

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

The Basics: Role of the Local Resettlement Agency

Introduction for the Trainer

Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about the basic services provided by the resettlement agency and about the need to work with resettlement agency staff. Participants will also learn that the assistance from the resettlement agency is limited.

Main Messages

Resettlement staff will be refugees' main guides to their new communities and will ensure that they are given basic services when they first arrive. It is important that refugees work with agency staff by listening to them and sharing their questions and concerns. Resettlement staff will provide reliable and accurate information. Refugees should understand that to succeed in the United States, they will need to play an active role in their own resettlement, especially since assistance from others is limited.



20 minutes

Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Identify their resettlement agency as the first point of contact for accessing services
- ▶ Describe basic services provided by their resettlement agency
- ▶ Define the partnership between the resettlement agency and the refugee

Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *case worker/manager*
- ▶ *resettlement agency*
- ▶ *Social Security number*
- ▶ *Who is your case worker/manager?*

Materials

- Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements (included)

Note to Trainer

This session is best conducted in an empty training space or with furniture pushed to the side, so that there is space in the middle of the room for participants to stand in a circle. If this is not possible, try to push furniture toward the middle of the training space, or have participants stand around outside the furniture, along the edge of the training space.

Session Preparation

Review the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements. Add or edit statements to ensure that all information is accurate and reflects the role of the resettlement agency in your area.

Understand the way in which clients are supposed to contact their case worker/manager, according to the resettlement agency policies. Prepare to share this information with participants.

Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

You will need to work in partnership with your resettlement agency. The services you receive will be for a limited time. During this session, we will talk about the basic things you need to know about the role of the resettlement agency.

Introductory Exercise

Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the question. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the question whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.

Activity

Ask participants to stand in a circle. The trainer should stand in the circle with the participants. Tell participants that you will read a statement. If participants agree with the statement or think it is correct, they take one step into the circle. If participants disagree with the statement or think it is incorrect, they continue standing where they are.

Read the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements one by one. Give participants time to decide if each statement is correct or incorrect, or if participants agree or disagree with the statement. Once participants have made their decision, ask them to talk about why they responded the way they did. Let participants know whether the statement is correct or incorrect. Then, before reading the next statement, ask participants who stepped into the middle of the circle to step back so all participants are back in the circle.

When all of the statements have been read, ask participants to turn to a partner and tell that person how to contact her/his case worker/manager.

Tell participants that when they first arrive in the United States, their case worker/manager will be the one to get in touch with them. After a period of time, refugees will need to know when and how to make contact with the agency. Explain the basic process that refugees should follow when contacting agency staff, based on what you found out about the resettlement agency's policy during the session preparation.

Then debrief the session using the questions below.

Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What are some of the basic services that your resettlement agency should provide?
- ▶ For how long will these services be provided to you?
- ▶ What is a partnership?
- ▶ Why do you think establishing a partnership with your resettlement agency is important?
- ▶ When you need to access basic services, who should you contact for assistance?
- ▶ When is it appropriate to contact your case worker/manager? How should you make contact?

Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with one to three participants, sit together in a group. Read the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements to participants one by one. Participants can be asked to raise their hands or move an object (such as a pen, pebble, or piece of paper) forward to demonstrate their agreement with the statement.

Variations and Considerations

Prepare a list with pictures of agency staff. When introducing the term *case worker/manager* during the introductory exercise, ask participants to identify and name their assigned case worker/manager.

If needed, use translated versions of the Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements.

Role of the Local Resettlement Agency Statements

Your resettlement agency will help you access important public services, such as medical assistance and English language classes.

Note to trainer: Stress that participants should discuss accessing public assistance with their resettlement agency.

Your resettlement agency is always available to help you, so you do not need to work with the agency.

Note to trainer: Discuss the importance of establishing a partnership with the resettlement agency.

You will receive basic services from your resettlement agency, such as scheduling your first medical appointment and registering your children at school.

Note to trainer: Discuss some of the other services the resettlement agency offers.

Your resettlement agency will be able to help you for as long as you need the help.

Note to trainer: Stress that services are for a limited period of time.

Whenever you need your case worker/manager, s/he is available, so you can call her/him anytime.

Note to trainer: Define appropriate hours to call case workers/managers. Remind participants that they can leave a message, either in English or a language they are more comfortable in.