

Arrival Planning Guidance: Pre-Arrival

You've been approved as a Community Sponsor – what a fantastic achievement! This part of our toolkit is designed to help you explore the days leading up to the arrival of the refugee family you will be supporting.

Accepting a refugee family

You will have already understood the [allocation process](#) that determines the vulnerability criteria of refugees and how they are accepted by the Home Office to be resettled in the UK. Once you've been approved as a sponsor all of the things that your group can offer will be assessed against what the refugee family require (e.g. if your group can offer a 1-bed property, it would not be suitable for a family with 3 children) and you, the charity acting as your Lead Sponsor (if you have one) and your Local Authority will be sent details of the family to consider whether you can support them. It is a joint decision. It is crucial you consider this information fully before accepting, and you must keep in mind that should you or the Local Authority not feel able to accept the family this will not stop that family being resettled elsewhere in the UK or your group being allocated another family.

Sometimes your group may feel they are able to support a family, but your Local Authority may not as they are aware of potential issues or lack of services in the area. Work with your Local Authority to understand their decisions.

To enable you to make this decision, you will be sent the information of the refugees via [MOVEit](#) in the form of an RRF (Resettlement Registration Form) this contains all of the personal data relating to each family member including their name, photograph, age and reasons why they have been registered as a refugee. This form goes into a lot of detail and of course, is confidential.

You will also be provided with an MHA (Migrant Health Assessment). This will provide details on the health of each refugee in the family, detailing any ongoing health conditions, medication and ongoing needs. This will be written in medical-terminology. Should you need help to understand the details on here, it may be worth speaking to your local GP, who might be able to talk generally about what the condition is. You may see on this form that details a follow up medical appointment being carried out in a certain timeframe; this may not be possible to achieve, and your GP can provide advice on this. Should any of the family have mobility needs, you will also be sent an ADL (Activities for Daily Living) form which the in-country Doctor will have carried out with the refugee, and will detail their level of mobility (including walking up stairs and how they manage their lives currently). For refugees with significant medical conditions, you will also be sent an SMC (Significant Medical Conditions Form). Blank copies of all of these documents are available on the [Reset Training website](#).

As part of the allocations process, the family will have confirmed that they are comfortable with being resettled with a sponsor group and into the UK and into your area. You should, however, keep in mind that you will need to explain how your group works once they arrive.

All forms will be written in English and you can ask the Home Office at any point for clarity on the information provided. It is unlikely that you will be sharing the information widely within your group.

Scheduled Arrival

Once your group and your Local Authority have accepted the refugees, you will be provided with a scheduled arrival date – this is usually around 8 weeks from the date of acceptance.

What will be happening with the refugees during this time?

During the time before departing the country they are currently in, the refugees will receive details of your group (which you will have provided to the Home Office), will have pre departure medical checks to ensure everyone is safe to fly) and go through cultural orientation training to begin to understand life in the UK. This training does not remove the need for you to do the same post-arrival; your neighbourhoods, communities and way in which you work will be different. The refugees will be given ‘welcome to the UK’ booklets, and these will also be sent to your group post-arrival too. These are booklets for different age ranges explaining life in the UK, covering cultural norms and legal requirements.

What should our group be doing?

This will depend on the family who you will be supporting however, you will generally need to:

- Prepare the accommodation – don’t forget that the Home Office will reimburse incurred void property costs for up to 8 weeks at local housing allowance rates.
- Notify your local services of the arrival date, booking appointments where you can. You will need to book appointments with:
 - Job CentrePlus (appointment within 3 days of arrival)
 - Register with schools (registration complete within 2 weeks of arrival)
 - GPs (appointment within 5-6 working days of arrival)
 - Notify specialist services as indicated by profile of refugees
 - Your local police Safer Neighbourhood Team

In this time, we would also recommend that you:

- Plan trip to and from the airport and make your transport arrangements
- Decide which group members will be at the airport (this should be a small group and include a male and a female interpreter).
- Book interpreters for 24 hour access for first week following arrival
- Prepare the [welcome pack](#)
- Plan your first few days and weeks
- Make sure your group members know what is expected of them

Your Stakeholders

Throughout the application process, you will have been building up a small bank of stakeholders with whom you'll continue to be in contact with as you await the family to arrive. Make sure you have easy access to the contact information for:

- DWP/Job Centre
- Healthcare Services (GP/Specialist medical services)
- Home Office Community Sponsorship Team
- Home Office Contact Officer
- Local Authority
- Schools

For the purposes of the arrival, you will also be connected with an escort from [IOM](#), who will be accompanying the family (sometimes alongside others), and will provide a handover to you at the airport.

On occasion, there may be delays from the original scheduled arrival date you have been given, this may be due to ill health or changed flights. You will be notified as soon as possible should this happen.