STEP 1 – Determine the level of interest in the sponsorship

Assess the level of interest in your parish or community. Try to establish who will be in your core group of volunteers who can offer more time, and who can offer help, but only as a support to the core group.

Try to get an idea of the experience the group is looking for. Do they want a lot of involvement (ex. choosing a family with several young children), or a lower amount of involvement (ex. young single male)?

Some key responsibilities to keep in mind! Sponsoring groups agree to provide the refugees with care, lodging, settlement assistance and support for the duration of the sponsorship period. Normally, this is 12 months starting from the refugee’s arrival in Canada or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first.

When a refugee is sponsored to come to Canada they do not have access to a welfare payment or an EI payment for the first year they are in Canada. They arrive as permanent residents. This means that they are able to work right away, and have access to other financial subsidies (ex. child tax credits, loans and bursaries, etc.). They are also able to access services offered by newcomer settlement organizations as well as French courses (Francisation) offered for free by the Québec government.

Your group would support the sponsored refugees by:

• providing the cost of food, rent and household utilities and other day-to-day living expenses;
• providing clothing, furniture and other household goods;
• locating interpreters;
• selecting a family physician and dentist;
• assisting with applying for provincial health-care coverage;
• enrolling children in school and adults in language training;
• introducing newcomers to people with similar personal interests;
• providing orientation with regard to banking services, transportation, etc.;
• helping in the search for employment

Please note: sponsored refugees receive the same Assurance maladie as any other Québec resident, which means they are not covered for expenses from dental work (for those over 12 years), eye glasses or certain types of medication.
STEP 2 – Begin fundraising!

Once your group has decided what refugee profile you are interested in (ex. what country of origin and family size), you can begin a fundraising plan. To find a family you can decide to reach out to people in the community who may have contacts overseas, or approach an organization in Montréal that could refer a family. Some refugees will already have family members living in Montréal. Whether or not you work in family members already here may affect your budget.

How much financial support will be required? Immigration Québec has created a table of suggested amounts that you would need for different family situations from one person up to a family.

### Suggested budget by family size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of persons aged 18 or more</th>
<th>Number of persons under 18 years of age</th>
<th>Amount recommended by Immigration Québec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>C$16,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C$22,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>C$25,068</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Estimate an additional C$2,865 for each extra person under 18 years of age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of persons aged 18 or more</th>
<th>Number of persons under 18 years of age</th>
<th>Amount recommended by Immigration Québec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>C$24,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C$27,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>C$29,303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimate an additional C$2,151 for each extra person under 18 years of age and by C$7,704 for each extra person aged 18 or more.

**Please note:** If you are working in collaboration with a family member already in Montréal, they may be willing to provide a portion of the money needed. In addition, if group members donate goods or time the amount required might be lower.

In general it is a good idea to raise a little extra than the recommended amount as there are always unforeseen expenses such as medication, dental care, and other situations where you will be very happy to be able to help out your family.

It is not necessary to have all of the money fundraised by the time you prepare and submit the application. However, it is important to have a plan of how you will fundraise the remaining amount. At this time you can also decide how you will be collecting and keeping aside donations. Your church or group can consider have a special account at the bank for the donations so it is clear.
STEP 3 - Prepare the application and submit it

Before the refugee can come to Canada, you must submit an application to the government. This application will have two parts

- Part 1: Application to show that your church can be a sponsor
- Part 2: Application to show that the refugee qualifies under the government program

Part 1: Application to show that your church can be a sponsor
To find out the exact specifications your church should contact the Ministère de l’Immigration, de la Diversité et de l’Inclusion (MIDI). This will likely include financial statements from the church and might include a settlement plan for when the refugees arrive. Please contact 514 864 9191 for more details.

Part 2: Application to show that the refugee qualifies under the government program
This is the application which must be completed with the refugee’s information. It is an application for Permanent Residence which includes three federal immigration forms; IMM 0008 – Generic application, IMM 0008 – Schedule 2, and IMM 5669 – Schedule A. These immigration forms can be completed in either French or English, preferably with the help of a qualified professional (ARM / lawyer / immigration consultant)

In this application refugees must show that they are eligible for the program by showing that they are either a Convention refugee or a person from the Country of Asylum Class.

- a Convention Refugee Abroad – have a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion / be outside of their country of origin / have no durable solution
- a person in the Country of Asylum Class – have been seriously and personally affected by civil war or armed conflict / be outside of their country of origin / have no durable solution

Once the application is submitted to the government it is sent abroad to the visa office which manages the region the refugee is currently living in. Each visa office has a different wait time. These wait times vary from 10 to 60 months. This is the delay before the refugee is called for an interview. At the end of the interview they are normally informed if they are accepted or rejected.

Refugees from Syria : Most arrive between 8 and 12 months after the application has been sent, some applications can take longer (ex. 24 months)

After a positive interview decision by the Visa Officer, the Canadian authorities will do the following tests:

- Medical screening (only for public health risks)
- Security screening (involvement in armed groups or war crimes)
- Criminality screening (convictions for serious offences)
STEP 4 – Establish a plan for when the family arrives

Developing your own resettlement plan will contribute tremendously to your efforts to assist the sponsored persons to resettle successfully and to ensuring that their needs are met during the sponsorship period. Be sure that the end result is something that is appropriate for your particular sponsorship.

Some templates exist already to get you started.

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment, available online at: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/kits/forms/IMM5373AE.pdf (although this form is intended for a group-of-five sponsorship, it’s budget template is useful)
- Refugee Sponsorship Training Program Guide for Sponsoring Groups available online at: http://www.rstp.ca/en/resources/handbook-for-sponsoring-groups/ (some chapters are not applicable for Québec, but the chapter 7 and 8 can be very useful)

Work out a monthly budget plan and stick to it! This will probably be the hardest thing for you to do. Everyone wants to be generous and help out. As much as it is tempting to give them more than the baseline amount (usually equivalent to social aid), try to stay as close as possible to this amount. You are not doing them a favor by supporting them beyond their means. Plan a budget that they can sustain after you are no longer financially responsible for them.

We suggest having a core group where there is a point person for each of the following categories: budgeting and finances, transportation, health care, groceries and shopping, education, and vocational needs. Other volunteers can offer support in these areas, but should report back to the point person.

You will need to take the following into consideration:

Before arrival:
- Determine what government services the sponsored person(s) will need or that will be useful to them
- Start looking for lodging, without signing a lease until the people concerned agree
- Collect necessary clothing, especially if they arrive in winter
- Optional if the family has experienced a lot of trauma– Arrange a training session with a representative from RIVO

Arrival:
- Try to be at the airport for the arrival, it is very reassuring
- Make sure the initial host family prepares a meal that is culturally appropriate
- Be flexible to the needs of the family. When they arrive they are probably in a fragile state and might make requests that seem strange to you, but are important for them (ex. sleeping with the lights on)
- Being a host has different implications across cultures, be sensitive to different expectations around hosting and sharing a living space
After arrival:

- Money: Upon arrival, you should provide cash to the sponsored person(s). You should help them open a bank account. You should review your budget during the first days following their arrival and review it with them periodically afterwards.

- Accommodation: You should settle accommodation without delay so the sponsored refugee will quickly feel at home and regain their autonomy. You should help them move in: signature of the lease, register for public services (telephone, hydro, gas), internet, purchase and functioning of appliances, and relations with neighbours.

- Orientation: You should help them to know their neighbourhood and to meet their basic needs – grocery store and dépanneur/convenience store, buying clothes, etc.

- Health care: During the first days, you should accompany the sponsored person(s) to the RAMQ to register for health cards.

- Education: You should help to find schools, daycare, summer day camps, and recreational activities, as appropriate. You should also explain expectations about education: obligation to go to school, school hours, etc.

- French: You should encourage the sponsored person(s) to learn French, if they don’t already. French courses *(Francisation)* offered for free by the Québec government.

*Please note:* This is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all activities required, all refugee cases are unique and the plan should be tailored to their situation.

Moving forward

Reflections and questions:
What kind of family composition is the group interested in?
- A single person, a couple, a couple with children?

What kind of help is the group willing to offer?
- A combination of material, financial and settlement help? Or just help with their settlement?

If working with a family member already in Montreal
- What role does the family member see for the group? Do they want lots of participation or only a little bit? Is the family member able to cover any of the expenses? How does this affect the budget?

Role of Action Réfugiés Montréal:
ARM’s mandate is to present sponsorship files for people in Montréal who have family members overseas who are refugees. We do this under our agreement with Immigration Québec. We are also able to facilitate refugee sponsorships for congregations. At this time we have a large volume of congregations interested and we are unsure of how much support we can offer to each one if several decide to move forward at the same time. We are always open to giving information and sharing best practices from past experiences. We are also open to assisting with the application preparation. We also might be able to match refugee families with congregations depending on the situation. With regards to settlement, ARM cannot offer any accompaniment but will check in with the volunteer committee and offer suggestions, or help in the case of a problem.
### Sample Budget for a Family of 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Month 1</th>
<th>Month 2</th>
<th>Month 3</th>
<th>Month 4</th>
<th>Month 5</th>
<th>Month 6</th>
<th>Month 7</th>
<th>Month 8</th>
<th>Month 9</th>
<th>Month 10</th>
<th>Month 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>$250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The budget may be higher depending on the family.

**Please note this is just a suggestion. Budgets should be modified to the individual case in question. The amount needed for**