

Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities

Many of the people we serve, and many of our coworkers, are refugees or immigrants. They bring strengths, skills, and resilience, and they may also be navigating a new system, a new language, and the weight of what they left behind. A welcoming approach makes our services work and our workplace stronger.

Content

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What to keep in mind.

- Language is the first door. Offer qualified interpreters and translated materials early, and never lean on a child to interpret.
- Systems are unfamiliar. What seems obvious to us, like how an assessment works or what a waiver is, may be brand new. Explain plainly, without condescension.
- Trust may be cautious. Some people come from places where government meant danger. Patience and follow-through earn trust over time.
- Status fears are real. People may worry that asking for help will affect their immigration situation. Be clear and accurate about what a service does and does not involve, and route legal questions to the right place.
- Culture shapes everything. How families make decisions, talk about disability, or accept help varies widely. Ask, do not assume.

Avoid the traps.

- Do not treat a whole region or religion as one culture. A Somali elder, a Hmong teenager, and a Ukrainian grandmother share little beyond the label immigrant.
- Do not mistake an accent or limited English for limited ability. The person in front of you may be highly skilled in another language.

Welcome is practical, not just kind. People who feel respected and understood engage, follow through, and get the help they came for.

Identify affected communities, plan accessible influence, and report what changed using Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities.

Connect the guidance to the person's goals, program rules, access needs, and follow-up using Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities.

Identify the workplace condition, involve affected staff, test an improvement, and monitor impact using Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities.

Confirm the current purpose, audience, and decision authority before using Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities to identify affected communities, plan accessible influence, and report what changed.

Choose the sections of Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities that match the situation; do not apply unrelated guidance as a blanket rule.

Document the action taken from Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities, the people affected, unresolved questions, and the responsible follow-up owner.

Check the stated limitations and evidence status for Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities; escalate when current authority or individual context is missing.

For community engagement staff, use Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities to identify affected communities, plan accessible influence, and report what changed; plan accessible participation, make influence visible, and close the feedback loop with community partners. Start by identify affected communities, plan accessible influence, and report what changed using Welcoming Refugee and Immigrant Communities.

Use cultural and community context to ask better questions, never to predict an individual or treat a group as monolithic.

Do not replace official legal, policy, clinical, supervisory, program, or Tribal authority.

Do not infer an individual's identity, preferences, needs, or experience from group-level information.

State uncertainty, use current authoritative sources, and escalate when the decision exceeds the user's role.

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