

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER

SUPPORT REFUGEES, IMMIGRANTS AND SURVIVORS ON THEIR JOURNEY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND INTEGRATION



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CONTENTS

WHAT IS A FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER?

Description
Program Phases

APPLICATION PROCESS

Initial Steps
Time Commitment
Friendship Volunteer Agreement
Training

PREPARING TO BE A FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER

Representative
Communication
Logging Volunteer Time & Donations

LET'S GET STARTED!

APPENDIX

Resources
Preparing for your Refugee Family
Friendship Volunteer Agreement

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER

THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH THE VULNERABLE

The world is facing the largest refugee crisis since World War II, with more than 65 million individuals forcibly displaced from their homes because of persecution and violence. In the aftermath of WWII, World Relief began serving those displaced by war and violence. More than 70 years later, we are still serving refugees, expanding into work with immigrants and survivors of human trafficking, and collaborating alongside thousands of local churches, organizations, communities and individual volunteers

WHAT IS A FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER?

A Friendship volunteer will walk alongside refugees and immigrants, with the goal of developing a mutually transformative relationship. Friendship volunteers are matched with refugee and immigrant families or individuals to meet on a weekly basis. Activities such as sharing meals, practicing English, assisting with orientation to the community, helping with practical advice about American life, and building friendship are all part of this experience. Patience, compassion and creativity go a long way in this vital, independent role.

PROGRAM PHASES

Once a Friendship Volunteer/s have completed training, the Friendship Volunteer will be paired with a refugee family or individual. Friendship Volunteers work with World Relief staff to determine how best to assist the family, but the program often includes:

- **Preparing for Arrival.** Before a refugee family arrives in the U.S., their Friendship Volunteer works with World Relief staff to prepare their house or apartment. In most cases, FPs are also present when their refugee family arrives at the airport, offering a warm welcome and the promise of a new beginning.
- **Resettlement & Adjustment.** During their first few months in the U.S., refugees have many appointments to schedule, orientations to attend, and things to learn. Some FPs may assist with tasks like securing a state ID, or teaching the family where and how to buy groceries, how to use public transportation, or even how to greet someone in English. Working through these tasks together empowers the family to move towards self-sufficiency, while reaffirming a sense of community and support as they adjust to life in the U.S.

- **Friendship. Your role as a volunteer.** FPs commit to visiting their refugee family at least once a week. Those visits often provide opportunities to help practice English, orient to American culture, and meet other practical needs, but the primary goal is to offer genuine and mutual friendship.

“FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER” MAY BE A MISNOMER SINCE YOU ARE MORE THAN JUST A FRIEND FOR YOUR REFUGEE PARTNER. YOU WILL ALSO TEACH THEM ABOUT LIFE IN AMERICA AND BE A STUDENT OF THEIR CULTURE.

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER ROLE

- Visit a refugee family 3-4 times per month (minimum 6 month commitment)
 - Play games (Checkers, Uno).
 - Bring pictures.
 - Invite them to holiday celebrations.
 - Share meals.
 - Celebrate their accomplishments.
 - Validate their frustration and loneliness.
- Talk about your family, roommates, job, friends, etc.
- Listen to their stories.
- Build friendship through visits with refugee family in their home
 - Practice English conversation
 - Teach them how to organize mail.
 - Teach about facial expressions/non-verbal communication that we frequently use.
 - Help them understand any cultural issues that they are struggling with.
- Share practical advice about life in a Western society
- Explore the local community with refugee family
 - Acquaint with various community resources (i.e.the library and how to use it).
 - Teach them how to ride the bus.
- Help familiarize refugees with American culture and customs
- Communicate consistently with Companion Coordinator about refugee needs
- Learn about their culture and customs
 - You are not just a teacher; you are a student of their culture! How do you learn? Just ask!
 - Learn about their country.
 - Learn about their culture and customs.
 - Learn about their family traditions.

APPLICATION PROCESS

INITIAL STEPS

In order to Friendship Volunteer, start by doing the following:

1. Apply to be a World Relief Volunteer.
 - a. Select Friendship Volunteer as your area of interest.
 - b. Attend one of the scheduled volunteer trainings.
 - c. You must be willing to complete a background check.
2. Review the Friendship Volunteer commitment.
 - a. Try to focus on only a couple areas. You can always expand later.
3. Contact World Relief when you are ready to be connected to a family/individual.

TIME COMMITMENT

We ask for a six-month commitment with weekly visits to the refugee family.

Each Friendship Volunteer must commit to serve and walk with their assigned refugee family for a minimum of six months. While the initial, state-funded Refugee Resettlement Program only lasts three months, World Relief believes the need for community, empowerment, and support stretches beyond ninety days. Our programs, including Friendship Volunteers, are designed to offer longer-lasting support.

The mutually-beneficial relationships that grow out of Friendship Volunteers happen as a result of consistently spending time together and intentionally building community. Occasionally refugee families may move away or not be open to relationship building. On the other hand, we realize you cannot put a time limit on a friendship. We ask for your flexibility, and ultimately hope throughout the process that the Friendship Volunteer develops friendships with the family that may last far beyond six months.

Weekly time commitments may vary throughout the experience, depending on availability and the needs of the refugee family. Generally, Friendship Volunteers will volunteer more during the post-arrival and early part of the resettlement period, as these involve English tutoring needs and specific appointments or services.

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Once the Friendship Volunteer and World Relief have agreed upon a specific refugee family to volunteer with, both parties will review and complete an agreement. The agreement includes basic biographical and contact information, as well as several lists of tasks to be completed. The Friendship

Volunteer and World Relief staff will together assign responsibility for the tasks based on the availability, skills, and passions of the Friendship Volunteer.

We treat the agreement as a tool to facilitate clear communication and establish responsibility for both the Friendship Volunteer and World Relief. **Please see the appendix for a sample Friendship Volunteer agreement.**

TRAINING

Before you invest as a Friendship Volunteer in a relationship with a refugee family, World Relief wants to first invest in you. It is important to us that all Friendship Volunteer members feel ready and confident going into their Friendship Volunteer experience.

Training will equip individuals with the tools needed to fulfill their six-month commitment. Some of the topics covered during training could include an overview of the refugee resettlement journey, how to understand cultural differences, and how to help without hurting. **Please see the appendix for a few training tips as you begin preparing for a refugee family.**

PREPARING TO BE A FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER

COMMUNICATION

Regular and open communication between World Relief and the Friendship Volunteer is essential, and remains a priority for World Relief as we support and empower you throughout your volunteer experience. World Relief will provide regular follow-up and be available to help answer any questions that may arise. The Friendship Volunteer should not act as a mediator between the client and World Relief. If the refugee has a question for World Relief, the Friendship Volunteer should encourage the refugee to contact their caseworker directly if they are still enrolled in the program.

LOGGING VOLUNTEER TIME & DONATIONS

By tracking your contributions to the Friendship Volunteer, you are helping World Relief convey the impact that volunteers have on refugees. You are also impacting *future* refugees. The grants supporting World Relief look to see proof of community involvement. In fact, the future and/or expansion of some grants are actually dependent upon this proof.

Here's how to log your volunteer hours, mileage, and donations. First, you'll need to access our tracking tool, called Track It Forward.

1. Select your local World Relief office on [Track It Forward](#).

2. Create an account by selecting “Sign Up” and providing basic information.
3. Once in the portal, you can begin logging* hours, donations, etc.

When logging, please complete the following fields:

1. **Date Volunteered**
2. **Activity**
 - a. When simply spending time with a client**, choose “community orientation.”
3. **Hours** (i.e., how much time you spent volunteering)
4. **Mileage**
 - a. Please note, mileage is only to be logged for the act of volunteering—not the drive to and from your home, unless the client is with you.
5. **Notes** (i.e., refugee first and last name and/or details on a donation)
 - a. The first and last name of the refugee you volunteered with.
 - b. Amount spent (if applicable).
 - c. Whether the donation was for a specific client**.
 - d. Details on what you did during the time listed, etc.

***Please note that Track It Forward has a smartphone app called OURVOLTS. You can download and access it once you have registered online.**

****Always list the first AND last name of the client.**

LET’S GET STARTED!

For more information or to become a Friendship Volunteer, please contact World Relief Triad at TriadVC@wr.org or 336-887-9007.

APPENDIX

RESOURCES

PREPARING FOR YOUR REFUGEE FAMILY

VISIT IDEAS

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

RESOURCES

Should you have trouble viewing the websites linked throughout the guide, below are the URLs for each resource.

Track It Forward, a tool for logging volunteer hours. <http://www.trackitforward.com/site/world-relief-high-point?type=register>

Cultural Orientation Resource Center, providing resources on cultures around the world. <http://www.culturalorientation.net/>

PREPARING FOR YOUR REFUGEE FAMILY

PREPARATION AND RECOMMENDED READING

The most effective Friendship Volunteers have gotten the opportunity to shadow another veteran Friendship Volunteer and prepare for the relationship building through the reviewing of the [Volunteer Toolkit](#). In preparation for your refugee family—and throughout the entire Friendship Volunteer experience, consider reading *When Helping Hurts, Small Group Experience* by Corbett & Fikkert or *Seeking Refuge* by Bauman, Soerens, Smeir.

LEARNING ABOUT THE REFUGEE FAMILY’S HOME AND CULTURE

Once you know the ethnicity and religion of your partnered refugee family or individual, you can conduct research in order to better understand their home culture—as well as the conflict they may have fled. The [Cultural Orientation Resource Center](#) offers great tools to begin learning.

AVOID ASSUMPTIONS

With only a small amount of biographical information on the refugees, it is important that Friendship Volunteers avoid making assumptions about the family they will be welcoming. Refrain from speculations like, ‘Are they educated or uneducated? Outgoing or reserved? Will they be appreciative or proud? Open or shut off?’

Refugees are as unique and diverse as all of us. As a Friendship Volunteer, it’s important to be ready to love and support whoever steps off the airplane as you fulfill the role you play in the refugee family’s life.

EVANGELISM VS. PROSYLETISM

World Relief is an evangelical organization. We believe in evangelism (an open invitation to a personal relationship with Jesus) but we reject proselytism (a coercive effort to convert someone). Evangelism does not pressure; it should never qualify service, acceptance, or compassion based on anyone’s response to faith. Please remember this as you serve your refugee family.

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER VISITS

Visit 1: Introductions



A World Relief representative will attend the first meeting between you and your refugee partner. The following is a suggested outline for your first meeting, which will probably last around 1/2 to 1 hour. You may choose to use the suggestions from this page for your first visit after your initial introduction with a World Relief representative.

1. Just prior to your meeting, review any information you may have about your refugee friend or their cultural information, this information can be found on the volunteer toolkit.
2. At the beginning of your meeting, introduce yourself and get to know each other by asking questions or discussing some information about yourself or your family and that of your refugee partner. Be sure to ask your refugee partner to pronounce his/her name for you and practice repeating it several times until you can say it correctly. *Remember that awkward moments and silence are a normal part of the first meeting. As time goes on, those periods of silence will decrease!*

Helpful Hint: *Since conversation can be slow in the beginning, check out “Conversation Starters” for a few sample open-ended questions you might use to get the discussion moving. Bring along pictures of your family members. You can also bring an atlas or map so your refugee partner can show you his/her homeland. You may wish to show the country from which you or your ancestors came to America. This would demonstrate that you, too, have roots in another place.*

3. During your meeting, suggest ideas for activities that you and your refugee partner might do together:
“Would you like to meet with me to practice your English?”
“Would you be interested in...?”
“Have you ever been to the...?”
“Would you like to see...?”

Icebreaker Questions

Simple conversation tends to be a challenge when trying to communicate with someone whose first language is not English. However, after spending some time with your family, you start to learn words from each other and develop a good system of communication. We know it can be hard at first so we came up with a list of conversation starters for you to use when first getting to know your family.

Conversation Starters

ASK

- Basic Info: names, ages, grades
- How long have you been in America?
 - (*If initial meeting was not upon arrival)
- What was it like when you first came to America?
 - (*Remember, some families have only been here for a few days).
- Do you like America, school, jobs, etc.
- What is different about your home country?
- What do you like to do for fun?
 - (*Remember that many have just come from very difficult circumstances and may not have had the 'luxury' of entertainment).
- What do you miss about your home country? Do you want to go back some day?
- Can you teach me some words in your language? (Refugees love this!)
- What is your job? What did you do in your home country?
- What kind of food do you like? Do you like American food, like pizza and hotdogs?
- How can people help refugees in America?
- Why did you have to leave your country?

**Don't push too much or get too specific. The details may be too painful to talk about.*

KIDS

- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- What is your favorite subject in school?

**Again, remember that some may have never had a chance to hope and dream like we do here. Now's the time to give them a chance to do just this! Dream with them!*

YOURSELF

- Your interests, what you do for a living, about your family, where you live, etc.
- Share your favorite activities and things you would like to show them.

Visit 2: Household, Cleaning, Safety

With all of the different types of products to choose from found on the cleaning supplies aisle at the grocery store, your refugee friend will need help picking the right one and knowing how to use it. It is worthwhile and beneficial to teach the new families how to clean their apartments correctly and thoroughly.



The following cleaning products are provided on the day of arrival:

- Laundry Detergent
- All-Purpose Cleaner
- Cleaning Sponges
- Dish Soap
- Trash Bags
- Paper Towels
- Mop/Bucket
- Broom/Dustpan

Most of the refugees have never seen any of these products before and can be rather confused on how they work or why they are necessary. However, some have, so always ask if they are familiar.

CLEANING

1. Show them how and where to use each one.
2. Stress the importance of cleaning every time you visit by asking if the apartment has been cleaned recently. Explaining that the landlord is very pleased with a clean tenant and that it avoids pests entering the house.
3. Help them shop for more supplies when needed.

SAFE PRACTICES

Safety outdoors includes:

- Watching for cars as the children play outside in the parking lot
- Caring for scrapes or cuts
- Drinking plenty of water while playing outside in heat
- Teach them to try and stay in lit areas and travel in pairs.
- Skincare and using sunscreen.

Safety indoors includes:

- Being mindful of children around hot stoves or ovens
- Making sure the smoke detector is working
- Not opening the door for people they don't know

Teach about calling 911 for real emergencies and explain that police officers and security guards can be trusted. Many of our refugee populations come from places where people in authority abuse their power and misuse people. They need to know that law enforcement can be trusted.

Suggested Activities

Don't worry about what to do during your meetings with your refugee family or friend. The options are endless! Even if your refugee partner speaks very little English, there are activities you can enjoy together. Shared activities provide a focus and structure for your time together. They can also provide opportunities to learn words or phrases in English and your refugee partner's native language. Below are a few ideas to get you started:

Community Orientation

- Take a ride together on [public transportation](#). Help newcomers locate the nearest bus stop and travel to important locations via public transport (grocery store, hospital, public assistance office, library, etc.)
- Go [grocery shopping](#) at an American grocery store and/or an ethnic store. Look at pricing, pounds, sizes, products, and coupons. Teach newcomers how to shop on a budget.
- Take a tour of a local government office, i.e. post office, fire station, or police station (usually offered for free if arranged in advance).
- Visit an [ethnic restaurant](#) of which the food is familiar for the newcomer.
- Enjoy parks, holiday festivities, Church, and sporting events with your refugee partners.
- Give your refugee partners a map of the city, state, country, and/or world so they can have a perspective on where they are now in relation to their home country. (City maps are free at the visitor's bureau)
- Some refugees may enjoy hearing the history of the area and city they are living in now.

Cultural Adaptation

- Discuss public safety and how to call 911 – when to call, when not to call, what to say.
- Review the home for maintenance problems. Practice with the newcomer explaining them to the landlord.
- Teach newcomers simple English phrases and words important to everyday life. Learn the same phrases in their language.
- Review a map of the community. Ride the bus or drive around town to learn street names.
- Visit the local post office and show them how to buy stamps and mail a letter.
- Visit the local library, show them how to use the Internet, apply for a library card, and check out books.
- Practice making and receiving telephone calls. Practice polite greetings and phone etiquette.
- Discuss money. Practice making change, tipping, etc.
- Practice telling time with a clock. Explain the importance of being on time in this culture.
- Take a trip to the laundromat. Discuss temperatures, color separation, amount of detergent, coin machines, etc.
- Go to a second-hand store or garage sale together and buy something for yourself. Some newcomers may think there is a stigma to buying used items. If you buy some for yourself that will help them see that it is okay.

Friendship Building Activities

- Take them to the park
- Invite them to a cultural event (family birthday party, wedding, cultural celebration)
- Ask them to teach you how to prepare a dish from their culture or teach you some other skill they have.
- Find out what they like to do and do it with them! (Bike riding, hiking, sewing, dancing, etc.)
- Find out about international events in the area (International Festival, etc.)

Friendship Activities Around the Triad

High Point

All a Flutter Butterfly Farm	7850 Clinard Farms Rd, High Point, NC 27265 336.454.5651
High Point Museum	1859 E Lexington Ave, High Point, NC 27262 336.885.1859
High Point Theatre	220 E. Commerce Ave, High Point, NC 27262 336.887.3001
Oak Hollow Park	3400 N. Centennial St, High Point, NC 27265 336.883.3494
Piedmont Environmental Center	1220 Penny Rd, High Point, NC 27265 336.883.8531

Greensboro

Airbound Trampoline Park	4215 High Point Rd, Greensboro, NC 27407 336.907.8682
Arboretum	401 Ashland Dr, Greensboro, NC 27403 336.373.4334
ArtQuest	200 N Davie St, Greensboro, NC 27401 336.333.7460
Bog Garden	1105 Hobbs Rd, Greensboro, NC 27410 336.373.4844
Children's Museum	220 North Church St, Greensboro NC 27401 336.574.2898
Country Park	3902 Nathanael Greene Dr, Greensboro, NC 27455 336.430.6562
Celebration Station	4315 Big Tree Way, Greensboro, NC 27409 336.316.0606
Ice Skating Ice House	6119 Landmark Center Blvd, Greensboro, NC 27407 336.852.1515
Natural Science Center	4301 Lawndale Dr, Greensboro, NC 27455 336.288.3769
Tanger Family Bicentennial Garden	1105 Hobbs Rd, Greensboro, NC 27408 336.373.2199

REMEMBER TO CHECK OUT THE VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT AT:

<http://worldrelieftriad.org/toolkit>

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

We are committed to assisting refugees and local Friendship Volunteers in order to ensure the best possible resettlement experience for those refugees admitted to the United States. The commitment to become a Friendship Volunteer is a moral obligation to walk alongside newly arrived refugees as they journey towards becoming self-sufficient, thriving members of their new community. This form should be completed by the Friendship Volunteer representative and a World Relief staff member.

WORLD RELIEF FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT FORM

We are committed to assisting refugees and Friendship Volunteers to assure the best possible resettlement experience for refugees admitted to the United States. The commitment to become a FP is a moral obligation to walk alongside newly arrived refugees as they journey towards becoming self-sufficient, thriving members of their new community. This form should be completed by the FP representative and a World Relief staff member.

Friendship Volunteer Info	
Name of main FP	
Address	
Phone 1	
Phone 2	
E-mail	

Friendship Volunteer Friends/Family Members			
Name	Email Address	Relationship	Ages

Refugee BIO			
Primary Applicant		Case Number	
Names/Descriptions			
Nationality			
Religion			
Language(s)			
Medical Needs			
Date of Arrival			
Location of Home			

World Relief Contacts		
Case Coordinator	Employment Specialist	Volunteer Coordination Specialist

Date of First World Relief / Friendship Volunteer Check in Meeting	
First Meeting (In person)	
Two Month Follow-Up (Call)	
Six Month Meeting (In person)	

Check mark who will provide each of the following services.

Task Category	Task	Deadline (from date of arrival)	World Relief	FP
Housing	Assist with home setup	Before Arrival		
	Provide home and lawn care orientations (maintenance, safety hazards, etc.)	1 st Month		
	Help address repair needs (check w/ World Relief before contacting landlord)	Ongoing		
Arrival	Stock home with groceries prior to refugee(s) arrival	Day of arrival		
	Meet family upon arrival at airport	Day of arrival		
	Provide transportation from airport to home upon arrival	Day of arrival		
General	Assure weather appropriate clothing for each family member	1 st week		
	Teach and assist with grocery shopping	1 st week		
	Assist in navigating cultural customs	Ongoing		
Transportation	Assist in understanding and accessing public transportation options (bus)	1 st Month		
Education	Assist with homework, as necessary	Ongoing		
	Assist with English tutoring, if necessary	Ongoing		
Healthcare	Assist in securing primary care and referral health care providers	1 st Month		
	Assist with securing dentist and dental care	3 rd Month		
	Assist with medical needs and education on an on-going basis	Ongoing		
Finance	Assist in setting up bank account	3 rd Month		
	Teach paying bills such as rent and utilities	Ongoing		
	Coach family on budgeting, managing resources, and building credit history	Ongoing		

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

I hereby commit to assist this refugee family with the services indicated on the task list above. I understand that this is a moral commitment only and that World Relief is ultimately responsible for the provision of these services. I will agree to keep World Relief apprised of all changes relating to this case, and to maintain lines of open and regular communication with World Relief throughout the initial resettlement period. As the Friendship Volunteer, I commit to do my due diligence in seeing that myself or/and my Friendship Volunteer group complete the World Relief volunteer process prior to volunteering, complete volunteer logs on a monthly basis (at least), and ensure completion of the above tasks to which the Friendship Volunteer as committed.

Friendship Volunteer

Signature

Date

World Relief Representative

Signature

Date