



# H.O.M.E. Program

## Housing Outreach Mentorship Education

Moving to a new country can be an overwhelming and isolating experience for anyone. Refugees, who are forced flee their homes due to conflict and persecution, face particularly acute cultural, emotional, and financial challenges during the resettlement process. The IRC in New Jersey welcomes hundreds of refugees each year, with the support of the local community crucial to their success.



The H.O.M.E. program pairs community and/or faith-based groups directly with refugee families resettled by the International Rescue Committee in New Jersey. In collaboration with IRC, HOME Teams assist to locate and prepare housing, provide targeted financial assistance and offer ongoing mentorship during a family's first six to twelve months in the U.S.

### **HOME Welcome**

Upon arrival, refugees can feel disoriented and alone. HOME Teams help welcome them to the New Jersey in two ways: apartment set-ups and airport pick-ups. Teams will purchase or donate in-kind furniture, household items, and groceries and then together help IRC staff set-up the apartment. A small group of HOME Team representatives may also accompany the caseworker to the airport to welcome the family to the United States.

### **HOME Subsidy**

Refugees are provided with funding to cover their first 30 days in the United States and IRC connects families to ongoing financial assistance programs once that funding is exhausted. HOME teams contribute \$500, or more if desired, to IRC's emergency fund. This fund supports the most vulnerable individuals and families in meeting basic needs. HOME teams may also raise additional funds to provide direct financial support to their family, in coordination with IRC staff.

### **HOME Mentorship**

While the IRC provides cultural orientation classes and community navigation services, most refugees benefit from additional one-on-one support with navigating U.S. systems and understanding the culture. For at least two hours per week, HOME Teams act as guides and allies. Example activities include visiting the local library, going grocery shopping, and riding the bus.



### Support for HOME Teams

The IRC in New Jersey is committed to ensuring HOME teams have the support and guidance needed to make this experience positive and impactful. Because ongoing communication and collaboration with IRC staff is key, HOME teams receive:

**Initial Orientation:** Upon enrollment in the program, HOME Teams participate in an orientation that covers the basics of refugee resettlement, cultural communication, and expectations of the program. Monthly introductory webinars are available to new HOME Team members.

**Continual One-on-One Support:** Throughout the mentorship period, an IRC liaison is available to troubleshoot issues, provide guidance, and provide updates.

**Monthly HOME Team Meetings:** Once a month, all current HOME Teams come together to share successes, address challenges, and learn about a specific IRC program. Meeting includes an “ask-me-anything” session with IRC’s casework supervisor and/or resettlement director.



### Raising the HOME Subsidy

Your \$500 HOME Team subsidy will assist the most vulnerable families served by IRC. Our emergency fund supports critical mental health services, transportation, rental and utility assistance when otherwise unavailable, and a variety of other urgent needs. Consider using [Crowdrise](#) to raise your HOME subsidy. Campaign language includes “**Please support emergency needs for refugees in NJ.**”

### IRC in New Jersey

The IRC was founded in New Jersey in 1984. Since that time, the IRC in New Jersey has expanded to respond to each new refugee crisis as it has arisen, providing resettlement opportunities to more than 8000 refugees from more than 20 countries. The regional office in Elizabeth provides critical programs and services to refugees and humanitarian entrants that help them rebuild their lives and become thriving community members. None of this would be possible without strong community support, demonstrated by IRC New York/New Jersey’s more than 507 volunteers and 274 individual donations in FY 2016.

### For More Information:

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Interested in forming a HOME Team? Please complete [this survey](#).