

# Community Sponsorship Scheme

## Code of Conduct Guidance

The Reset training includes a module to help your group think through clear and consistent ways of working with your family.

Groups and families have found it helpful to be clear from the outset about what the family can expect from the group and vice versa.

Your group will be expected to agree ways of working that are right for you, and to set these out in a 'Code of Conduct' to be approved by your Lead Sponsor.

You may need to review your 'Code of Conduct' at regular intervals to ensure it remains appropriate for each stage of the resettlement journey.

Every group is different, and there is no 'one size fits all' approach, but here are some of the issues you may wish to consider when drafting your Code of Conduct, along with some *examples only* of decisions taken by other groups:

ISSUE	CHALLENGE	DECISION
Hours of Support	<i>Other than the first couple of weeks, sensible limits on the group's 'on call' availability help to prevent undue pressure on volunteers' own work and family lives, and encourage families to manage situations themselves, using the group's prior information and advice, including what to do in an emergency.</i>	<p>Calls or texts to the group will be answered between 8 am and 7pm Mon-Fri.</p> <p>The group will use a single contact mobile number answered on rota.</p> <p>Regular interpreters will each be issued with a dedicated contact mobile number.</p>
Family hospitality	<i>Accepting a family's offers of food and drink could impact on an already tight family budget. Unless more time was factored in this could also result in delays and missed appointments. Not accepting their hospitality could upset or offend some families.</i>	<p>The group will accept drinks and light snacks offered, but only during longer appointments in the family home, except for ESOL sessions.</p> <p>The group will politely decline any offer of refreshments, carefully explaining their reasons for this to the family at the outset.</p>

<p><b>Social visits</b></p>	<p><i>As relationships develop over time there may be opportunities to engage in social activities with the family, as opposed to resettlement-specific activity. All such opportunities require group discussion and agreement to help ensure unity and consistency. Lead Sponsor insurance may not cover such activity.</i></p>	<p>Any proposed social activity will be agreed in advance by the group and logged as such by the volunteer(s).</p> <p>No social activity will take place during the first three months, except as part of an agreed family orientation visit e.g. the local park.</p>
<p><b>Medical appointments</b></p>	<p><i>Families may need to disclose highly personal and sensitive information during medical appointments. Attendance by volunteers or the group's own interpreters is not appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Suitable interpreter provision is an NHS responsibility.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes NHS interpreters are not provided or do not attend as planned.</i></p>	<p>The GP practice, local NHS hospital and other local health services will be contacted pre-arrival to discuss interpreter provision.</p> <p>The group will discuss all aspects of UK healthcare with the family, including interpreters, within one week of arrival.</p> <p>NHS interpreters will be requested for every appointment.</p> <p>Where NHS interpreters fail to attend non-urgent appointments these will be rebooked.</p>
<p><b>Referring to the family</b></p>	<p><i>Once families arrive, they are no longer refugees. At that point it may be helpful to stop using the term 'refugee family'. Some groups refer to 'the family' or 'our family' whereas others feel this could also be disempowering.</i></p>	<p>The group will discuss how to refer to the family with them, within two weeks of arrival.</p> <p>The group will only refer to the family by their surname, or if briefly necessary at the outset, as 'the &lt;surname&gt; family from x country of origin'.</p>
<p><b>Group roles</b></p>	<p><i>Group members are each assigned one or more specific roles. Keeping to these roles, and delegating other issues to the appropriate colleague, ensures all can contribute and avoids over-reliance on specific volunteers.</i></p>	<p>The group agrees to adhere to the agreed roles as far as possible.</p> <p>Where immediate help or advice is requested, from a volunteer with a different role, the appropriate colleague will be called or texted for telephone advice or guidance.</p>
<p><b>Difficult subjects</b></p>	<p><i>Families often come from conflict zones involving complex dynamics between opposing factions. Families may have religious beliefs that some volunteers find difficult.</i></p>	<p>Group members will not instigate discussions about the situation in the family's country of origin or departure, or about any aspect of politics or religion.</p>

		The group will ensure the family understands the law and what is or is not acceptable in the UK, including freedom of speech, conscience and religion and examples of its limits.
<b>Immigration advice</b>	<p><i>It is unlawful for anyone who is not an OISC-certified immigration solicitor or adviser to offer this advice.</i></p> <p><i>Questions about family reunion, permanent settlement, and travel outside the UK are very common, and groups need to be prepared for this.</i></p>	<p>The group will make clear to the family at the outset that group members offering them immigration advice is against the law.</p> <p>The group will source and provide the family with key information about family reunion rules, travel requirements and the application process for Indefinite Leave to Remain after 5 years.</p>
<b>Time-keeping</b>	<p><i>The family will need to attend a great many appointments, particularly within the first few months. Their finances, health, education and well-being may be seriously harmed by lateness or non-attendance.</i></p>	<p>The group will explain to the family the importance of punctuality for all appointments.</p> <p>When accompanying the family to appointments, group members will allow plenty of time for the journey, anticipating weather, delays, public transport issues, parking etc.</p>
<b>Decision-making</b>	<p><i>The group will be required to consider and decide on a very wide range of matters, some of which are likely to elicit strong views and opinions.</i></p> <p><i>Families can expect to show high levels of dependency on the group's knowledge and experience of life in the UK, particularly at the outset.</i></p>	<p>The group will agree clear ground rules for meetings and decision-making, including respect for each other's views and acceptance of the agreed democratic process.</p> <p>The group will discuss empowerment with the family, and will equip, support and encourage them to make their own decisions at all times, provided doing so does not breach their safeguarding responsibilities.</p> <p>The group will ensure the family has sufficient information to foresee any potentially adverse consequences of decisions they may wish to take.</p>