

PRIVATE REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

What is the Welcome Corps Program?

Welcome Corps allows groups of five or more US citizens or permanent residents to apply to privately sponsor the resettlement of refugees who have been cleared for resettlement by the State Department in the place of traditional resettlement agencies, so long as they **raise \$2,375 per refugee; pass background checks; and submit an assistance plan to place refugees in local communities, help them find housing, identify job opportunities, and enroll children in schools.**

How is it different from Past/Other Sponsorship Programs?

Welcome Corps is different from temporary humanitarian parole programs (such as Uniting for Ukraine or the Processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans) because the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program offers individuals a pathway

TO QUALIFY A GROUP MUST:

- Have a minimum of 5 members who are US Citizens or LPR.
- Be over the age of 18 and who live in or near the same community.
- Private sponsor groups can be formed with family members, friends, neighbors, work colleagues, members of faith groups, book club members—any group of adults who together meet the requirements.
- Collectively, sponsor group members must demonstrate that they have the capacity to provide the **core minimum requirements** for sponsorship.

CORE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Private sponsor groups are required to provide the following services:

- Airport Reception
- Financial Support
- Housing
- Basic Necessities
- Documentation
- Benefits & Services
- Health & Mental Health Services
- Education & Childcare
- Language
- Interpretation & Translations
- Cultural Connections
- Orientation
- Employment
- Transportation
- Transition from Sponsorship
- Reporting and Feedback

IF YOU ARE APPLYING TO SPONSOR A REFUGEE/ FAMILY YOU KNOW:

- Use the Refugee Eligibility Tool to check if the individuals you would like to sponsor may be eligible for consideration for resettlement in the United States.
- To be approved for resettlement to the US through the Welcome Corps, the individuals you wish to sponsor must also successfully pass the U.S. government's screening and vetting processes, including review and adjudication of their refugee claim, security screening, and medical examination.
- Refugees are responsible for paying any fines for overstaying their visa to obtain exit permission to leave the country where they currently live. The U.S. government will not cover these costs.

WHAT DO I NEED FOR THE APPLICATION?

- **Contact information for you and your sponsor group members**
 - **Signed commitment form by every sponsor group member:** Each member of your private sponsor group must sign and date the Welcome Corps [Commitment Form](#) agreeing to the program requirements and responsibilities and confirming you have reviewed and agree to the [Code of Conduct](#).
 - **Information about access to [resources and services in your community](#)**
 - **Proof that you've raised the money required:** To apply, you must upload a document that shows you have secured at least 60% of the required \$2,425 per refugee you plan to sponsor (\$1,455 per refugee). [Learn more about accepted documentation.](#)
- If you are applying to sponsor someone you know, you also will need to provide information about the refugee(s) you wish to sponsor so they can be referred to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. Review the [eligibility criteria](#).
- Your group will indicate the family size you are able to support and information about your community's resources. The application review process takes about two to six weeks. Timelines vary depending on the case.
- **If you are applying to support a refugee you do not know**, it typically takes between two and three months after your application is approved to be matched with a refugee or refugee family and for travel arrangements to be made.
- **If you are applying to sponsor someone you know**, you should expect that it will take a minimum of six months up to a few years from the time you submit a completed application.



How to become a Private Sponsor Organization (PSOs) that support Welcome Corp?

Private Sponsor Organizations must meet minimum requirements, including:

- 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) status
- Agree to support and oversee minimum of 50 affiliated and/or unaffiliated sponsor groups per year
- Complete required Welcome Corps Essentials baseline training
- Demonstrate financial health via provision of audited financial statements
- Demonstrate organizational capacity to be an effective PSO with staff to support and oversee sponsor groups
- Complete Welcome Corps PSO onboarding

Private Sponsor Organization Responsibilities:

- Recruit PSGs
- Provide application support to PSGs
- Communicate with PSGs
- Provide ongoing support and oversight to PSGs
- Identify and address sponsorship breakdowns
- Collect and review 30 and 90-day reports and ensure participation in surveys
- Support in coordination of services
- Coordinate with CSH and maintain compliance with CSH protocols
- Participate in the PSO Council
- PSO and PSG monitoring reporting

Pros of cultural organizations in supporting African and Caribbean refugees through resettlement:

- **Cultural Familiarity:** Cultural organizations often share common backgrounds and experiences with African and Caribbean refugees. They understand the nuances of their cultures, traditions, and challenges, which allows for more effective support and communication.
- **Community Integration:** These organizations serve as bridges between the refugee community and the larger society. They help refugees navigate the complexities of their new environment, including language barriers, social norms, and access to resources. By facilitating integration, cultural organizations contribute to the refugees' sense of belonging and well-being in their new homes.
- **Empowerment & Skill Building:** Cultural organizations empower refugees by providing opportunities for skill development, education, and leadership training. Through workshops, seminars, and vocational programs, refugees can acquire new skills, enhance their employability, and gain confidence in navigating their new lives.
- **Preservation of Culture & Heritage:** Cultural organizations play a crucial role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of African and Caribbean refugees. By celebrating traditions, language, music, dance, and cuisine, these organizations help refugees maintain connections to their roots.
- **Advocacy & Representation:** Cultural organizations advocate for the rights and interests of African and Caribbean refugees at local, national, and international levels. They raise awareness about refugee issues, challenge stereotypes and discrimination, and mobilize resources to address systemic barriers to resettlement and integration.

Cons of cultural organizations in supporting African and Caribbean refugees through resettlement:

- **Language Barriers:** Language barriers can significantly hinder refugees' access to essential services, employment opportunities, and social integration. Many African and Caribbean refugees may not be fluent in the dominant language of their host country, which can impede communication, comprehension, and engagement with various systems and institutions.
- **Mismatch of Skills and Job Opportunities:** African and Caribbean refugees often face challenges in translating their skills, qualifications, and work experiences to the labor market of their host country. There may be mismatches between the skills refugees possess and the available job opportunities, leading to underemployment, deskilling, and frustration among refugees seeking meaningful employment.
- **Discrimination and Bias in the Workplace:** African and Caribbean refugees may encounter discrimination, bias, and systemic barriers in the workplace based on their ethnicity, race, or refugee status. Employers may hold prejudices or stereotypes about refugees, which can limit their access to advancement opportunities.

○ Resources for Sponsors: <https://bit.ly/3V5KZOq>

○ Resources for Refugees: <https://bit.ly/49FP2Y5>

○ Resources for Organizations: <https://bit.ly/49JorJJ>