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**INFORMATION PACKAGE ON PRIVATE**

**SPONSORSHIP OF REFUGEES**

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**Thank you for your interest in sponsoring Refugees and becoming a Constituent group of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough (Sponsorship Agreement Holder with Citizenship and Immigration Canada).**

**What is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH)?**

A number of organizations have signed sponsorship agreements with the Government of Canada to help support refugees from abroad when they resettle in Canada. These organizations are known as sponsorship agreement holders. They can sponsor refugees themselves or work with others in the community to sponsor refugees.

Most sponsorship agreement holders are religious, ethnic, community or service organizations.

**What is a Constituent Group?**

As indicated above, a SAH can authorize CGs to sponsor under its agreement and provide support to the refugees. CGs are based in the sponsored refugees’ expected community of settlement and must have their sponsorship application and settlement plan approved by their SAH before the undertaking is submitted to the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W).

**What are the responsibilities of the sponsoring group?**

Sponsoring groups agree to provide the refugees with care, lodging, settlement assistance and support for the duration of the sponsorship period. Normally, this is 12 months starting from the refugee’s arrival in Canada or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first.

Private sponsors normally support the sponsored refugees by:

* Providing the cost of food, rent and household utilities and other day-to-day living expenses;
* Providing clothing, furniture and other household goods;
* Locating interpreters;
* Selecting a family physician and dentist;
* Assisting with applying for provincial health-care coverage;
* Enrolling children in school and adults in language training;
* Introducing newcomers to people with similar personal interests;
* Providing orientation with regard to banking services, transportation, etc.; and
* Helping in the search for employment

As for securing tax receipts, each Constituent Group is strongly encouraged to work with its own faith community (e.g. parish) which can issue receipts. If the CG does not wish to limit itself to a faith-based group, it might link with a charitable organization willing to open a refugee trust fund account for the CG.

**How much financial support will be required?**

The sponsorship application kit provides details of how much financial support will likely be needed to meet the sponsorship obligations as well as advice on how to determine whether a group has sufficient funds. Although the cost of living varies from centre to centre across the country, the Sponsorship Cost Table and the In-Kind Deduction table included in the sponsorship kits can help to estimate the annual settlement cost for sponsoring a refugee or refugee family. One rule of thumb is that sponsors are expected to provide a level of support that is at least equal to that of the prevailing rates for social assistance in the expected community of settlement.

The sponsoring group may establish a trust fund for the sponsorship but may not accept or require payment of funds from a refugee for submitting a sponsorship.

The financial support of sponsors is given on the basis of need. Refugees are expected to contribute to their own settlement costs from funds they bring to Canada or earn during their sponsorship period.

Since sponsorship is meant to lead to self-sufficiency, sponsoring groups are encouraged to help refugees find employment but cannot force refugees to accept any job offered. Sponsors are, however, permitted to adjust their financial support downward if a refugee refuses to take a *reasonable* job offer. Finding employment within the sponsorship period is not always possible, so the sponsoring group is advised not to count on employment income when securing funds for the sponsorship.

**Sponsorship Cost Table**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Family Size | 12 Months of Income Support | Start-up Costs | Estimated Total Annual Settlement Cost ($) |
| 1 | 9,800 | 2,800 | 12,600 |
| 2 | 16,800 | 4,400 | 21,200 |
| 3 | 17,700 | 5,300 | 23,000 |
| 4 | 20,000 | 7,000 | 27,000 |
| 5 | 22,500 | 7,200 | 29,700 |
| 6 | 24,500 | 8,000 | 32,500 |
| Additional member | 1,550 | 1,000 | 2,550 |

Income support can vary depending on ages of various dependents which play a role in determining monthly income support for shelter, food, transportation and incidentals.

**In-Kind Deduction Table ($)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Family Size | Shelter | Clothing | Furniture | Start-up Costs (Household Needs) | School Start-up Costs | Food Staples |
| 1 | 6,000 | 500 | 1,500 | 325 |  | 175 |
| 2 | 7,100 | 1,000 | 2,000 | 350 |  | 250 |
| 3 | 7,800 | 1,375 | 2,500 | 375 |  | 325 |
| 4 | 8,400 | 1,750 | 3,000 | 400 |  | 400 |
| 5 | 9,600 | 2,125 | 3,500 | 425 |  | 475 |
| 6 | 9,600 | 2,500 | 4,000 | 450 |  | 550 |
| additional member | 900 | 375 | 500 | 25 | 150 per child between ages 4-21 | 75 |

The In-kind Deduction Table is based on annual costs. Start-up Costs include: bedding, linens and household items. These are approximate rates only and should be used as a guideline. Contact your local Citizenship and Immigration Centre (CIC) should you be interested in your local Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) income support rates which are in line with local social assistance rates.

**Start-Up Costs**

Sponsoring groups might find it useful for their own planning purposes to be aware of the financial assistance Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) provides to government-assisted refugees in order to cover standard household start-up costs. The following information describes some of the various needs that are considered when CIC establishes the amount for the initial start-up cheque. Individual start-up costs with established maximums:

Clothing: a one-time basic clothing allowance is provided.

* $325 per adult
* $250 per dependent child

Winter clothing: winter coat, winter boots, mittens, scarf, snow pants for children, etc.

* $175 per adult
* $125 per dependent child

Basic Household Needs Allowance: Suggested items include: beds, table and chairs, bed linens, basic window coverings and common household products such as kitchen utensils, pots, pans, brooms, mops, detergents and cleansers.

The following maximum allowance rates apply:

* Per single without accompanying dependents: $1,330
* Per single plus one (1) dependent: $2,340
* Per single plus two (2) dependents: $2,665
* Per couple without accompanying dependents: $1,960
* Per couple plus one (1) accompanying dependent: $2,455
* Per couple plus two (2) accompanying dependents: $2,945
* Per couple plus three (3) accompanying dependents: $3,515
* For each additional dependent: $350

Food Staples: flour, sugar, rice, spices and condiments, etc.

* $175 for the first person in each household
* $75 for each additional dependent (no maximum)

School Start-Up Allowance: an allowance of $150 for school-age children and young adults attending K-13, between the ages of 4-21 to defray costs for school supplies, activity fees, gym clothing, etc.

**Settlement Planning**

The Settlement Plan is a plan detailing what you and members of your group will do to orient and support the newcomer(s) during the sponsorship. It will provide your group with a framework for working through the many details of who will do what, when, how, with what resources and where those resources will come from. This Plan should be used as a guide with the understanding that circumstances may change and that it may need to be revised and updated to reflect these changes during the settlement period. Your settlement planning should also take into account the settlement needs of non-accompanying family members listed on the IMM 0008, as your group will be expected to sponsor them as well if they submit an IMM 0008 within one year of the arrival of the principal applicant.

Being prepared involves learning about all the local resources available. This may require you to research about anything that will help you accomplish the tasks.

For the duration of the sponsorship, as a member of the sponsoring group you are required to provide settlement assistance in the form of:

* Reception (e.g.: meeting at the airport; welcoming; etc.)
* Orientation (e.g.: to the group, to the new neighbourhood, to Canada)
* Housing (e.g.: arranging for temporary accommodation; helping find permanent accommodation; budgeting for housing expenses)
* Clothing
* Food
* Transportation (e.g.: orienting to public transit system; assisting in obtaining driver’s license)
* Language (e.g.: assisting in scheduling language test; finding and registering for appropriate language programs, etc.)
* Schooling (e.g.: helping in the registration of children; finding adult education programs/courses; etc.)
* Childcare (e.g.: helping arrange for child care when needed; informing about Canadian childcare practices and customs; sharing information about child protection laws)
* Emotional and moral support

**We can make a huge difference in people’s lives. We can save a refugees’ life. Would you like to be part of this? The Diocesan Refugee Committee is there to help you. Here are some suggestions:**

* Form a refugee committee at your church (it can be part of outreach or it can be a separate committee) and see if there is enough interest in your church to become involved in a refugee sponsorship.
* If your church feels that it is too small to handle such a project, then try joining with other churches in your area. Alternatively consider making it a deanery project or an ecumenical project with other denominations in your community. Refugee work is a good way to bring people together and to meet some really great people.
* Find out if there is a church near you which has a refugee family who they are looking after right now and ask if they need any help.
* Welcome refugees into your community. By definition refugees do not want to leave their country of birth but are forced to do so. They experience alienation in a new culture and a long painful separation from other family members.
* Think about the way we live. Ask yourself if we are contributing directly or indirectly to the injustices which create refugees, or are we contributing to peace and justice for all.
* Pray for refugees; pray that peace will prevail in their homelands; pray that they will be able to endure the terrible suffering.

Are you….

* A housewife? Take a refugee mother along shopping. If possible, help her by pointing out how to get good buys, or give her a ride home with her groceries.
* A student? Find ways to include refugees in your social activities.
* A car or truck owner? Offer rides to those who come to the church or school you attend; offer to help refugees move into new homes.
* An owner or manager of apartments or houses? Take a risk and accept a refugee family even when they cannot come up with all of the security you normally require. Most of the time you won’t be disappointed.
* An employer? Consider employing refugees despite language handicaps.
* A teacher? Home-bound mothers and other refugees would love help in learning English.
* A psychologist, psychiatrist, counsellor or social worker? Any person with good listening skills can help worried and upset refugees, just by being present and listening.

**Helpful links and websites:**

<http://www.rstp.ca/en/>

Settlement Plan: <http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/27chapter7.pdf>

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/sponsor/index.asp>

The New Canadian Center: <http://www.nccpeterborough.ca/>

**Next Steps:**

* Call the diocese at (705) 745 5123 to express your interest in sponsoring and to inquire about the next workshop which will provide more details about how to welcome a family.
* Form a sponsorship committee.
* Decide on the size of the family you wish to sponsor and target your fundraising toward that goal.
* Consult with the SAH representative regarding names of possible refugee families.
* Have your Constituency Group representatives (2) sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Diocese of Peterborough.

Note: In order to proceed the Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) needs:

1. The signed MOU
2. Proof of funds;
3. A copy of the CG’s settlement Plan.