

Refugee resettlement in New Zealand



Volunteer info sheet



Overview

New Zealand currently welcomes 750 refugees each year under its quota. Over the next two and a half years, an additional 600 places will be made for Syrian refugees. When former refugees arrive in New Zealand, they spend six weeks at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre. The Centre is run by Immigration New Zealand and offers former refugees an introduction to life here. After this, they are resettled in one of six locations around the country: Auckland, Waikato, Manawatu, Wellington, Nelson and Dunedin.

At this point, New Zealand Red Cross becomes the primary provider of refugee community resettlement programmes. We offer settlement support to former refugees during the first 12 months of their resettlement journey. We also provide employment support for former refugees which is available for several years after arrival.

Refugee Support Volunteers

Refugee support volunteers are essential to the work that we do. Moving to a new country is hard for anyone but for people arriving as refugees it poses an even greater challenge. Many former refugees arrive with few belongings and will be resettling without the support of friends and family. In addition to this, many aspects of 'kiwi' life may be completely new for former refugees and their families. Volunteers are invaluable because they provide support for day-to-day tasks which may pose challenges for new arrivals. In addition to this, they may be the first friends a family makes on arrival. Volunteers play a key role in being part of their new support network. We often hear of volunteers who have become 'like family' to the family they are supporting to resettle.

Who can be a volunteer?

Anyone with a passion for helping people and an interest in welcoming new Kiwis can be a Red Cross Refugee Support Volunteer. No previous experience in this area is required, as our comprehensive training equips you with the skills you will need.

Training

Refugee Support Volunteers receive comprehensive training from NZRC staff, along with mentoring and support during their time as a volunteer. Training courses are held throughout the year and cover a range of topics including;

- An introduction to the refugee experience
- The role of the refugee support volunteer
- Teams and teamwork
- Refugee health, well-being and education
- Key support services
- Culture

The training provides volunteers with the information they need to confidently and successfully support their family.

Placement / role / tasks / time commitment

Volunteers work in teams to support their family or individual for up to 6 months. Teams are decided on the availability of volunteers, and we try to match those with complementary skills. Volunteers welcome former refugees to New Zealand, provide practical, hands-on support, and often foster strong friendships with members of the family or individual they support, as well as with others in their volunteer team.

Volunteer tasks may include:

- Setting up the household prior to family's/individual's arrival
- Helping families enrol their children in school
- Helping the family or individual enrol at the doctor
- Connecting families and individuals to their community
- Other similar responsibilities

Volunteers generally find the first 2-4 weeks of the placement are the busiest, with initial appointments and settling-in tasks. After the first 6 weeks, less time is required as the family is more settled. By this stage volunteers typically spend time with their family or individual on a weekly basis.



Dates and times of training course:

Free training courses are offered every two months. The next course will **start on Tuesday 30th October 2018**.

Session 1: "The Refugee Experience"
Tuesday 30 October either 9.30am-12.30pm OR 6-9pm

Session 2: "The RSV-role and Support Services"
Tuesday 6 Nov either 9.30am-12.30pm OR 6-9pm

Session 3: "Health and Wellbeing"
Tuesday 13 Nov either 9.30am-12.30pm OR 6-9pm

Session 4: "Education and Employment"
Tuesday 20 Nov either 9.30am-12.30pm OR 6-9pm

Session 5: "Culture"
Tuesday 27 Nov either 9.30am-12.30pm OR 6-9pm

Team Planning Night:
Tuesday 4 December 6-8:30pm

You need to attend all five training sessions and the Planning Night held at the Red Cross on 422 Te Rapa Road in Hamilton.

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