SELF-SUFFICIENT
Setting and Keeping Boundaries

- **Make boundaries clear early on and keep them consistent**
  Doing this will help prevent problems in the future. Every volunteer-client relationship is different, so it is important for there to be a clear understanding from the beginning. Sometimes refugees have a hard time differentiating between agency staff and volunteers and they expect the same of both.

- **Boundaries are essential for both you and the client**
  Even agency staff can have a difficult time with boundaries! It is very difficult to undo a problem that has been created by blurred boundary lines.

- **Do not be afraid to say “NO”**
  This can be very difficult at first but it is essential. Is the refugee asking you to make a phone call even when his or her English is sufficient to do it alone? Are they asking you for money or material goods? As a volunteer, you have the right to say no.

- **Boundaries help prevent burnout**
  Refugee resettlement work can be stressful, even for volunteers who do it once or twice a week! It is a high burnout field and the primary way to prevent that is to care for yourself. Don’t feel bad if you need to take a week off for a little personal time. The best helpers know how to keep a balance between themselves and the people they are helping. If you start to feel yourself burning out, please let us know quickly.

- **Detached compassion**
  This Buddhist concept is defined as “a way of entering into the situation of the person being helped that enables the helper to continue to function effectively in the helping role.” Although it is important to form a bond with the clients, remember that taking on their problems as your own will only hurt both of you in the long run.

A few ways to recognize that there are boundary issues...

- Your gut says, “Oh no not again!” to a refugee request but your mouth says, “One more time can’t hurt.”
- You begin to feel the refugees fear or sense of urgency as your own.
- You find yourself wanting to “solve” refugee’s feelings of anger, disappointment or loss.
- You want to “buffer” refugees from the very real difficulties of starting life over again at the bottom of a new culture.
- You insert yourself as a “middleman” into a refugee’s relationship or disputes.
- You realize that you are afraid that refugees won’t like you or might be angry if you don’t meet their expectations.
• You try to force solutions to a problem rather than giving the refugees the information and tools needed to solve it for themselves.
• You start to think that no one can solve a refugee’s problem as well as you can.
• You catch yourself thinking, “It feels so good to be needed.”
• Your own family, work and/or relationships are suffering because of time or emotional attention given to refugees.

Questions to consider when setting boundaries:

• Which phone numbers do I want to provide to the family? Which days and times are acceptable for them to call?
• Do I want to go places with the family that cost money? How much am I willing to spend per week? (Spending money is not a requirement of volunteering!)
• Do I want them to visit my home? Is there a possibility I will feel uncomfortable about the differences between our homes?
• Will I meet with the family only certain times each week or will it be flexible? What if they call and ask me to help them today?
• What will I do if I begin to feel stressed about the relationship?

Confidentiality

All volunteers have signed a confidentiality agreement. It is essential that LFS staff and volunteers respect clients by maintaining their confidential information, including physical and mental health, finances, past traumatic experiences, and personal identifying information.
Lessons learned, field notes, and letting go of Type A

No matter who your match ends up to be, there are some things I can share with you that I know both from personal experience and from working with refugees for the past 20 years.

- **The student wasn’t home. She had company when I came over. She didn’t do the homework. She didn’t say “thank you.” She cancelled three times in a row. Her children broke the computer I donated.** Don’t take it personally. These incidents are not a show of disrespect toward you. This lack of follow through by the refugees is common in the beginning, especially for those who have lived in camps for years and years where there is no schedule, no structure, and no pressing need to be anywhere 99 percent of the time. It takes time to change something that is so culturally embedded. If you take these missteps personally or see them as an insult, you will become very frustrated, very quickly. (This I learned the hard way.)

- Newly arrived refugees from many countries have absolutely, positively no idea whatsoever what a volunteer is or why the work they do is significant. The refugees have no comprehension of what your time is worth. It is too foreign a concept. This is true regardless of language level, country of origin, or previous education.

- Until the second point is understood, the students don’t understand that you are not an employee of their resettlement agency. Often, the refugees see a volunteer as yet one more generic American person in a long line of them who is being paid to help.

  - When the clients move, expect to be the last person to find out, usually when you arrive for a lesson only to find an empty apartment and disconnected phone. Nobody ever thinks to tell the tutor, even if they’ve been together for months or a couple of years. This goes back to the previous point. The student just assumes you already know.

- For those who have no formal education, the concept of being a student does not exist. Those who are in this category may or may not grasp what their responsibilities are as a student. More likely not, at least, not for a while. They certainly have no idea what an American might expect of them.

- Persons who have no formal education and those who have lived in camps for many years don’t prioritize the way an American probably would. Some have no concept of prioritizing at all. Even for us, this is a learned skill that is overtly taught.
Do not expect the students to express any gratitude. It doesn’t mean they don’t appreciate the help; many just never express it, at least, not in a way that is familiar to us.

There are at least dozens of ways to get frustrated when working with newly arrived refugees (regardless of language level or previous education), and I have probably been through them all. In my own case, I eventually had to realize that I had no control over how the refugees I worked with interpreted the day-to-day expectations of this culture any more than they could see that I had expectations at all—mostly because my expectations were founded on my cultural norms. Personally, I had to learn to let go of any expectations I had and realize there would be a period of time where my flexibility was paramount to making the situation successful. The refugees’ behavior is not going to conform to our expectations of what is polite or even required until they have settled in and experienced more of the culture first-hand.

My best advice (and it may seem inadequate) is to be flexible, don’t expect the students to understand your priorities (or why they are priorities), and realize that it takes time to get into a rhythm with your student—no matter who it is. Being or not being eager to learn or committed to the task shouldn’t be confused with the issues of time management, prioritization, or cultural respect. They are definitely mutually exclusive but it takes time to integrate the expectations and understanding on both sides.

Now, having said all of that, I hope you don’t feel overwhelmed by these truths or inclined to leave the program. In my own case, once I made peace with these realities, my experience got much better. I can honestly say that working with the refugee population for the past 20 years has been and continues to be the most rewarding thing I have ever done. Although this work still challenges me, I find it to be well worth the effort. It has never been easy, but it has always been fulfilling.

—Sharon McCreary