

SAMPLE SPONSOR GROUP STRUCTURE AND ROLES

Last Updated 05/02/22

The United States has a rich tradition of welcoming newcomers through sponsorship. Following are some best practices, drawn from this experience, that can set you and the newcomer you are welcoming up for success.

Experience with sponsorship has shown that sponsorship is most successful when the responsibility is shared. Consider pulling together a group of at least five people, with one person serving as sponsor lead. You can see a sample sponsor group structure below.

There are also local organizations, such as nonprofits that serve immigrants or city government offices for newcomers. They may have services and programs that can assist the sponsor team or complement team roles. Connect with [2-1-1](#) to learn more.

Sponsor Group Lead:

Ensures guidelines are followed, tasks are completed, program documentation is submitted, and facilitates group meetings and communication. Some of their tasks may include:

- Ensuring that the conditions of a newcomer's status (e.g. parole) are met and that required documentation (such as Social Security cards or state IDs) are submitted
- When appropriate, ensuring newcomers are connected to free or affordable legal assistance to explore options for changes to immigration status.

Finance & Employment Team:

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading fundraising efforts, developing a budget, and navigating newcomers' access to employment services (if applicable). Some of their tasks may include:

- Facilitating fundraising efforts
- Overseeing group funds disbursements
- Developing a budget for the sponsor group
- Collaborating with newcomers to create a family household budget
- Locating local workforce services (including options for career training) and online employment exchanges
- Facilitating an informal job search

Housing & Basic Necessities Team:

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading the housing search and ensuring basic necessities are provided. Some of their tasks may include:

- Securing and furnishing clean, safe, affordable housing
- Arranging for utilities to be installed
- Providing food staples
- Providing seasonally appropriate clothing

Benefits & Healthcare Team:

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading connections to healthcare and eligible benefits.

Some of their tasks may include:

- Connecting the newcomer to healthcare providers
- Where appropriate and available, enrolling individuals and families in services and benefits, such as Affordable Care Act plans, Children's Health Insurance Plans (CHIP), or other available health insurance plans, depending on what is available in each state.
- Connecting the newcomer to mental healthcare resources as appropriate
- Connecting the newcomer to local, state and community-based nonprofit services (food pantry, town social services, etc.)

Welcoming & Local Orientation Team

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading initial welcome efforts and community orientation.

Some of their tasks may include:

- Meeting newcomers at the airport & transporting them to secured housing
- Orienting newcomers to community resources (library, youth services/clubs, recreational, etc.)
- Orienting newcomers to public transportation (bus, train, rideshare, etc.)
- Orienting newcomers to laws, personal and home safety
- Facilitating connections to local ethnic based community organizations and/or faith communities as appropriate.

Education & Language Team

Group member(s) will provide primary support by leading school enrollment and connection to English language learning services. Some of their tasks may include:

- Enrolling children in school, afterschool, and/or summer school programming
- Exploring community college or higher education options for older youth
- Providing interpreter and/or translation services for communication with newcomers
- Connecting to formal, free or affordable language and digital literacy classes, as necessary
- Providing informal language training partners
- Connecting parents to family or community liaisons in local schools or school districts to build awareness about navigating the U.S. educational system