



### Priority



This is a HIGH priority task and should be regularly examined by the group.

### Timing



Planning of this must be started within the first weeks of arrival.

### Group Participation



The entire refugee sponsoring group should be involved in planning the sponsorship transition..

### Post-Sponsorship Transition:

**Refugee sponsorship is unique for all involved, and the relationships that are built often last for many years. However, it is essential for newcomers to become financially self-sufficient once the sponsorship is completed.**

- With the exception of clearly designated JAS (Joint Assistance Sponsorship) cases, sponsorships last 12 months from the date of arrival.
- Community connections and friendships may continue indefinitely.
- Financial support **MUST** end after 12 months.

### Exit Strategy:

- Each group must develop and implement an exit strategy.
- Start the conversation **EARLY**. From the very first week of the sponsorship newcomers should understand exactly when the financial support will end.
- Mark the date on a calendar and give it to the newcomers.
- Revisit this conversation often to avoid surprises and misunderstandings.
- Work throughout the year to support meaningful connections beyond the sponsor group: Cultural communities, settlement agencies, sports, clubs, volunteering, classes, extracurricular activities, conversation circles...
- Ask newcomers how they feel about the end of the sponsorship. Identify concerns and solutions, resources etc.
- As the months pass, put increasing emphasis on newcomers being independent.

### Promote a strong understanding of how to:

- Pay rent, bills.
- Live on a budget.
- Effectively use public transit.
- Access services, make appointments.
- Update address with immigration, government, service providers etc.



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Connect with AURA:



**At the end of the sponsorship, newcomers transition to financial self-sufficiency.**

### Employment:

Help identify/search for employment (ensuring it does not interfere with ESL during the sponsorship).

- Orient newcomers to employment in Canada.
- Emphasize the importance of Canadian experience.
- For newcomers with professional experience, explore certification/bridging programs, mentors, internships etc.
- Identify resources to support:
  - Job skills training, continuing education, trades/technical school etc.
  - Resume building, interview practice etc.
  - Filing income tax (Tax Clinics).

### Social Assistance:

- If continued English language learning is a priority, Social Assistance may be the best option once the sponsorship ends.
- During the sponsorship, sponsored newcomers are not eligible for social assistance. In fact, the sponsor group would be liable to the government if any funds were received.

### Ontario Works (OW):

- Social Assistance in Ontario is called Ontario Works. Contact Ontario Works during the last month of sponsorship to arrange for intake.
- Applicants can apply online, over the phone, or in-person.
- An Ontario Works Rate Chart is available online.
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) is an extended social assistance program for people with disabilities. Applicants first apply for OW, and then request an ODSP application from their worker.

### Housing:

If newcomers will not be able to remain in the housing their sponsors provided, help them find and move into appropriate housing they will be able to afford.

### Additional Support:

Legally, a sponsor group can decide to continue supporting newcomers financially. However, AURA recommends **VERY STRONGLY AGAINST** this:

- Newcomers can become dependent on additional financial support from sponsors.
- Sponsors can end up subsidizing a situation that could continue indefinitely (social assistance, low paid work).
- Ending this relationship later can be extremely complicated.
- Continued emotional/settlement support can be jeopardized if a financial relationship continues.
- Any additional support your group intends to provide should have very clearly defined boundaries. If you are considering additional support, contact the AURA Executive Director to discuss it.**

1. Remember, Interim Federal Health (IFHP) coverage ends at the same time as a 12 month sponsorship.

2. The best time to start planning for post-sponsorship is in the first month of sponsorship.

3. Emphasize the importance of becoming a Canadian citizen.

**Citizenship Eligibility:**  
(as of Feb 2017):

- Physically present in Canada for 4 years as a Permanent Resident.
- Filed Income tax for 4 years.
- Proof of Language Capability (for applicants age 14-64).
- LINC Level 4+ (Speaking/Listening) Graduated secondary school (in English)
- Third party language test results
- Knowledge of Canada
- Fees/completed application forms