

U.S. REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM OVERSEAS CULTURAL ORIENTATION OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS

TRAVEL

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

Refugees need to prepare to travel from location of origin to final destination

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants can identify the steps they will go through when traveling to their final destination in the U.S.
- Participants are aware of restrictions in terms of baggage items, size, weight and number of luggage pieces as well as the consequences of violating these restrictions
- Participants can demonstrate a basic knowledge of airline etiquette and travel logistics (toilet, meals, boarding, etc.) as well as personal and family safety throughout the travel process
- Participants can say that they will be picked up at the final destination airport by local resettlement agency staff, volunteers, or their U.S. tie

Refugees are responsible for the documents in their IOM bag

- Participants understand the necessity of traveling with their IOM bag and not placing it in checked luggage.
- Participants can acknowledge that the documents in the IOM bag are important and that they are responsible for keeping those items safe

Refugees may have an escort if they are seriously ill or have mobility problems

- Participants can state that the escort is there to guide them in their travel to the United States

Refugees have responsibilities related to the promissory note

- Participants can describe what a promissory note is
- Participants acknowledge responsibility for repayment of their travel loan

ROLE OF LOCAL RESETTLEMENT AGENCY

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

The local resettlement agency is not a government agency

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants can articulate the difference between the local resettlement agency and the government

The local resettlement agency provides assistance to refugees through the provision of items and/or money to meet initial needs, a limited scope of services, and advocacy on refugees' behalf to receive services for which they are eligible

- Participants can identify four types of items that will be provided soon after arrival: initial housing, basic furnishings, seasonal clothing as necessary, food or food allowance
- Participants can state that they may receive money and/or money may be spent on their behalf
- Participants can identify basic services provided by the local resettlement agency

ROLE OF LOCAL RESETTLEMENT AGENCY (CONTINUED)

There are a number of organizations that will work alongside local resettlement agencies to assist in resettlement

- Participants can identify the local resettlement agency as the first point of contact for accessing services
- Participants can articulate that the local resettlement agency may assist refugees with access to other agencies or organizations for services

Assistance provided by the local resettlement agency and by public assistance is limited and benefits vary across locations and cases

- Participants can articulate that the services they receive will be for a limited time
- Participants can state that the services they receive may not be the same as what other refugees will receive
- Participants can verbalize that they will receive assistance but non-urgent issues may not be addressed immediately

The quality and quantity of items provided will vary

- Participants can state that the items they receive might not be new or what they would choose for themselves
- Participants can state that the items or money they receive may not be the same as what other refugees will receive
- Participants can identify factors related to the quality and quantity of items they might receive, including the availability of resources, the need of the family, budgets

Refugees are responsible for their own successful resettlement in partnership with the local resettlement agency

- Participants can articulate that they are ultimately responsible for their success
- Participants can affirm that refugees and the local resettlement agency work in partnership
- Participants can name the local resettlement agency case manager as a source of reliable and accurate information

HOUSING

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

There are a variety of types of housing arrangements (including shared housing, apartment, house, etc.)

- Participants can describe different types of housing

Decent, safe, and sanitary housing will be provided by the local resettlement agency or, in some cases, by the U.S. tie

- Participants can identify characteristics of housing they may expect

Understanding basic safety considerations and use of appliances/facilities will facilitate safety in the home

- Participants can relay that they should keep their doors locked at all times and not allow strangers into the home.
- Participants can describe safe and appropriate use of basic appliances and bathroom facilities
- Participants can share who to call in case of an emergency

Housing comes with rights, responsibilities, restrictions and regulations

- Participants can acknowledge that they will have to sign a lease after arrival
- Participants can list rights and responsibilities of refugees regarding housing and utilities
- Participants can list behaviors that may lead to eviction

HEALTH

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

Refugees should bring an initial supply of medications and relevant prescriptions

Initial health screenings and immunizations may take place within 30 days of arrival

Extensive health care may not be available in the initial weeks of resettlement

The U.S. has no universal health-care system but refugee medical assistance differs state by state and in many cases is available for eight months

U.S. standards for basic hygiene may differ from those of the home country

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

There are key cultural differences between the refugee's culture and culture(s) in the U.S., including social norms and laws

Resettlement may have an impact on family roles and dynamics

There are numerous phases of cultural adjustment

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants can express the need to bring an initial supply of medications and copies of prescriptions
- Participants are aware that some traditional medicines could be considered unsafe or even illegal by U.S. standards

- Participants can acknowledge that a basic health screening and immunizations will be scheduled for after their arrival
- Participants can state that it is their responsibility to attend that health screening and any follow up appointments

- Participants can indicate they understand that only emergencies can be dealt with on arrival
- Participants can distinguish between urgent and routine health care and identify where to go for each

- Participants can acknowledge that health care in the United States is very expensive and that the government will only pay for this care for up to the first eight months. After that, it is the individual's responsibility to obtain insurance or pay for services
- Participants recognize that after eight months, refugees not eligible for Medicaid and not receiving health insurance as a benefit of their jobs, will be responsible to pay for their own health care
- Long-term health insurance is generally tied to employment

- Participants can demonstrate how norms for basic hygiene are similar to or different from norms in their home country
- Participants can identify potential consequences of not adopting U.S. norms for hygiene

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants can identify U.S. laws and norms that may be unfamiliar or challenging and these laws and norms may differ by region or state in the U.S.

- Participants can identify situations in which current roles and family dynamics may be challenged upon resettlement in the U.S.

- Participants can indicate that cultural adjustment is a multi-step, long-term process

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT (CONTINUED)

There are some basic coping mechanisms to deal with the stressors of adjustment

- Participants can list possible coping mechanisms for themselves and their families
- Participants can articulate that honoring and preserving their home culture can help facilitate successful adjustment to life in the U.S.
- Participants can identify the types of religious and/or cultural resources that may exist in the communities where they settle
- Participants can state that learning English will facilitate their adjustment to life in the U.S.

There are ways to seek assistance from others in your community

- Participants can identify possible sources of assistance when facing adjustment challenges

Expectations regarding parenting practices may differ in the U.S. from what they are used to

- Participants can identify parenting practices that are illegal or unacceptable in the U.S.
- Participants can identify parenting practices that may be unfamiliar or challenging

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

The United States is governed by rule of law.

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants can acknowledge their responsibility to know and obey the laws of the U.S.
- Participants can name behaviors and practices that are illegal in the U.S. and can identify at least one possible consequence to disobeying the laws
- Participants can acknowledge that they are responsible for their personal safety and the safety of their families
- Participants can identify ways in which their parenting, and other cultural practices may conflict with U.S. laws

There are rights and responsibilities related to refugee status and status adjustment

- Participants acknowledge that they are required to apply for permanent residency as soon as they become eligible, and they may eventually apply to become a U.S. citizen
- Participants can name basic rights and responsibilities of refugees in the U.S.

There are implications of the choices that refugees make

- Participants can consider the implications of moving away from their initial resettlement site
- Participants can acknowledge that their financial obligations in the U.S. (e.g., rent, travel loan) will affect their ability to remit money to relatives back home

EMPLOYMENT

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

Early employment is essential to survival in the U.S., and it must be the primary focus for all employable adults (men and women)

The refugee plays a central role in finding/obtaining employment in the U.S.

A person's initial job might not be in their chosen profession

There are general characteristics of U.S. professional and work culture to which refugees must adapt in order to be successful in finding and maintaining employment

Employees have rights as well as responsibilities in the workplace

A crucial way of finding better paying jobs is learning how to speak in English

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants can list positive consequences of early employment and negative consequences of delayed employment or lack of employment
- Participants can articulate that turning down any job could be used as a reason to deny benefits
- Participants can identify good interview skills such as firm handshake, eye contact, appropriate body language and also negative actions such as not answering questions well, stressing the need for a lot of money, disinterested expression.

- Participants can articulate that they will receive assistance in accessing employment services and developing job skills
- Participants (if employable adults) can identify themselves as responsible for obtaining employment in the U.S.

- Participants can list positive consequences of accepting employment outside their chosen profession
- Participants can identify types of jobs they may hold in the U.S. during the initial resettlement period

- Participants can identify appropriate and desirable workplace behavior
- Participants can list aspects of U.S. professional and work culture that may differ from their homeland

- Participants can acknowledge that they have the right to be paid for their work and to work in an environment free from discrimination and harassment
- Participants can list rights and responsibilities in the workplace

- Participants can identify English language acquisition as a key to a better job

EDUCATION

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

For both adults and children, learning English is critical to successful adjustment in the U.S.

Schooling is compulsory until at least the age of 16 for both boys and girls and is free in public schools

LEARNING INDICATORS

- Participants will be able to list reasons why learning English is important for successful adjustment in the U.S.
- Participants can acknowledge that learning English is their responsibility and can list ways in which they might do this

- Participants can identify basic characteristics of schooling in the U.S.

EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

The value for adults and teenagers to continue formal education should be weighed against the need to work

- Participants can identify education as a lifelong experience
- Participants will be able to identify that education is a goal to be achieved but should be weighed against other factors such as employment

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