



The Welcome Circle Program

The Welcome Circle Program (also referred to as Sponsor Circle Program), is a community-led resettlement initiative that supports everyday Americans in taking on the responsibility of welcoming newcomers to their communities. USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services is partnering with the Community Sponsorship Hub and other organizations to respond to the migrant and human displacement crises by expanding the number of Welcome Circles across the country.

Overview

Community sponsorship centers communities at the heart of welcoming newcomers. This act of welcome brings neighbors closer together and provides a newcomer the opportunity to begin again. It is a powerful – and direct – way to support newcomers settling into new communities. This can include helping to find housing, providing initial household essentials, scheduling medical appointments, helping children enroll in schools, and supporting job searches. For everyone involved, new and lasting friendships are built, strengthening communities across the country. And at every step, sponsors receive training and support from resettlement professionals.

The Welcome Circle Program enables groups of individuals in local communities to form certified Sponsor Circles to provide initial welcome and support to newcomers. USCCB, in close partnership with the Community Sponsorship Hub, oversees the process through which Circles are vetted, certified, and matched with newcomers who opt into the program. This program provides critical support in ensuring that newcomers receive welcome and support. Through the Sponsor Circle Program, hundreds of newcomers have been welcomed into communities across the country.

The Commitment

By serving as a Sponsor Circle, your group commits to welcoming newcomers and providing support during the initial resettlement period. This is a significant commitment, but one that enables you to serve in the critical role of helping newcomers rebuild their lives in your community.

Next Steps

1. Establish a Group

Our experience has shown that sponsorship is most successful when the responsibility is shared. The first step is to pull together a group of at least five people, with one person serving as sponsor group lead. You can see a sample sponsor group structure [here](#).

2. Create a Budget

As a sponsor, you will offer critical support in the first months after arrival. You will assist them in securing initial housing and ensure they have essential furnishings, household goods, and food. Create a budget to estimate the resources you will need to provide this support. You can use [this budget template](#) to get you started.

3. Fundraise to Meet that Budget

Fundraising can help you generate the financial and in-kind resources needed to support newcomers. Often, members of your community are eager to give. Organizations can also provide support. [This fundraising guide](#) can serve as a useful support.

4. Make a List of Early Tasks

In addition to providing the newcomer with critical financial support, you will also need to connect them with relevant services such as health care and education, and support their integration, including by helping them as they improve their English and secure employment. Here is a [checklist](#) that can guide you in things to be done.

5. Keep Going!

Supporting someone who is adjusting to a new environment can take time and rarely unfolds as expected. Newcomers have unique journeys and may seek to achieve different goals on different timelines. Sponsorship is hard work. But it's worth it!

Support You Will Receive

As a Welcome Circle, you won't be alone. You will have access to application support, a growing suite of tools and resources, and ongoing guidance offered by welcoming experts. You will also be connected with USCCB staff or local affiliate who will provide you with ongoing guidance and support, including answering questions that you may have during your Circle experience.

Want to Learn More?

For more information, visit <https://www.usccb.org/welcomecircles> to sign up for an online information session. Contact welcomecircles@usccb.org if you have any questions.