

HOW TO BECOME A *Sponsor*

Private sponsorship of refugees to Canada is considered a group activity. Private sponsors make a humanitarian commitment of their personal time, energy, and often their money to assist an individual or a family in need of resettlement. Volunteering to assist refugees is a humanitarian commitment and a way of responding to the injustices in the world. Within the private sponsorship of refugees program in Canada, there are three different ways to form a sponsoring group: Sponsorship Agreement Holders, Community Sponsors and Groups of Five.

Volunteering to assist refugees is a humanitarian commitment



What is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder?

Sponsorship Agreement Holder's (SAH) are established organizations that have signed an agreement with the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Groups who sponsor under a SAH are referred to as Constituent Groups (CG's).

What is a Community Sponsor?

A Community Sponsor (CS) can be any Canadian organization, association or corporation. A Community Sponsor can sponsor up to two refugee families per year without a sponsorship agreement.

What is a Group of Five?

A Group of Five (G5) is a group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Group of Five are usually one-time groups formed in response to special situations that arise.



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Group Considerations

Remember that group members need to work closely with each other for up to three years or more (taking into account the application, processing and sponsorship period). The group must prove that they have sufficient financial resources and the expertise and commitment to support the sponsored refugees for 12 months from the date of arrival in Canada. In exceptional circumstances, and with the option of withdrawing the sponsorship, the group may be asked to commit to a sponsorship period of up to 36 months.



Forming Groups

When you begin to form your group you need to consider what the likely costs or responsibilities of the sponsorship will be. Especially when there are costs involved, such as in a Group of Five sponsorship, be upfront about the commitments required when approaching other potential group members.

Consider carefully who you need as part of your group. How much money can you contribute and how much still needs to be contributed by others? Do you know others in your community that have been involved in previous sponsorships or other refugee related work who may be able to help with the processing, provide donations, or assist in the settlement of the newcomers? Do you have work colleagues who might get involved? As you consider the requirements of the sponsorship, you will begin to find others who will be able to join you in the partnership of sponsoring.

What Responsibilities Do Sponsors Have?

During the Sponsorship Period the sponsoring group promises to provide:

- ❖ Reception
- ❖ Lodging
- ❖ Basic care and financial support
- ❖ Settlement assistance and support
- ❖ Ongoing friendship and emotional support

For more information please consult the
RSTP Sponsoring Group Handbook
available online at www.rstp.ca.