

Responsibilities of Sponsoring Groups⁴

Refugee sponsorship carries with it a number of moral, financial, and legal responsibilities in relation to the refugees sponsored, IRCC, and other parties. Broadly speaking, the responsibilities of a sponsoring group can be placed in two categories: *pre-arrival* responsibilities and *post-arrival* responsibilities.

Each of these areas requires the sponsoring group to carry out a set of actions or activities that result in positive sponsorship outcomes and experiences. Below are the main duties under these two broad categories.

Pre-Arrival Responsibilities

Sponsoring groups are expected to carry out the following duties in relation to refugees they are sponsoring.

1. **Submit fully and correctly completed refugee sponsorship applications.** To avoid the return of an application and to save time and resources, sponsors are expected to play an active role, with help from World Renew, in properly and fully completing all sponsorship forms and required documents.
2. **Commit to having sufficient resources to support the privately sponsored refugees for the sponsorship period.** When submitting a private refugee Sponsorship Undertaking (IRCC form IMM-5373), the sponsoring group must commit to having sufficient resources to support the privately sponsored refugee(s) for the sponsorship period determined in the Sponsorship Undertaking, which is normally 12 months.
3. **Complete and submit a settlement plan to World Renew.** Details of the plan for supporting the financial and resettlement needs of the sponsored refugees will be outlined in a Settlement Plan (IRCC form IMM-5440) that will be completed, signed, and submitted to World Renew for approval (see **APPENDIX: “[Settlement Plan](#)”** for a sample).

⁴ This resource is adapted from the RSTP website: “Overview of Sponsorship Responsibilities.” www.rstp.ca/en/sponsorship-responsibilities/responsibilities

4. **Maintain contact with refugee applicants and update them** (*does not apply to BVOR sponsorships*). Being in contact with the refugee applicant throughout the process allows sponsors to share information and updates with them. It also enables the sponsoring group and refugee applicant to inform World Renew about any important changes and thus ensure the visa office and ROC-O are notified.
5. **Update IRCC about any changes in family composition** (*does not apply to BVOR sponsorships*). To ensure that the family unit remains intact, sponsors need to inform World Renew and ensure that refugee applicants inform the visa office and ROC-O office about any changes in the family composition of the applicant. Failure to declare changes on time, such as a new baby or spouse, can result in permanent separation of family members.
6. **Ensure refugees are aware of their interview and are present for it** (*does not apply to BVOR sponsorships*). When World Renew informs the sponsoring group of the applicant's interview date, the sponsor is responsible for notifying the refugee applicant as soon as possible and verifying that the applicant is aware of the interview details (i.e. date, location). The group should not assume that the refugee applicant will be informed of the interview day. Sponsors are to confirm with World Renew that the refugee will be at the interview and World Renew will confirm with the visa post.
7. **Prepare refugees for an interview** (*does not apply to BVOR sponsorships*). The sponsoring group must ensure that the refugee applicant(s) prepare for their interview. On the World Renew **WEBSITE** you will find "[Preparing Applicants for An Interview](#)," a helpful set of instructions to assist refugees in readying themselves for their interview.
8. **Work directly with refugee applicants and World Renew to avoid any delay or complication in the sponsorship process.** The sponsoring group should work with the refugee applicant and World Renew to ensure that the sponsorship process goes smoothly. Examples of tasks include following-up on requests to submit

additional documents, updating completed forms, and making any other requested changes to forms. If there are any changes in the sponsoring group (i.e. finances, human resource) which might negatively affect the capacity of the group to carry out its sponsorship responsibility, please inform World Renew immediately. Ideally, the group should recruit new volunteers and reconstitute its resettlement committee or fundraise to collect the required financial resources that will enable it to continue with the sponsorship process. If this is not possible, the group must consult with World Renew.

9. **Screen and train volunteers.** The sponsoring group will exercise due diligence in screening and training volunteers involved with the settlement of refugees. Because resettled refugees are considered *a vulnerable population*, all members of the sponsoring group who will work directly with the sponsored refugees are required to obtain a current Canadian Police Information Centre Check, plus a Vulnerable Sector Verification version of a Criminal Record Check.
10. **Offer a warm reception.** Meet and welcome the refugee(s) upon arrival at their final airport destination and provide transportation for the newcomers and their belongings to the sponsoring group's community.

Post-Arrival Responsibilities

The sponsoring group has a variety of responsibilities related to meeting the basic settlement needs of sponsored refugees upon their arrival in Canada and informing World Renew of their efforts and any challenges that arise in the sponsorship. The following is a brief summary of these responsibilities. These must be carried out in accordance with the Settlement Plan (IRCC form IMM-5440) that the sponsoring group has completed.

1. **Lodging.** Provide suitable accommodations, basic furniture, and other household essentials.
2. **Care.** Provide food, clothing, local transportation costs, and other necessities of life.

3. Settlement assistance and support (see **APPENDIX: “[First Weeks Checklist](#)”** for more detailed overview).

- update IRCC’s online “My Application” platform with Canadian address upon arrival to ensure that PR cards are mailed to the correct address (within 180 days of arrival)
- assist in the completion of required forms including health insurance, social insurance, child tax benefits registrations, etc.
- open a bank account
- facilitate access to English or French language classes
- understand the rights and responsibilities of permanent residents
- facilitate access to employment (recommended later in the settlement year after completion of language classes)
- facilitate access to community support groups, settlement services, and other resources in the community
- register children in school and facilitate access with the school system
- locate and assist in accessing a family physician and dentist
- support empowerment and independence of the sponsored refugees

4. Monitoring. The sponsoring group must inform World Renew at month two and month nine to discuss how the sponsorship is progressing.

At month two, a survey will be distributed asking groups if they have been successful in completing the essential early sponsorship tasks. The survey also provides an opportunity to outline the biggest challenges facing the sponsorship and goals for the remainder of the sponsorship. Please see **APPENDIX: [Monitoring - Early Weeks Check-In](#)** for the list of the survey questions.

At month nine, World Renew will schedule a phone or face-to-face interview with the main sponsoring contact. This interview is an opportunity to discuss the successes and challenges of the sponsorship,, as well as next steps for transitioning out of the sponsorship period. We will help the sponsor do a basic assessment of what types of support the refugee(s) will need once the sponsorship is complete and how those needs can be met. Please see **APPENDIX: [Monitoring - Nine Month Check-In](#)** for the list of interview questions.

If there are any significant challenges during the course of the sponsorship, such as but not limited to, the sponsored refugee(s) being unhappy with the support that is provided or the sponsored newcomer indicating a desire to move outside the community of settlement, the sponsoring group must inform World Renew as soon as possible.