

Committee Descriptions for River East Resettlement Alliance (RERA)

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Group Co-leaders

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- Coordinate co-sponsorship activities
- Ensure that all committees are established, fully staffed, and performing necessary duties
- *Coordinate overlapping activities of the committees*
- Collect reports from the committees and provide regular reports to IRIS Case Manager
- Serve as primary contacts with IRIS
- Check in with the refugee family regularly until they are established

Administrative Contact Person

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- Create a system to gather required IRIS forms and documentation and send it to IRIS staff.

Apartment Set-up Committee

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- Set up housing with required furnishings (IRIS provides a list of furniture, appliances and household items)
- Provide initial pantry of culturally appropriate groceries according to list provided by IRIs

Childcare Committee

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- Develop a list of volunteers who will provide childcare during adult appointments and in emergencies
- Act as contact point for family or other committees when a need for childcare is identified
- Reach out to volunteer list, secure needed childcare, and notify requester

Cultural Orientation Committee

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- Ensure family attends the federally required orientation program at IRIS (3 consecutive days)
- Teach the family the basics about living in the US: grocery shopping, clothes laundering, banking, etc.
- Teach family how to operate all mechanical aspects of their home including plumbing, electrical appliances and lights, security, maintenance expectations
- Discuss hygiene and dress, especially as it relates to job interviews and general community acceptance

Education Committee

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- Learn the school registration process and school resources for English Language Learners before the family arrives
- Find free local ESOL classes for adults and help to arrange childcare (through Childcare Point Person)
- Identify early childhood education programs .Birth to 3, Pre –K and Head Start
- After they have received all health clearances, register children for school and adults in English language classes
- Ensure children are registered for school busing and explain this to parents and children (times, stops, etc.)
- Act as liaison with public schools that children attend

Employment Committee

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- Identify potential employment opportunities before the family arrives
- Very soon after arrival, ensure that all employable adults do an employment assessment and create a resume (IRIS will conduct the assessment and can provide advice, guidelines, resources and templates)
- Assist with job applications and the interview process
- Help adults find jobs and become economically self-sufficient as soon as possible

Finance Committee

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- Develop a budget for the co-sponsorship, including all income (funds raised by us as co-sponsor, State Dept. welcome grant of \$925 per person, Temporary Family

Assistance money, Food Stamps, employment income) and expenses (rent, utilities, food, transportation, etc.)

- Oversee resettlement disbursements
- Help family access all possible sources of funding, including applying at DSS for food stamps (SNAP) and Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), identify a local food pantry and register the family
- Develop and coach family on household budget, managing resources, building a credit history

Fundraising Committee

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- Spearhead the effort to raise \$15,000-\$18,000 to defray family living expenses (primarily to subsidize the rent for the first 3-6 months).

Healthcare Committee

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- Accompany each refugee to a Refugee Health Assessment (RHA) within 30 days of arrival (either at the Yale Refugee Clinic, or IRIS can help you identify RHA providers in your area)
- Identify primary care and mental health providers in area who are accepting new patients with HUSKY/Medicaid and who provide interpreters
- Bring refugees for first appointments with primary care providers and any specialists necessary for follow up
- Help family make appointments and arrange transportation (public transportation or rides from Transportation Point Person) as needed
- Assist with urgent or emergency medical needs, while involving IRIS for guidance.

Housing Committee

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- Select a neighborhood based on school quality, public transportation, and availability of appropriate groceries
- Create an inventory of possible 2- and 3-bedroom affordable apartments in target area with willing landlords
- Upon notification of family arrival date, negotiate a one-year lease and obtain the apartment
- Connect utilities
- Be available to help with any landlord issues during first 6 months

Interpreter Point Person(s) Committee

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- Develop a roster of individuals speaking possible family languages (Dari, Pashto, Farsi, Arabic, Swahili) who are willing to act as interpreters for family members
- Ensure that interpreters attend important meetings/appointments (especially arrival, initial intake, employment and financial meetings)

Public Transportation & Community Orientation Point Person Committee

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- Research public transportation options before family arrives
- Instruct family on how to use public transportation (fares, payment, entering and exiting procedures)
- Show family members how to get to important locations: schools, jobs, market, place of worship, hospital

Ride Coordinator Committee

(for initial appointments and special transportation needs)

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- Identify a list of drivers willing to take refugees to initial appointments (medical, Dept. of Social Services, Social Security office, DMV, job interviews, Cultural Orientation at IRIS on 3 consecutive days, and in emergencies)
- Collect copies of drivers' licenses and insurance cards for all volunteer drivers
- Reach out to volunteer drivers when family or another committee identifies a transportation need.
- Obtain driver and notify requester

Technology Committee

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- Assists with any tech issues for our group.
- Prepares online resources (e.g. forms to solicit volunteers and to collect monies)

Welcome Point Person(s) Committee

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- Meet family at designated arrival point (New Haven, JFK or Newark airport)
- Obtain and bring appropriate clothing for the weather
- Arrange for a language interpreter to accompany you (work with Interpreter Point Person)
- Arrange for preparation of a culturally appropriate hot meal for arrival day (IRIS will provide a menu or introduction to a cook)