



# Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program Policy and Procedure Manual

*Developed in collaboration with Indiana Youth Institute*



**EXODUS  
REFUGEE**  
*The life ahead.*

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**



## **Table of Contents**

<b>SECTION 1. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Program History .....	4
Mission Statement .....	4
Facts and Figures .....	4
Volunteer Staff Contacts .....	5
<b>SECTION 2. Volunteer Program Policies.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Volunteer Bill of Rights.....	6
Recruitment Policy .....	6
Inquiry Policy.....	6
Eligibility Policy.....	7
Screening Policy .....	8
Training Policy.....	9
Matching Policy .....	10
Match Support and Supervision Policy .....	10
Recognition Policy .....	11
Record-Keeping Policy .....	11
Confidentiality Policy .....	12
Transportation Policy .....	13
Mandatory Reporting Policy.....	13
Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Weapons Policy .....	14
Harassment-Free Environment Policy .....	15
Harassment Complaint Procedure.....	15
Equal Opportunity Policy.....	16
Religious Affiliations and Proselytizing .....	17
Conflict of Interest Policy .....	17
Unacceptable Behavior Policy .....	18
Discipline Procedure .....	19
Volunteer Grievance Policy.....	20
Client Grievance Policy.....	21
Closure Policy .....	21
Closure Procedure .....	22
<b>SECTION 3. Volunteer Engagement Policies .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Program Opportunity Descriptions.....	23
COVID-19 Procedure for Volunteer Opportunities .....	26
Training Procedure .....	26
Matching Procedures .....	27
Conflict Resolution .....	28
Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Procedure.....	29
Domestic Violence .....	29
Boundaries .....	30
Power Dynamics .....	31
Romantic Relationships with Exodus Clients .....	31
Expectations about Refugee Living Conditions .....	32
Cultural Awareness.....	33
Equity in Volunteerism .....	33
Volunteers and Childcare.....	33
Exodus/Volunteer Relationship.....	34
Offering Extra Gifts/Support to Clients.....	34
Client Self-Determination and Decision-Making .....	35
Volunteer Engagement with Housing .....	35
No Policy Favoritism Clause .....	36





---

## SECTION 1. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

### Program History

Exodus Refugee has a long history of welcoming refugees and asylees from many countries, cultures, languages, faiths, and political opinions. Exodus began in 1981 with the mission to serve the legal needs of immigrants and Cuban refugees who had arrived as part of the Mariel boatlift in 1980. Since that time, Exodus has helped thousands of refugees from more than 50 different countries establish new lives in Indiana.

### Mission Statement

**Exodus Refugee Immigration is dedicated to the protection of human rights by serving the resettlement needs of refugees and other displaced people fleeing persecution, injustice, and war by welcoming them to Indiana.**

### Facts and Figures

According to the United Nations, there are 103 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, the highest level since World War II. Of these, 32.5 million are refugees – not only have they been forced to leave their homes, but often friends and family, education, and careers. This is the result of having to leave their home country.

More than half of refugees are children, fleeing violence and worse, all the while still at risk of exploitation, abuse, and more. Many refugee children have been separated from their family or are otherwise unsupported.

In FY 2022, just 25,465 refugees from around the world were admitted to the United States (a considerable decrease from the 84,994 welcomed in 2016) as COVID-19 and the previous administration's policies continued to have an impact on resettlement numbers. Refugees from Burma and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the two largest groups now resettling in Indiana.



## Volunteer Staff Contacts

**Cassandra Sanborn – Director of Development**

Email Address: [csanborn@exodusrefugee.org](mailto:csanborn@exodusrefugee.org)  
(Office hours from 9A – 4P)

**Erin Aquino – Bloomington Resettlement Director**

Email Address: [eaquino@exodusrefugee.org](mailto:eaquino@exodusrefugee.org)  
(Office hours from 9A – 4P) – for Bloomington volunteers only

**Jericho Jones – Volunteer Coordinator**

Work Cell: 317-435-1907 (Office hours from 9A – 4P)  
Email Address: [jjones@exodusrefugee.org](mailto:jjones@exodusrefugee.org)

**Kristopher George – Community Sponsorship Coordinator**

Work Cell: 317-619-2286 (Office hours from 9A – 4P)  
Email Address: [kgeorge@exodusrefugee.org](mailto:kgeorge@exodusrefugee.org)

**Renee Miller – Bloomington Community Engagement Coordinator**

Work Cell: 317-419-6091 (Office hours from 9A – 4P)  
Email Address: [rmiller@exodusrefugee.org](mailto:rmiller@exodusrefugee.org)

**Communication Expectations:** If you must leave a voicemail, please leave a brief voicemail stating your name, volunteer activity, call-back number, and the purpose of your call. Please allow between one to two business days for us to return your call. If it is an emergency after office hours, please call the **Exodus after-hours emergency line at (317) 625-7892 and 911 (if applicable)**. If you send an email, please allow between one to three business days to receive a response to your email. Your messages are important to us and we do our best to address everyone’s concerns and/or inquiries in due time. Response times may be delayed due to staffing, work demands, staff who are out for various reasons, and other key factors. We will prioritize your requests during this time as much as possible. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding.



---

## **SECTION 2. Volunteer Program Policies**

### **Volunteer Bill of Rights**

Volunteers are a respected and highly valued component to executing the mission of Exodus Refugee. As such, volunteers have the right to:

- To be assigned a meaningful task(s).
- To be oriented, trained, and supervised during the duration of their activity.
- To ask questions about their task(s) and receive feedback about their performance.
- To be treated with respect and kindness at all times by every member of the organization for which they volunteer.
- To offer input and feedback to the organization about the job(s) or task(s) they are performing in an effort to improve their situation and the needs of other volunteers.
- To be trusted with confidential information which may be necessary to fulfill their task.
- To expect that their time will be used efficiently and effectively.
- To be thanked for the work that they do and not be taken for granted.

### **Recruitment Policy**

It is the policy of Exodus that there be ongoing recruitment activities for new mentors and other volunteers. As such, an Annual Recruitment Plan will be developed and will include recruitment goals and strategies to achieve those goals. This plan will be kept current with any ongoing adjustments.

It is possible that volunteer recruitment can be paused for an undetermined amount of time. Our goal as an agency is to provide volunteers with ample opportunity to make a difference and join in our mission. This would include making sure that we have the capacity to equitably and effectively make volunteer matches, thus reducing unnecessary waiting times for volunteers.

The Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and the Community Sponsorship Coordinator all assume lead responsibility for the recruitment of new volunteers for their respective programs. Other volunteer program staff, the CEO, and advisory board members will support the Volunteer Coordinator and the Community Sponsorship Coordinator in these activities as required.

### **Inquiry Policy**

It is the goal of the Exodus Volunteer Program to respond to all inquiries regarding participation in the volunteer program as soon as possible. Response time will vary depending on the season of the year, but the response time goal is within 5 business days.

We strive to provide all potential program volunteers with the best public relations and customer service as possible, from first contact throughout the screening process and beyond, regardless of the final screening outcome. All program staff handling calls from prospective mentors will be patient, courteous, and respectful in all interactions.

Confidentiality for all potential volunteers will be upheld throughout the entire process.



---

## Eligibility Policy

The Exodus Volunteer Program dictates that each participant must meet the defined eligibility criteria if they are interested in individual or group commitments. Exodus Development Department staff are expected to be knowledgeable of and understand all eligibility criteria required for volunteer participation in the program.

Extenuating circumstances may be reviewed at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator/Community Sponsorship Coordinator/Community Engagement Coordinator and Director of Development/Resettlement Director and acceptance may then be allowed with the written approval of the CEO and representative of the Board of Directors when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

### **Volunteers must meet the following criteria to be eligible for matching:**

- Be over 18 years of age. Those volunteering who are under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a supervising adult.
- Live, work, or are regularly in either Marion or Monroe County (our opportunities may work best for those located in Marion, Monroe, Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Morgan, Johnson, or Shelby County)
- Have a vehicle, provide proof of a valid operator's license, and current vehicle insurance for the following opportunities: Life Skills Mentor, Conversation Partner (if planning to provide transportation to clients), Teen Mentor, Co-Sponsor member, Transportation Volunteer
- For all other opportunities, volunteers must have reliable transportation and photo identification.
- Agree to the commitment as designated by the volunteer opportunity:
  - Life Skills Mentoring (Indianapolis and Bloomington): 6 months
  - Conversation Partnering: 6 months
  - Teen Mentoring: 1 year
  - ESL Volunteering: 6 months
  - Front Desk Volunteering: 6 months
  - Youth Tutoring Volunteering: 1 year
  - Co-Sponsor (Indianapolis and Bloomington): 90 Days (3 months)
  - Housing Setups: Scheduled volunteering session (1 day for a couple of hours)
  - Warehouse/Donation Sorting: Scheduled volunteering session (1 day for a couple of hours)
- Be willing to complete a volunteer application from the Exodus website. \*
- Be willing to view Refugee 101 Introductory Session, as well as the area specific training. Please keep in mind that, depending on the opportunity, different staff may be facilitating the training session with a different process. Volunteer training processes are thus subject to the department where the volunteer will be directly supervised. \*
- Be willing to complete and sign the Exodus confidentiality forms. \*
- Pass the Criminal Background Screening Process \*
- Agree to sign a copy of the Exodus Volunteer Policy Manual to verify that the volunteer applicant has indeed received the Manual and commits to uphold the requirements therein. \*

\* Warehouse/donation sorting is exempt from these requirements.

### **Non-Eligibility Clauses/Circumstances:**



- Exodus will not accept any volunteer, and retains the right to close any match, in instances where information received through the volunteer's application and screening process is subsequently found to be false or misleading.
- Exodus will not accept any volunteer who fails to complete the screening process. Such a volunteer applicant will forfeit their space on the waiting list and any prospective match will be connected with the next eligible applicant.
- Exodus reserves the right to reject any volunteer without providing reason or cause.

**Clients of Exodus will be expected to uphold the following requirements:**

- Be a client/client family of Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc. (either Indianapolis or Bloomington affiliate offices)
- Reside in the state of Indiana and reside in either Marion or Monroe County
- Be at least 18 years old or older (for all other matches except for the Teen Mentor Program and Youth Tutoring Program)
- Be between 15 years old and 23 years old (for the Teen Mentor Program)
- Be between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade (for the Youth Tutoring Program)
- Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all Exodus Volunteer Program policies and procedures
- Agree to the time commitment as outlined by the specific opportunity
- Be willing to communicate with the volunteer regularly
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the Volunteer Coordinator (as necessary)

The Exodus Volunteer Program reserves the right to alter the match preference communicated by the client in accordance with what Exodus staff deems most appropriate to the situation. If alterations are necessary, Exodus staff members will be forthright with the client and communicate why the change is occurring.

## Screening Policy

Exodus Refugee Immigration will require that each volunteer completes a screening procedure. This will include (but may not be limited to) staff-led training sessions, in-person/virtual interviews by staff, and background checks. Exodus runs all background checks through SafeHiring Solutions\*, which typically cost between \$20 - 25. Volunteers will not be reimbursed for the cost associated with paying for a background check.

We understand that some volunteers may have recently undergone a background check for other purposes, whether it be for governmental, employment, or educational purposes. That said, for the sake of consistency, uniformity, and quality control, all volunteers will be required to undergo a background check through SafeHiring Solutions.

A background check is required for all volunteers except for those opportunities in which a background check is not applicable (i.e. Warehouse/donation sorting). Program staff must ensure that each applicant completes these established minimum screening procedures:

### Volunteer Screening Procedures

- View the Refugee 101 Session online and complete the Reflection Form
- Complete an application from Exodus' website



- Check driving record and gain copy of current driver's insurance coverage
- Check criminal history: state criminal history, child abuse registry, sexual offender registry. Same checks must be performed in all states resided in for at least 5 years prior to application
- Complete personal interview (if applicable to the volunteer opportunity)
- Sign a form certifying that the volunteer has read and is willing to abide by the policies found within the policy manual

### **Background Check Results**

Volunteers have the right to request a copy of their background check from the Exodus Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator. If there are any criminal charges that are found, Exodus staff is not required to explain why a possible denial of volunteerism has taken place, except where it is required by law. Otherwise, the volunteer background check results will be kept entirely confidential in every circumstance that doesn't directly impact public safety or the safety of Exodus staff/clients.

The decision to accept an applicant into the program will be based upon a final assessment done by program staff at the completion of the volunteer screening procedure.

All mentors are expected to meet the eligibility criteria. However, extenuating circumstances may be reviewed at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator, Director of Development, Bloomington Resettlement Director, Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator. Acceptance may then be allowed with written approval of the Exodus CEO and representative of the Board of Directors when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

Documentation of the screening process must be maintained for each applicant and documented in confidential files.

*\* SafeHiring Solutions is not a company owned by or linked to Exodus – therefore, all pricing conflicts are subject to be handled by SafeHiring Solutions. If a volunteer has issues with their background check or the financial cost associated with it, they are free to contact the Volunteer Coordinator or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator. However, it would be most effective to contact SafeHiring Solution directly at [support@safehiringsolutions.com](mailto:support@safehiringsolutions.com). In the event that the price of the background check is beyond the means of a volunteer applicant, they should reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator at Exodus to either work out an alternative to this requirement or receive a scholarship to pay the cost of the background check.*

## **Training Policy**

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program requires that all volunteers (with the exception of warehouse volunteers) view the pre-recorded Refugee 101 training video online. The link to this video will be given to all volunteer applicants within 2 business days of their application, if not sooner. Volunteer trainees will need to complete the follow-up Reflection Form to move forward in the volunteer orientation process – a link will be provided with for this Form as well. Secondary trainings directly related to the volunteer opportunity of the volunteer's choosing will need to be completed. Volunteers will be directed by the Volunteer Coordinator or the Community Engagement Coordinator to the correct staff member for secondary trainings. These trainings will cover basic program guidelines, safety issues (including mandatory reporting), and communication/relationship building skills.

Due to the flexible nature of training planning, all Conversation Partner and Life Skills Mentoring training sessions will be recorded via a virtual platform (most likely Zoom). Registering online for



the session would place the volunteer on the mailing list to receive the recording of the session via email. Viewing this session and reporting the viewing to the Volunteer Coordinator would count as having completed the training requirement. A link for this registration will be sent via email with the initial invitation.

For Co-Sponsors, recordings of training sessions will be given to team leaders to distribute to the group. Before contacting the Community Sponsorship Coordinator, volunteers are expected to communicate directly with their designated team leadership to see if they can obtain the resource from their leader first.

It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator to plan, develop, and deliver appropriate training sessions with assistance from other agency staff as needed.

## Matching Policy

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program requires that the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, and Community Sponsorship Coordinator follow the guidelines outlined in the match procedure prior to creating a client/volunteer match. The Volunteer Coordinator and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator should do the best that they can to use the following criteria to determine match suitability:

- Preferences of the volunteer and/or client
- Common interests
- Geographic proximity
- Cultural sensitivities
- Similar personalities
- Matching volunteer capacity to help with the client's presented need

Matches will typically be either male adult to male adult/youth, female adult to female adult/youth, or volunteer family to client family. However, there may be times where a female volunteer may need to be matched with a male client and vice versa depending on the availability of volunteers or the skills set presented. These matches are expected to be rare, but entirely acceptable so long as cultural sensitivities and personal comfort levels are not violated in either the volunteer(s) or the client(s).

## Match Support and Supervision Policy

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program aims for the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator to make monthly phone or personal contact to check-in with volunteers. Exodus staff must gather information for that month including the dates spent participating in mentoring activities and a description of those activities, and assess the success of the match from all party's perspectives. In the case of match difficulties, discord, or concerns, appropriate discussion and intervention must be undertaken to improve or rectify problem areas.

When volunteers experience issues with the volunteer engagement or with the match relationship, they are expected to reach out to either the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator as soon as the issues occur. As a review, if you must leave a voicemail, please leave a brief voicemail stating your name, volunteer activity, call-



back number, and the purpose of your call. Please allow between 24 and 48 for us to return your call. If it is an emergency after office hours, please call the **Exodus after-hours emergency line at (317) 625-7892 and 911 (if applicable)**. If you send an email, please allow between 24 and 72 hours to receive a response to your email.

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program staff understands how important your need for support is and will do the best they can to address each volunteer's concerns and/or inquiries in due time.

## Recognition Policy

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program aims for all volunteers be recognized as important to the success of the Volunteer program and the Exodus mission overall. Emphasis on recognition will be impartial across the different volunteer opportunities, though some opportunities may be honored differently than others.

It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator to, at minimum, plan and implement the following recognition activities:

- Host an annual or bi-annual recognition event that highlights outstanding service or performance acknowledgments
- In collaboration with the Engagement Associate, feature a mentor match, Warehouse group, individual volunteer, and/or Co-Sponsor group on a consistent basis in either our newsletter or social media profiles

## Record-Keeping Policy

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program requires that each step of the Volunteer application and match process be documented by the appropriate staff. Commonly, this is done through database-centered record keeping through a secure online or desktop-based platform. As far as volunteer-client interaction, record keeping is completed through detailed case-noting, of which only Exodus staff have access to and can edit. Different programs that the volunteer program supports may have alternative methods in which activity reporting and record keeping is accomplished.

Each volunteer will have a confidential digital folder to contain all of, but not limited to, the following documentation:

- Background Check results
- Confidentiality Form submission
- Driver's License copy
- Driver's Insurance card copy
- Disciplinary documentation

All records are to be kept confidential and are to be covered by the conditions outlined in the confidentiality policy. Archival records or those records of past applicants and volunteers will be maintained and kept confidential for a period of seven years after the close of their participation in the program. After seven years, the records will be deleted from all digital records, and done so only by approved individuals.



---

## Confidentiality Policy

It is the policy of the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program to protect the confidentiality of its volunteers and the clients being served. This policy is designed for the safety and privacy of our clients, but is also outlined by Exodus' national agency (in this case, Church World Service, otherwise known as CWS) that licensed staff are also bound by confidentiality. With the exception of the limitations listed below, program staff will only share information about volunteers and/or clients, and their families with other Exodus professional staff and the Board of Directors. Further, all prospective volunteers and clients will be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by Exodus staff. Mutual confidentiality of all personal identifying information is expected of both the volunteer and the client with whom they are matched.

To provide a secure environment for both volunteers and client, it may (and in special circumstances, will) be necessary to ask volunteers to divulge extensive personal information about themselves, including:

- Information gained in application to and during volunteer participation
- Volunteer names, phone numbers, email addresses, and home addresses
- Gender identification (binary or non-binary included) – this information is necessary for cross-cultural consideration for volunteer-client matches only and is by no means a determinate factor on whether a match will eventually take place or if the volunteer is welcome to engage in volunteer activities with Exodus

Records are considered the property of Exodus (until the time for record-keeping has expired), not the agency workers, and are not available for review by volunteers.

### Limits of Confidentiality

Information from volunteer and client records may be shared with external individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

- Upon receipt of signed "release" forms from volunteers or clients.
- Volunteer names, photographs, videos, verbal statements etc. may be used in Exodus publications or promotional materials only upon written consent of the volunteer.
- To be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.
- To legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving Exodus Refugee - such information remains privileged information, and its confidentiality is protected by law.
- Exodus staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters and as such must disclose information indicating that a client may be dangerous to or intends to harm him/herself or others.
- At the time a volunteer or client is considered as a match candidate, information is shared between the prospective match parties. However, *the full identity of the prospective match mate shall not be revealed at this stage*. Names and addresses are shared with match mates only after the involved parties have met and agree to be formally matched. Each party shall have the right to refuse the proposed match.



### **Safekeeping of Confidential Records**

The Volunteer Coordinator and the Community Sponsorship Coordinator (in collaboration with the Director of Development and/or Bloomington Resettlement Director) are considered the custodians of confidential records. It is their responsibility to supervise the management of confidential information in order to ensure safekeeping, accuracy, accountability, and compliance with Board policies.

### **Requesting Confidential Information From Other Agencies**

A volunteer's or client's right to privacy shall be respected by the agency. Requests for confidential information from other organizations or persons will need to be accompanied by a signed release from the volunteer or client.

### **Violations of Confidentiality**

A known violation of the agency policy on confidentiality by a volunteer may result in a written warning or disciplinary action such as suspension or termination from the program.

## **Transportation Policy**

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program allows volunteers to transport clients in their own private vehicles if all of the following criteria is met prior to transporting the client:

- Volunteers must own a car; all safety functions (including blinkers, headlights, brake and back-up lights, seat belts, tires, brakes, etc.) must be in good operating condition.
- Volunteers must possess a valid driver's license and present proof of auto insurance; a record of insurance will be maintained in the volunteer's file and will be updated on an annual basis as necessary
- Volunteers must undergo a driving record check and not possess driving records for the last three years.
- Exodus requires that volunteers obey all traffic laws, use seat belts, and headlights (day-time running lights if during the day) at all times.
- Volunteers must avoid taking medication or using any other substance that might impair driving ability.
- If a vehicular accident occurs while the volunteer is engaged in mentoring, it should be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator or Community Sponsorship Coordinator promptly.
- Volunteers must be willing to follow directives from Exodus if Exodus staff members advise against transporting clients for the sake of fostering self-sufficiency

If any of the above policy is not followed, the volunteer will not be allowed to transport the client in a private automobile.

## **Mandatory Reporting Policy**

In accordance with Indiana Code 31-33-5, it is the policy of the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program that all staff, volunteers, and other representatives of the program must report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect of agency clients immediately. All such suspected reports must be made to



appropriate state and/or local authorities. Program staff must follow the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect procedure.

All employees of Exodus Refugee are required to undergo training as to what constitutes child abuse and neglect, what the state statutes are, and how to properly report such cases. Volunteers are provided with the resources regarding who to call if they suspect child abuse. Volunteers are expected to attempt contacting Exodus prior to contacting any CPS or DCS agency. The only exception is when the child is suspected to be in imminent or immediate danger, in which case the volunteer is instructed to call 911 as soon as possible.

Any staff or volunteers suspected of child abuse or neglect will be investigated by Exodus. Contact with the Volunteer Program will be restricted or constrained. The person in question may be suspended from employment (in the case of a staff member) or volunteer participation per the decision of the CEO and Board of Directors until such investigation is concluded.

## Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Weapons Policy

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program prohibits the use of drugs, alcohol, and firearms. Volunteers and clients are prohibited from using drugs, consuming alcohol, or possessing firearms (as a civilian) while engaging in any official volunteer activities. Any suspected violations should be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, or Community Sponsorship Coordinator as soon as possible.

**Alcoholic Beverages:** No volunteer of the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program will possess or consume beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages while actively engaged or prior to actively engaging in volunteering, nor shall any volunteer endorse the use of alcohol. Exodus clients will be held to the same standard when engaging with volunteers. Volunteers and clients may go to a location where alcohol is served, provided that alcohol is not the main attraction of the establishment and the volunteer/client does not consume any alcohol whatsoever.

Volunteers should inherently keep in mind that the involvement of alcoholic beverages in any environment, event, or conversation may violate cultural and/or religious sensitivities possessed by some of the clients served by Exodus.

**Drugs:** No volunteer of the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program will be permitted to manufacture, possess, distribute, or use any illegal substance while volunteering or otherwise.

**Weapons, Firearms, and Other Dangerous Materials:** The possession or use of firearms, firecrackers, explosives, toxic/dangerous chemicals, or other lethal weapons, equipment, and/or material while engaging in volunteer activities is strictly prohibited.

Even if the volunteer has a current and valid Indiana State conceal-to-carry or open-carry permit, volunteers are still expected to not be in possession of firearms (either in their vehicle or on their person) while engaged in volunteer opportunities. Clients of Exodus will be expected to uphold this standard as well. The only exception to this policy is if the volunteer is a law enforcement officer recognized by the state of Indiana *and* if they are on-call during the time of their volunteering engagement (in which case, officers are still asked to leave their weapons in their vehicle unless they are dressed in uniform). Otherwise, even law enforcement officers are respectfully asked to leave all firearms at home or in a safe place while engaging with Exodus clients in a volunteer capacity\*.



Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate suspension and/or termination of the volunteer's relationship with the client and with the Exodus Volunteer Program. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification being given to legal authorities that may result in arrest, legal action, and/or punishment by fine and/or imprisonment.

*\* This policy is not intended to create undue burden or a lapse of safety in any way for law enforcement officers who volunteer with Exodus. That said, in order to create a trauma-informed environment, officers must understand that their service weapon may mean something completely different to our clients, many of whom have had negative and traumatic experiences with law enforcement officers in their respective nations. Volunteers, regardless of background or profession, are expected to do whatever is necessary to facilitate a trauma-informed environment when engaging with Exodus clients.*

## Harassment-Free Environment Policy

The Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program is committed to fostering a service atmosphere for clients, staff, and volunteers free of all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. It is the policy of this agency to regard any unlawful harassment of Exodus employees, clients, and/or volunteers, as a very serious matter. Unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, by any person is strictly prohibited. This policy is not designed to create needless intrusions on the freedom of speech or expression of volunteers nor to regulate anyone's personal morality. This policy is to prevent any unlawful harassment during volunteer experiences. Each volunteer is required to read this policy and familiarize themselves with it.

### Harassment Definitions

"Sexual harassment", but is not limited to, the following:

- Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:
  - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's reception of volunteer service/client experience, or
  - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for volunteer support decisions affecting such individual, or
  - Such conduct is severe or pervasive and has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or abusive environment.

Conduct within the definition of unlawful sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Unwelcomed physical contact of a sexual nature such as patting, pinching, or unnecessary touching.
2. Overt or implied threats against an individual to induce him or her to perform sexual favors or engage in unwelcomed sexual relationships.
3. Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature, including intimating by way of suggestion a desire for sexual relations or the making of jokes or remarks of a sexual nature to or in the presence of an individual who finds them offensive.
4. Use of sexually suggestive terms or gestures to describe an individual's body, clothing, or sexual activities.
5. Displaying, printing, or transmitting offensive sexually suggestive pictures or materials in the workplace or volunteer environment.

## Harassment Complaint Procedure



Any volunteer(s) who believes that he/she/they has been subjected to any form of unlawful harassment in the workplace is expected and has a responsibility to report the matter. Any Exodus client(s) who believes that he/she/they has been subjected to any form of unlawful harassment by Exodus staff, interns or a fellow volunteer has the right to report complaints. Any complaints of unlawful harassment should be made to the CEO. A volunteer need not contact anyone that the volunteer believes to be an involved party. All complaints of unlawful harassment should be made within 60 days of the alleged harassment. Thereafter, a formal complaint form must be completed and signed by the complainant. Any managerial employee who becomes aware of an alleged incident of unlawful harassment must report it to the CEO, or, if the matter involves the CEO, to the President of the Board of Directors.

If a complaint involves the CEO, the complaint should be made directly to the President of the Board of Directors. For such complaints, the requirements specified for the CEO in the remaining paragraphs of this policy shall not apply. Instead, the Board President shall investigate the complaint and make a report to the full Board. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, the complainant and CEO shall be so advised. If it appears that there may be a basis for the complaint, the complaint shall be presented to the Board for further investigation and remedial action where appropriate.

The CEO, as the case may be, shall immediately record any complaint he/she receives on a complaint form regardless of the manner in which the complaint is received, indicating the date, persons involved, and a brief statement of the complaint. The complainant shall sign the complaint form. The CEO shall give a copy of the complaint to the alleged offender. All complaints shall be confidential to the extent possible. The CEO shall investigate within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. The investigation shall include separate interviews with the complainant, the alleged offender, and any other persons who have knowledge of the subject of the complaint. The CEO or Board President, as the case may be, within a reasonable time will make written findings and a written determination. If the CEO or Board President finds that the complaint is unsubstantiated, the complainant and the alleged offender shall be advised of the right to appeal the decision to the Board of Directors. The appeal must be made within 30 days of receipt of notice to the complainant. The notice to the complainant shall contain the name and address of the President of the Board of Directors.

If the CEO finds that there is a basis for the complaint, the CEO shall take the appropriate remedial action, including but not limited to suspension or termination. The CEO shall advise the complainant and the alleged offender of the decision. The CEO shall inform the complainant that remedial action has been taken against the alleged offender. Any appeal shall be filed with the Board Secretary with a copy to the CEO, within 30 days of notice to the complainant of the CEO's decision. The notice of appeal shall contain a statement of the grounds relied upon by the complainant. Exodus encourages and expects volunteers to immediately report any incidents of perceived unlawful harassment and to cooperate with any investigation of a complaint of unlawful harassment. Exodus strictly prohibits any retaliation against any volunteer for filing a complaint of perceived unlawful harassment or participating in the investigation of such complaint.

## **Equal Opportunity Policy**

Under Federal law, Exodus does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin. Exodus upholds Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex (including pregnancy). Religious discrimination includes failing to reasonably accommodate a volunteer's religious practices where the accommodation does not impose undue hardship on Exodus or violate the policy prohibiting religious proselyting. Exodus is committed to the



policy of equal opportunity in volunteering. It is our policy to recruit qualified persons on the basis of merit without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation or identity, disability, medical status, military or veteran status, or any other protected class as set forth under applicable state and federal civil rights laws. Recruitment decisions will be based on the individual's qualifications to perform the task offered.

It is the policy of Exodus to:

- Follow personnel procedures that will ensure equal opportunity for all people without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation or identity, disability, medical status, military or veteran status, or any other protected class.
- Make reasonable accommodations wherever necessary for all volunteers with disabilities, provided that the individual is otherwise qualified to perform the major functions of the job.
- Thoroughly investigate instances of alleged discrimination and take corrective action if warranted.

If you have any questions regarding our equal opportunity policy, or if you believe you have in any way been discriminated against, contact your Volunteer Coordinator immediately. If you cannot discuss the matter with your Volunteer Coordinator, please contact the Exodus CEO or the Board President.

## **Religious Affiliations and Proselytizing**

As a secular and federally-funded 501(c)(3), Exodus expressly prohibits volunteers from leveraging any volunteer opportunity to engage in proselytizing Exodus clients or staff. Religious or political proselytizing are included in this policy without exception. Volunteers who violate this policy may be subject to immediate dismissal from their service.

Volunteers are permitted to invite clients to social engagements (absent of observations of worship) or outings with those in their religious circle (provided that no proselytizing is happening). If a client is interested in attending a religious service or learning more about a volunteer's faith background, the volunteer is free to objectively facilitate that experience and/or answer those questions. If a volunteer considers themselves unable to be objective in facilitating experiences or answering questions, they should refer those conversations to the client's Exodus contact.

All inquiries of faith practice must originate from the client themselves. Any initiation of faith-based conversation by a volunteer would be considered to be proselytization. The only exception to this policy is when a volunteer initiates a conversation regarding religion as a means of learning to accommodate the client's culture and preferences.

If a client requests assistance in finding connections to their own faith community, then Exodus requests that volunteers assist clients as they can.

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

The purpose of the following policy and procedures is to complement Exodus bylaws to prevent the personal interest of volunteers from interfering with the performance of their duties to Exodus, or result in personal financial, professional, or political gain on the part of such persons at the expense of Exodus or its members, supporters, and other stakeholders.



**Conflict of Interest (also Conflict)** means a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between the private interests and official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. Persons in a position of trust include staff members, officers, board members, and volunteers of Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc.

**Board** means the Board of Directors.

**Officer** means an officer of the Board of Directors.

**Volunteer** means a person – other than a board member – who does not receive compensation for services and expertise provided to Exodus and retains a significant independent decision-making authority to commit resources of the organization.

**Staff Member** means a person who receives all or part of her/his income from the payroll of Exodus.

**Member** means a member of Exodus which shall be a state association of nonprofit organizations that represent a statewide and multi-sector or subsector 501(c)(3) constituency with a diverse range of corporate identities, or a regional association of nonprofit organizations that represent a specific region within a state or multi-state geographic area and a multi-sector or subsector constituency with a diverse range of corporate identities.

**Supporter** means corporations, foundation, individual, 501(c)(3) nonprofits, and other nonprofit organizations who contribute to Exodus.

### **Policies and Practices**

Full disclosure shall be made by the interested volunteers to the Exodus Development Department Staff in all conflicts of interest, including but not limited to the following:

- A volunteer is related to a board member or staff member by blood, marriage, or domestic partnership
- A volunteer stands to benefit from an Exodus transaction or receives payment from Exodus for any subcontract, goods, or services other than as part of her/his regular job responsibilities or as reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred as provided in the bylaws and board policy
- A volunteer is a member of the governing body of a contributor to Exodus.

Following full disclosure of a possible conflict of interest or any condition listed above, the Development Department team shall determine whether a conflict of interest exists and, if so, the Team shall vote to authorize or reject the transaction or take any other action deemed necessary to address the conflict and protect Exodus Refugee Immigration Inc.'s best interests. A copy of this policy shall be given to all Board members, staff members, volunteers or other key stakeholders upon commencement of such person's relationship with Exodus or at the official adoption of stated policy.

## **Unacceptable Behavior Policy**

Unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated on the part of volunteers and clients while participating in the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program. This policy is in addition to behavioral requirements stipulated in other policies or procedures within this manual. The following policy in no way is intended to take precedence over other policies or procedures including, but not limited to, the following:



- Confidentiality Policy
- Transportation Policy
- Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Policy
- Use of Alcohol, Drugs, and Firearms Policy

A number of behaviors are regarded as incompatible with the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program's goals, values, and program standards:

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, kicking, and physical assault
- Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual
- Demeaning or exploitive behavior of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behavior
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material
- Known sexual abuse or neglect of a child
- Denigration, public or private, of any Exodus client or client family member
- Denigration, public or private, of political or religious institutions/leaders adhered to or followed by an Exodus client
- Denigration, public or private, of Exodus' program and/or organizational partners leaders and/or partners
- Intentional violation of any local, state, or federal law
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Possession of illegal substances

Volunteers should keep in mind that Exodus clients will be held to these same conduct standards. Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from participation in the mentoring program.

## **Discipline Procedure**

### **Step 1: Verbal/Written warning**

At the first instance of a volunteer's violation of program policy, the volunteer will have a discussion with the Volunteer Coordinator and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator. After a discussion of the circumstance or incident in question, a reminder to uphold Volunteer Program policy will be provided, and a gentle request to cease the behavior that resulted in the infraction. The Volunteer Coordinator and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator will also strongly encourage the volunteer to read the Volunteer Program Policy and Procedure Manual so that no other policies are infringed upon. If the volunteer has misplaced their first copy, Exodus staff will provide a new one as soon as possible.

This verbal communication can take place in-person or over the phone. For the sake of documentation, the details of each verbal warning will need to be crafted in summary, with the volunteer and the Director of Development and/or the Bloomington Resettlement Director copied to the email. If needed, this warning can also take place solely through a well-crafted email.

### **Step 2: Meeting with Volunteer Coordinator/Community Engagement Coordinator/Community Sponsorship Coordinator and Director of Development**

If another violation of program policy occurs, even if the second infraction differs categorically from the first infraction, a formal meeting will need to take place between the volunteer, the Volunteer



Coordinator/Community Sponsorship Coordinator, and the Director of Development/Bloomington Resettlement Director.

During the conversation, the policy that was broken will be discussed and the incident in which it was broken. Then, it will be granted that volunteer will be able to tell their side of the story and their perspective on the situation. Within the course of the conversation, a formal action plan will be created for the volunteer so that they do not break any more policies. This action plan will be created in cooperation with the volunteer, as we will trust to the volunteer knows that the level of support that they will need to abide by policy. This written action plan will be signed by all parties present and kept in the volunteer's file.

### Step 3: Formal Release from Volunteering

If violations of policy persist, then the volunteer would have to be released from volunteering within the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program. A phone call, an email, or an in-person conversation will be sufficient. Volunteers are free to contest this decision within the confines of the Exodus Volunteer Grievance Policy.

### Exodus Staff Discipline

Exodus staff members engaged in the Exodus Volunteer Program will be subject to abiding by the policies and procedures outlined in this manual. However, discipline for any of their infractions of policy will be based on the Exodus Employee disciplinary procedure instead of the Volunteer Program Policy and Procedure Manual.

## Volunteer Grievance Policy

A volunteer may file a grievance in response to any action or situation related to the services/actions of Exodus Refugee if he/she/they feel that a formal process is necessary for the successful resolution of the matter. In the case of a volunteer, the party with the grievance is encouraged to work out the situation in an informal fashion if at all possible with the assigned staff person or direct supervisor, but this is not necessary before filing a written grievance. The party with the grievance should file a written grievance as soon as possible after the matter arises (within 15 business days). In the case of a volunteer or community member, the grievance should also be directed to the Executive Director. If the grievance is in regards to the violation of an Exodus Volunteer Program policy, such as sexual harassment, code of conduct, etc., or is a situation involving eminent danger or harm, etc. the grievance should be filed with the Executive Director immediately. If the grievance involves the Executive Director it should be directed to the President of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director or Board President have 15 business days to respond to the grievance in writing. Should the party with the grievance be unsatisfied with the Executive Director's response to a grievance, one may be filed with the President of the Board of Directors. The President in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Board will provide a written response within 30 days. The decision of the Board President will be final. Time periods may be extended if investigation is required however, a preliminary written response may be issued.



Contact Name:	Cole Varga	Office Address:	2457 E Washington St, Ste A, Indianapolis, IN 46201
Email of Contact:	cvarga@exodusrefugee.org	Phone Number:	(317) 921-0836
<p>3. If you are dissatisfied with the actions taken in response to your grievance, you have the right to contact the national headquarters of Church World Service to file a grievance. Contact information: Church World Service, 475 Riverside Drive #700, New York, NY 10115. Phone: (212) 870-2061. Fax: 212-870-3300. Email: IRPFeedback@cwsglobal.org</p>			
<p>4. If your grievance is in regards to the state social service program and you are dissatisfied with the resolution provided at the local level, you may contact the office of the State Refugee Coordinator. Contact information: Matthew Schomburg, matthew.schomburg@fssa.in.gov, 855-673-0193 x5831</p>			

### Client Grievance Policy

The Staff and Board of Exodus strive to provide the most compassionate, responsive, and comprehensive service possible to the clients of our agency. Any Exodus client who believes that he/she/they was wrongly denied services by volunteers or that he/she was subjected to any form of mistreatment or harassment by Exodus volunteers has the right to make a complaint to the Executive Director within 60 days of the event. The Executive Director will make a record of the complaint and investigate within 15 business days. All complaints will be confidential to the extent possible. Exodus will carry out its investigation in good faith and will endeavor to keep the client informed of the progress, outcome, and measures taken to resolve or remediate any problems. If the complaint is regarding the Executive Director, the complaint should be sent directly to the President of the Exodus Board of Directors who will investigate the complaint

### Closure Policy

It is the policy of the Exodus Refugee Volunteer Program that all volunteers be offered a way to provide feedback on their experience and officially have closure to their volunteer commitment. This feedback/closure opportunity is primarily accomplished through the usage of Microsoft Office Forms and Surveys. Exodus staff will do the best that we can to consider all suggestions and experiences to improve the volunteer experience moving forward.

The Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator will reach out to the individual volunteer and/or Co-Sponsor Group leader to confirm the official end of the volunteer commitment. This will occur via email for the purpose of documentation.

It is Exodus' goal to foster genuine relationships that cultivate our clients' integration into the community. Therefore, while the official commitment has a beginning and end date, enduring relationships between clients and volunteers are welcomed and encouraged as long as there is mutual consent. That said, the recommendations for volunteer-to-client interaction and personal/professional boundaries are strongly recommended by Exodus to be upheld.

Volunteers who close out of one opportunity are welcome and encouraged to notify the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, or Community Sponsorship Coordinator if they are interested in another opportunity. This volunteer would then be put on the wait list to be connected to that next available opportunity. Volunteers should keep in mind that they may have to engage in opportunity specific trainings if they are interested in volunteering in a different capacity.

### Circumstances for Closure



Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship of which Exodus Refugee would be principally accountable for ensuring that the goals of the Exodus resettlement mission were met and perpetuated to the benefit of the client and enrichment of the volunteer. Post-closure, what transpires between a client and a volunteer (with the exception of any illegal activity, ethically reprehensible behaviors, or hinderances to resettlement objectives) is deferred to mutual consent.

Closure can occur for any number of reasons, including (but not limited to):

- The contracted match duration has reached the end of its timeline
- One or both participants do not want to continue the match
- There are changes in life circumstances of either the volunteer or client
- An individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation
- There is a disciplinary situation with either the client or the volunteer that could not be rectified after a conversation with the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator

After a closure of a match, though volunteers are encouraged to pursue another volunteer opportunity, no volunteer is entitled to another avenue for volunteering. It is left to the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator (in collaboration with the Director of Development) whether an individual or group will be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation performance and current goals and needs of the program.

## Closure Procedure

Exodus Volunteer Program staff will follow the closure procedures as closely as possible and will vary based on the reasons for the match ending:

1. At the point it is decided that a match is closing, the mentoring program staff will detail closure in Tracking System and inform all participants of the commitment term end.
2. All closures must be classified as to the reason for the match ending. The major classifications are as follows and the circumstances will dictate the procedure to be followed:

### **Planned**

A planned closure is one that has been known about for a period of time such as 6 months or more. Common reasons for planning a match closure may include the match is reaching the end of the 6 months to 1-year commitment and/or the goals of the match have been achieved.

### **Extenuating**

Extenuating circumstances for match closure are generally more sudden in nature, and beyond the control of the program and/or its participants. This would include circumstances such relocation or an unexpected personal crisis.

### **Difficult**

A difficult match closure is due to relationship or behavioral difficulties. Circumstances would include a lack of cooperation/contact, irreconcilable issues, lack of compatibility, and/or violations of program policies.



3. In all circumstances, the volunteer and client will receive a Closure message (most likely via email) stipulating the match has formally ended and that any future contact is beyond the scope and responsibility of Exodus.
4. All data tracking will be completed by the Volunteer Coordinator or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator.

## SECTION 3. Volunteer Engagement Policies

### Program Opportunity Descriptions

#### Front Desk Coverage

The purpose of this role is to help greet refugee clients at the Exodus Indianapolis office. Primary responsibilities include answering phones, forwarding messages, and checking-in clients. Volunteers should expect a fast-paced environment with high traffic times of the day, clients who speak minimal English, and little interpretation help. Volunteers are permitted to volunteer with a friend for this opportunity. Volunteers must have availability during the work week between the hours of 9A and 4PM. Volunteers are required to commit to serving at the desk twice a month for at least 3 hours total (the commitment would last 6 months).

Required trainings: Refugee 101, Front Desk Orientation

#### Teach English

The purpose of this role is to support Exodus clients as they work through specialized curriculum and build English skills. Volunteers will be asked to teach 1.5-hour English classes weekly at Exodus for 6 months per commitment term. All materials and curriculum are supplied by Exodus staff. The class schedule for this opportunity will be presented by the LCORE (Language, Cultural Orientation, and Readiness for Employment) staff. Volunteers are required to complete Exodus trainings and an online class observation. Teaching experience of some kind is required for this opportunity, with preference given to those volunteers who have ESL teaching experience. This is a virtual volunteer opportunity via the Zoom platform.

Required trainings: Refugee 101, LCORE English class Observation/Training

#### Conversation Partner

The purpose of this role is to facilitate an environment in which a refugee client can practice communicating with English in typical conversation. The role is designed to supplement, not replace, the skills that they learn in their ESL classes. While English-skill building is one of the primary goals of this partnership, volunteers will also learn to thrive in one-on-one situations with refugees and become a social connection that helps the client successfully integrate into life in America. Volunteers are required to commit to a 6-month period and must be able to meet with the refugee individual between 2-4 times a month.

Required trainings: Refugee 101, Conversation Partner Training



### **Teen Mentor**

The purpose of this role is to intentionally influence the lives of refugee youth as they navigate unique challenges while adapting to life in America. Volunteers are in a special position to provide encouragement and support to this vulnerable population. Volunteers in this role will serve as cultural ambassadors to teens and walk with the youth as they work toward future goals. The clients themselves will identify those goals, which in the past have included helping with homework, studying for driver's exams, obtaining a library card, acquiring a summer job, or applying for secondary education. Additionally, Exodus will host monthly educational events (covering topics like college readiness, employment readiness, cultural adjustment, etc.) that refugee teens and volunteers can attend together. Depending on the circumstance, a volunteer may be paired with two teens rather than one (but never three or more). Volunteers must commit to a minimum of 1 year, being able to meet with teens at least 2 times per month.

Required trainings: Refugee 101, Youth Mentoring Training, Stewards of Children (online), personal interview with staff

### **Youth Tutoring Volunteer**

The purpose of this role is to pair refugee kids ranging from 3rd to 8th grade with an adult tutor who can help them navigate the U.S. Education system. Volunteering in this opportunity would include helping refugee students with homework and working together to achieve their educational goals. The volunteer tutor would meet with the student at a minimum of once a week (2-hours per session) to work with the student on their educational needs. The Program also offers quarterly group activities with Exodus for students and tutors alike to learn and have fun together. Volunteers would be required to commit to 1 year of service for this opportunity. It is preferred that volunteers interested in this role have educational or tutoring experience, but neither is required.

Required trainings: Refugee 101, Stewards of Children (online), personal interview with staff

### **Life Skills Mentor**

The purpose of this role is to assist refugee individuals and families to attain a better grasp of American culture, successfully integrate into their new community, and achieve personal goals. Refugees will identify goals to work towards with their mentors. Goals might include practical skills such as grocery shopping, budgeting, banking, or getting acquainted with modern technology. Time with the individual or family can be spent at their home, at a volunteer's home, and/or out in the community. Volunteers are expected to commit to a 6-month commitment, visiting the individual or family between 2 and 4 times per month.

Required trainings: Refugee 101, Life Skills Mentor Training

### **Bus Training Volunteer**

The purpose of this role is to assist refugee individuals and families in achieving self-sufficiency as they learn how to navigate their city via the bus system. Refugees will identify their goals in travel skills. This would always include learning how to get from their home to Exodus but could also include learning how to travel to the grocery store, their job, their school, or even public service locations (like the Social Security office or their local BMV). Volunteers and clients alike will have the opportunity to learn more about the city of Indianapolis, enjoy some sights along the way, and develop friendships based upon shared



experience. Volunteers would be required to commit to a 3-month commitment. Operating hours for this opportunity range between 7A – 4P on Monday through Friday. Outings generally take a minimum of 3 hours round trip. Volunteers should be prepared to be called upon approximately 1 week in advance. It is not mandatory for volunteers to accept every opportunity – it is important that volunteers be willing to be asked and remain as flexible as possible.

Required training: Refugee 101, Volunteer Bus Training Presentation

### **R+P Transportation Volunteer**

The R+P (Reception and Placement) Program seeks to provide support to our case management team by transporting newcomers and their families to initial health screenings, grocery store outings, bank visits, and more. This is a great way for volunteers to provide practical and emotional support to refugee families as they learn to navigate the American medical system for the first time. Having a personal vehicle and space to take multiple people at a time will be mandatory for this opportunity. The minimum commitment for this opportunity is 3 months, and the operating hours for this opportunity range between 7A – 4P, Monday through Friday. Volunteers should be prepared to be called upon between 1 week to 1 day in advance. While it is not mandatory to accept every opportunity, volunteers will need to remain as flexible as possible. A copy of driver's licenses and insurance cards will be required.

Required trainings: Refugee 101 (emphasis on Boundaries)

### **Co-Sponsors**

The purpose of this role is to partner with Exodus to assist a refugee individual or family with adjusting to life in America. This role is not a suitable for an individual or even a single family. The entities that are ideal for this role are faith organizations, companies, civic organizations, or larger social groups. Also, the group would need to have a well-established infrastructure, enough to meet a financial fundraising goal of around \$5,000.

A Co-Sponsor will commit to at least 8 “core service” activities. The distinction between “core services” and “additional services” will be communicated during the Co-Sponsor Training. Among these activities (either “core” or “additional”) would include meeting the individual or family at the airport, setting up an apartment, providing transportation to appointments, teaching English, providing financial assistance (rent, utilities, school supplies etc.) and more. Groups will need to be comfortable working with individuals who potentially limited English proficiency – groups would have to pay for their own interpretation services apart from the initial meeting. Group members would also need to pass criminal background checks.

Co-Sponsors alike are required to commit to a full 90 days (3 months) to support the matched individual or family. There will not be an official extension of this relationship beyond 3 months.

Required trainings: Co-Sponsor Training, Co-Sponsor Refresher (Boundaries Training)

### **One-Time Opportunities**

#### 1) Warehouse Help/Donation Sorting

This opportunity would involve providing assistance maintaining the order of our warehouse by sorting donations, assembling furniture from boxes, organizing clothes, and/or staging



furniture. Volunteers should come prepared to lift, bend, twist, walk, and stand on their feet for an extended period of time. It is recommended that volunteers interested in this opportunity come dressed for the weather (as the warehouse is not climate controlled) and to wear clothing that can get dirty. It is required to wear closed-toed shoes when participating in the opportunity. Services times are scheduled between Monday through Friday for any 2-hour slot between 9A and 4P. Weekend opportunities are possible, but limited.

Required Trainings: Refugee 101

## 2) Apartment Setups

This opportunity would involve providing help setting up those apartments or rental houses for newcoming refugee clients. This would involve unloading moving trucks and/or unpacking household items to be placed neatly in the new home. Volunteers would need to consider their ability to lift heavy furniture and/or walk and stand for long periods of time. This opportunity would also involve driving to the refugee clients' home addresses. Therefore, background checks would be required for all volunteers.

Required Trainings: Refugee 101

## COVID-19 Procedure for Volunteer Opportunities

Though vaccinations and booster shots have done a lot to reduce COVID-19 infection rates and hospitalizations, variants of COVID continue to develop all over the world and make their way to the U.S. Therefore, until further notice, even while we continue to allow in-person engagements, our COVID-19 precautions will continue to be observed. Volunteers are free to come prepared to wear a mask if volunteering for any opportunity that is engaged in-person, but it is no longer required. Volunteers will also no longer be required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before volunteering with Exodus. This policy is subject to change if there is a new variant of COVID-19 that produces another public health crisis.

## Training Procedure

### General Training Procedures

1. Each volunteer (with the exception of those interested in warehouse donation/sorting) will need to complete a volunteer application and complete the Refugee 101 session.
2. Depending on the volunteer role, there will be a secondary training that will be involved. The trainer of a given session will be contingent upon the department that the volunteer opportunity will be supporting.

Trainers per opportunity are the following:

Front Desk: Office Coordinator

English Teaching: Manager of Educational Program

Conversation Partner: Volunteer Coordinator

Youth Mentor: Youth Program Associate

Youth Tutoring: Youth Program Associate

Life Skills Mentor: Volunteer Coordinator



Bus Training: Employment Associate  
R&P Transportation: Pre-Arrival Associate  
Co-Sponsor: Community Sponsorship Coordinator

Different volunteer opportunities may have additional supporting materials that could be provided and maintained separately from this policy and procedure manual. Different volunteer roles may have more or less supporting materials – this is fully contingent on both the nature of the opportunity and the purview of the staff supervisor. If a volunteer feels that there are more supporting materials needed, they are welcome to request additional resources from the Exodus staff supervisor. Materials will be provided if available.

## Matching Procedures

### Conversation Partner/Life Skills Mentors/Teen Mentors

1. To begin the match process, the Volunteer Coordinator will first ensure that the client is indeed requesting a volunteer. During this time, the Volunteer Coordinator will collect the client's availability to meet with a volunteer. Though the Volunteer Coordinator receives referrals from internal staff, the Volunteer Coordinator has the responsibility to hear the request from the client themselves. After this, the Volunteer Coordinator evaluates if a potential volunteer has completed all background check, confidentiality, and training requirements. Then, the Volunteer Coordinator will evaluate the volunteer's skills sets, personality, preferences, and availability to see if the potential match is a good fit. That said, greatest weight will be placed on the client preferences and needs. Matches will be made using the match suitability criteria (found below) as a guide as closely as possible:
  - Client preferences and needs
  - Volunteer preferences and needs
  - Common interests
  - Compatibility of meeting times
  - Geographical proximity
  - Similar personalities or traits
2. Once a potential match is identified, and the criteria above is met, the Volunteer Coordinator will reach out to the potential volunteer to express the client's need and gauge interest in committing to the opportunity. The Volunteer Coordinator will not use first or last names of the client when describing the opportunity to the potential volunteer. If the volunteer reciprocates interest in the present opportunity, the Volunteer Coordinator will provide additional details to establish a meet. This process is primarily accomplished via email.
3. After confirming the meeting time with the Volunteer Coordinator, the Volunteer Coordinator will contact the client to confirm the meeting date, time, and platform (if not being done in-person).
4. Once the client confirms, the Volunteer Coordinator will secure an interpreter for the meeting time.
5. The meeting will take place as scheduled. There will be introductions between both parties. The Volunteer Coordinator will go over the details of the volunteer-client relationship and the expectations of mutual confidentiality. Near the end of the meeting, telephone numbers and addresses are exchanged between the volunteer and the client.
6. After the meeting, the volunteer-client meeting is recorded in the client's digital case note by the Volunteer Coordinator. The match is also tracked in the Volunteer Coordinator's Volunteer



Reports Tracking sheet, which would include the volunteer's contact information, the client's case note link, and any date-tracking information necessary.

## Conflict Resolution

1. Due to the large volume of volunteer interactions that are managed on a frequent basis, neither the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, nor the Community Sponsorship Coordinator has the capacity to directly monitor every interaction between clients and volunteers. Though the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and Community Sponsorship Coordinator can conduct check-ins as often as they can, if conflict or issues do arise during the course of the volunteer engagement, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to alert Exodus staff.
2. The general process for resolving problems will follow the IDEAL model that includes:
  - Identify the problem and have a clear, shared understanding of that problem between the volunteer, client(s), and/or Exodus Staff member.
  - Develop alternative solutions that could address the problem.
  - Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each solution.
  - Act on what is mutually decided to be the most effective solution.
  - Learn from the situation and consider if there are way to prevent the problem moving forward.
3. When a match problem involves a lack of contact on the part of the volunteer or client, the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator will make a genuine effort to contact the non-communicating party to seek out any barriers of communication that exist. The IDEAL model should be used to figure out how to solve any communication barriers that are discovered. If it is discovered that there is willful passivity or apathy in communication from any party, a straightforward conversation will be needed to determine if it is still viable to continue the match.
4. If a problem area continues, the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator should consult with the Director of Development, Exodus' CEO and/or community resources to define a plan of action to address the problem. This plan will then be discussed with the client(s) and/or the volunteer. If a violation of Exodus Volunteer Program Policies are involved in the issue, the Program Disciplinary Policy may need to be followed.
5. If the problem cannot be resolved, formally closing the match may be necessary. At that time, it would be determined if either or both parties are suitable for another match in the future.
6. All support and supervision by program staff must be recorded in the respective client's electronic case file.



---

## Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Procedure

All staff, agency representatives, and volunteers must adhere to the following mandatory reporting procedures:

### **Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

1. All suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect, recent or otherwise, must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Sponsorship Coordinator, Director of Development, and/or Bloomington Resettlement Director immediately, the same day if possible.
2. A volunteer must then file a report with the state Child Protective Services (CPS) within 24 hours per state statute. The Indiana CPS hotline is 1-800-800-5556.
3. If knowledge of the suspected abuse or neglect occurs, the volunteer must contact Exodus staff as soon as possible. If there is a life-threatening emergency, volunteers should call 911 prior to calling Exodus staff. However, in all cases possible, volunteers must contact Exodus staff to get guidance. All Indiana residents are mandated reporters, so volunteers may need to contact CPS themselves – that said, it is important to notify an Exodus staff member as soon as possible after making the report. After speaking to Exodus staff members and reporting the incident, the volunteer should understand that they will not be entitled to any update of the situation – Exodus will take sole responsibility for the situation moving forward from that point. If the volunteer makes the report and CPS needs additional information, CPS will contact the volunteer directly.

If an incident of suspected child abuse or neglect occurs after regular business hours, volunteers should contact the Exodus After-Hours Emergency Phone number at 317-625-7892.

### **Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect by Program Staff or Volunteers**

1. The same procedures outlined above will be followed for any suspected child abuse and neglect by any Exodus staff person, program representative, or volunteer.
2. In addition, the alleged abuser will be investigated by the Exodus Volunteer Program staff, Exodus CEO, and/or Exodus board members.
3. During such an investigation, the alleged abuser will be immediately restricted from contact with youth, placed on employment probation, terminated, or suspended from participation in the program.
4. In the case of suspicion of a teen mentor or youth tutor volunteer, the client parent/guardian will be immediately informed of the suspicion.

## Domestic Violence

If a volunteer is witness to or becomes suspicious of domestic violence during the course of their volunteer engagement, it is required that they report this suspicion or incident to **Exodus staff immediately**. This is to be done by either phone/voicemail (first preference), email (second preference), or an in-person visit (last preference).

After the point of reporting to Exodus, the volunteer must understand that they are thereby removed to the situation. For legal reason and to respect the client's right to privacy in especially sensitive matters, no updates will be provided to them if they are not relevant to the continuation of their volunteer engagement, if any updates at all.



Volunteers are asked to refrain from requesting updates about the situation. Volunteers are also asked not to take the initiative in reporting to a domestic violence hotline. This situation is different from suspicion of neglect and child abuse in that there is no mandated reporting of domestic violence required of Indiana residents. The victim/survivor of the situation must take the lead in reaching out to domestic violence resources. If you suspect that someone is being subjected to domestic violence, volunteers are encouraged to provide the suspected victim with local domestic violence resources and/or hotlines.

If a client's child witnesses domestic violence between two adults, that incident must be reported as child abuse to CPS. Please see the above section about reporting child abuse to CPS.

## Boundaries

Refugee resettlement is characteristically a high-stress and emotionally taxing line of work, as this involves serving various demographics in a multi-cultural environment and providing high levels of trauma-informed care. Therefore, Exodus Refugee Immigration, Inc. strongly advocates for the establishment of strong personal and professional boundaries when considering staff relationships with Exodus clients. In the same way, the Exodus Volunteer Program strongly urges and requires the same boundaries to be exercised by program volunteers.

Boundaries can be defined as an invisible line that determines a limit or extent, clearly articulating where one person ends and the other begins. Boundaries ensure that the distinguishing between two things (or two or more people) is not violated, and that all parties are able to both serve each other and protect their own autonomy. Boundaries clearly establish for each person what is okay and what is not throughout the course of any relationship – healthy boundaries are not flippant in nature or subject to constant circumstantial change. The violation of boundaries are indicators of an unhealthy and, oftentimes, destructive relationship.

Categorical examples of boundaries include, but are not limited to:

- Time
- Money
- Energy
- Communication tone
- Communication frequency (either over or underwhelming)
- Decision-making
- Physical touch
- Resources
- Gifts
- Advocacy (speaking up versus speaking for)
- Personal values
- Goals
- Family dynamics
- Personal and sexual health
- Confidential information (such as personal identifying information, financial information, passwords, contact information, etc.)
- Financial decisions
- Property sharing
- Faith and religion
- Cultural sensitivities
- Trauma-informed interaction



Personal and professional boundaries are necessary to preserve the volunteer's and the client's mental health and also to participate in the client's journey to self-sufficiency. It is important that our volunteers realize that it is their responsibility to teach and empower clients **without** invading the client's sense of autonomy (i.e. doing things on their behalf, or making decisions on their behalf without their permission, etc.). It is also essential that a volunteer does not view the ease or difficulty of a client's adjustment to life in the U.S. as *their own* measure of success as a volunteer – this would indicate an inappropriate and paternalistic sense of responsibility in which boundary violations are bound to occur.

Boundaries are expected to be upheld and respected by both volunteers *and* clients. Both parties have the right and responsibility to say “no” to any requests made by the other party that are deemed as inappropriate or beyond the capacity of the volunteer/client to uphold. Boundaries also communicate respect for the other's capacity to take ownership of their own lives and relieves pressure from having to fulfill inappropriate expectations. Volunteers and clients alike will need to evaluate their motivations, biases, and goals in order to establish and uphold healthy boundaries.

## Power Dynamics

It is important for volunteers to realize that, regardless of good intentions, there is a power dynamic that exists between a volunteer and a refugee client. The volunteer is the one providing support, and the refugee client/family is the one receiving said support. It is essential to keep this in mind and evaluate if any suggestions or activities reinforce this unequal power dynamic or rob the family/individual of dignity. Some of the engagements, suggestions, or opportunities that volunteers may suggest to refugees may perpetuate these dynamics unintentionally.

Please avoid suggesting and/or promoting engagements that could potentially create a conflict of interest for the client and affect their confidence in expressing autonomy. Examples of this could include:

- Hiring a refugee directly for a company that the volunteer owns
- Offering an undocumented employment opportunity for a personal event
- Offering a personally owned ride-sharing service to meet a refugee family's basic needs
- Loaning a personal vehicle as a client's source of transportation

The situations above mark some instances where a client or family may be afraid to tell the volunteer “no” because they are in a position of depending on the volunteer for some source of sustenance or resource and they don't want it to be withheld. It is important that, as volunteers support clients, that they are making sure that their support doesn't take away from a client's ability to be autonomous without them. It is also the volunteer's responsibility to say “no” if they are asked by the refugee individual or family to provide a support that would inevitably lead to a unequal power dynamic or sense of dependency.

## Romantic Relationships with Exodus Clients

Under absolutely no circumstances will volunteers be permitted to initiate or engage in a romantic relationship with an Exodus client while they are volunteering through Exodus. This establishes an unethical power dynamic between the volunteer (one who offers support) and the client (one who receives support). Sexual relationships of any kind, for any duration, are strictly forbidden within the Exodus Volunteer Program. Examples of relationships include, but are not limited to:

- Courtship/arranged marriage
- Marriage
- Dating relationship



- Romantic hand-holding
- Kissing upon the lips
- Kissing of any kind
- Romantic/prolonged hugging
- Leering
- Verbal sexual intercourse of any kind
- Physical sexual intercourse of any kind

Mutual consent of any such relationship **IS NOT** a relevant factor regarding this policy. All “quid pro quo” (“This for That”) romantic or sexual relationships are expressly forbidden. Any discovered violation of this policy from *any point in time* will be subject to the full extent of the disciplinary process and will most likely result in termination from the volunteer program.

Volunteers who violate this policy will no longer be welcome to participate and/or provide support within the Exodus Volunteer Program. Volunteers and clients alike who violate this policy with a minor (a person under the age of 18 years old) will be subjected to the full extent of the law. Misunderstanding or ignorance of the client’s age is not an excuse. The parent and/or legal guardian of the minor will be informed immediately of the relationship. Clients who violate this policy will continue to receive services from Exodus (as applicable), but will not be permitted to receive personalized support from volunteer constituents for the remainder of their tenure as Exodus clients. If a client is found to have had sexual relations with a child or minor volunteer, the parent of the minor will be notified immediately and it will be decided then what legal course of action will be taken.

If a volunteer suspects that a romantic relationship is taking place or receives solicitation from a client, it is the volunteer’s responsibility to tell Exodus staff immediately. Clients will also be told that it their responsibility to report any suspicion or solicitation coming from an Exodus volunteer.

## Expectations about Refugee Living Conditions

Exodus Refugee Immigration is mandated by the federal government and their parent agency CWS (Church World Service) to provide a sufficient supply of home resources so that each individual/family can begin the process toward self-sufficiency. With that said, many of our client live in low-income housing and shared living spaces/apartment buildings.

Volunteers may find that the living situations that they may encounter do not meet the expectations that they would choose for themselves. These incongruent expectations may translate into a suspicion of a lack of safety or sanitation. All things considered, we ask that volunteers understand that Exodus places significant thought and energy into the housing placements of our clients. Please evaluate if a living situation is actually unsafe or if it only below the volunteer’s personal expectations. If a volunteer has concerns, they are free to alert the Volunteer Coordinator, the Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or Community Sponsorship Coordinator. Exodus staff will consult with the Exodus Housing Department to check in on the condition that is the subject of complaint. If, however, the Housing Department, in conjunction with the Marion County Health Department, deems that condition is conducive to healthy living, the Exodus Volunteer Staff will rely on the Housing Department’s expertise. We ask that volunteers respect and cooperate with this decision.

Also, as far as possessions, volunteers may notice that refugee clients and families don’t always have the most updated amenities and/or supplies. For example, a client may have to handwash dishes instead of having a dishwasher. If a volunteer has something that they would like to donate to



a client, it is required that the clients be asked if they want the offering or not. However, if they do not, volunteers should respect the client's decision and support however best they can.

Volunteers should evaluate their own biases regarding what is necessary for life and happiness against what the client actually needs. Settling these expectations beforehand will help volunteers protect a client's sense of dignity in conversation (the comments made about a living condition) and in action, also respecting boundaries and self-determination within the relationship.

## **Cultural Awareness**

Exodus Refugee Immigration serves refugees, immigrants, and asylees from all around the world. Our clients bring their experiences, cultures, food, languages, religions, and wardrobes with them as they build a new life in our country. Volunteers will be equipped as best as possible through Exodus training sessions to be prepared to appropriately engage our clients to accommodate their culture.

Exodus staff will provide cultural background resources as much as possible to volunteers depending on what is available. Exodus staff may also point volunteers to trusted resources either online or in the community to provide materials and tips for interaction with people from different cultures. Volunteers are also welcome to do their own research, as well as attempt to study various languages.

Though our clients are learning to adjust to life in America, volunteers should keep in mind that Exodus clients are not obligated to adopt American values. Exodus clients are free to maintain their values from their cultural background – at Exodus, we believe that this diversity of perspectives and values is what make our country a great place to live. We ask that volunteers, regardless of cultural or political persuasion, respect this diversity of thought and practice. Exodus staff is always open to discuss and assist volunteers in learning how to behave in ways to honor such diversity.

## **Equity in Volunteerism**

Exodus Refugee serves a wide variety of clients from all over the world. Regardless of where a person comes from, each individual/family comes with their unique level of support needs. It is by the degree of support need, not by ethnicity or demographic, that Exodus uses to prioritize the matching needs of client.

We ask that, as much as possible, volunteers refrain from allowing media exposure and bias to be the sole motivator for desiring to participate in refugee resettlement volunteering. Though some conflicts may get mainstream media attention, it is Exodus' stance that we should not forget that there are many conflicts around the world and people who need help building a new life. Equity in resettlement is a high value to Exodus, and it's also expected to be a high value in our Volunteer Program.

Stating preferences of working with certain refugee populations over other refugee populations borders on discriminatory practice, and will thereby not be tolerated within the Exodus Volunteer Program. Any volunteer or volunteer group that refuses to work with a client or client family from any particular demographic (whether that be for reasons of race, religion, family composition, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) will risk not being matched with a client to support at all.

## **Volunteers and Childcare**

Volunteers are not permitted to serve as caretakers or babysitters for refugee children while their parents and/or legal guardians are not present in-person unless there are exceptional



circumstances. In all circumstances (including when driving refugee children), there cannot be less than two volunteers present with the children, and the volunteers must have the permission of the parents. Volunteers can also watch refugee children during an Exodus event, in which case the event would take place at the Exodus office and staff members would provide supervision. Individual volunteers are not permitted to be left alone with refugee children for any period of time unless they are participating in the youth mentoring or tutoring program. Volunteers must receive express consent from the refugee child's parents/legal guardian before transporting refugee children for any distance in their personal vehicles (or other vehicles).

## **Exodus/Volunteer Relationship**

Exodus values the relationship between staff and volunteers and appreciates everything that they do to support the organization's mission. Exodus staff also understand that the way that Exodus goes about refugee resettlement may be different than what our volunteers expect or are used to. That said, it is become important to outline the culture of relationship that has proven to be most productive for all parties involved.

We ask that volunteers trust Exodus' expertise within the various processes for resettlement. Exodus staff are always willing to take suggestions for volunteers – that said, we ask that volunteers respect Exodus's final decision on any given matter. This will communicate trust in Exodus as a partner – in turn, Exodus will do everything within their power to ensure that volunteers are provided the support that is needed for the refugee individual and/or family. Volunteers are also strongly encouraged to keep composure when things are frustrating or things don't go according to plan. Flexibility is a high-value skill set in the culture of refugee resettlement, and this skill is definitely needed when working in a volunteer capacity. A positive mindset is important in this line of work, so volunteers and Exodus staff alike will need to assume the best and accept appropriate accountability for any actions taken.

It should also be known that Exodus can experience limitations in what we are able to do. There are many processes and services that are beyond our direct control – we ask that volunteers be willing to pivot alongside Exodus whenever we encounter the limits on what we are able to do. Exodus should not be expected to have special relationships with service providers or hidden internal knowledge that can be leveraged to make providing support easier for the volunteer to accomplish. If any problems arise, we ask that volunteers work together with Exodus staff members (either the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Sponsorship Coordinator, and/or Director of Development) to rectify those issues and follow Exodus leadership.

## **Offering Extra Gifts/Support to Clients**

It is the position of the Exodus Volunteer Program that volunteers should not provide monetary gifts for any reason whatsoever. This includes cash and/or checks. Giving money directly to clients is strictly forbidden, as this both creates an unsustainable culture of relationship as well as contributes to an unequal power dynamic. Finances that are fundraised and spent on direct support for refugees will either be conducted by Co-Sponsors or Exodus staff. Gift cards may be provided in some instances after consulting with Exodus staff members. (For example, a co-sponsor team may purchase an Uber gift card to help a refugee client make it to work, or may purchase a gift card to help their family purchase new shoes or school supplies, etc.) Individual mentors and volunteers should not feel obligated to spend their money directly on clients, even if asked by clients.

Material gifts should only be given with client permission. Volunteers should feel free to say “no” to any requests from clients that are deemed as unreasonable, beyond the capacity of the volunteer to provide, or would inhibit a client's journey to self-sufficiency.



Regarding transportation assistance, volunteers are free to offer transportation in their own vehicles at request from the client. However, Exodus strongly recommends that volunteers reserve the offering of transportation for ongoing Exodus volunteer opportunities. This is the best way to offer support without contributing to the hinderance of self-sufficiency or inappropriate dependency. If an Exodus staff member recommends that a client find their own means of transportation, it is not up to the volunteer to make an autonomous decision and go against Exodus recommendation.

Due to equity concerns, the following material gifts/donations are off not eligible for direct or indirect offerings to clients (either from a volunteer mentor or a Co-Sponsor):

- Automotive vehicles (cars, vans, trucks, road-legal motorized scooters, motorcycles, etc.)
- Houses
- Cable services
- High-speed internet services
- Gym memberships
- Zoo memberships
- Museum memberships

If there is a gift that is questionable or that a volunteer is not sure about, we ask that they consult an Exodus staff member *prior* to offering the gift to the client or discussing it with them.

## Client Self-Determination and Decision-Making

As support persons, volunteers and Exodus Volunteer Program staff alike must respect an Exodus client's right and ability to make decisions for themselves and/or their families. Even if the decision is one that a volunteer or Exodus staff member does not agree with or perceives to make life more difficult, we must respect a client's right to self-determination.

It is important that a volunteer feels free to provide options, tools, and information. Volunteers should recognize that many clients may also attempt to lean upon volunteers for their perspectives, since many of these processes are new to our clients and they may lack the confidence in making these decisions. Volunteers will need to resist the urge to make decisions for clients if asked by them to make choices on their behalf.

Self-determination is essential to establishing a client's capacity to take ownership of their own lives in this country, whether a volunteer and/or Exodus staff member is present to support them. If a volunteer is concerned that a client's decision for themselves or their family would prevent undue harm or risk, they are free to alert either the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator of their concerns. The Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, and/or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator will follow-up on the situation as appropriate, valuing the client's self-determination as a top priority.

## Volunteer Engagement with Housing

Exodus Refugee makes continuous and diligent efforts to ensure that clients are housed in apartments, townhouses, or homes that are as clean and safe as possible. If volunteers are concerned about a household condition, they are free to submit those concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, or the Community Sponsorship Coordinator. We ask that volunteers refrain from engaging with housing matters beyond the submission of a complaint of housing conditions. It is deemed inappropriate for volunteers to attempt to engage housing



managers or landlords on the behalf of the family. Volunteers will not be entitled to updates on maintenance issues and solutions – those updates will be provided to the clients directly.

Exodus Housing Department staff will take point on all maintenance issues or housing condition follow-ups with the appropriate personnel on those housing units. The Exodus Volunteer Program views the Exodus Housing Team as the experts on housing situations and the chief point of contact for rectifying any issues. We ask that volunteers respect the final decisions of our housing team, whether they fully understand/agree with them or not.

Volunteers should encourage clients to advocate for themselves regarding any housing conditions, housing prices, or other housing terms that the client(s) would like to discuss with landlords, housing managers, or Exodus Refugee.

Regarding housing and Co-Sponsor involvement, Exodus Refugee does not condone signing a lease on behalf of a client, nor producing rental deposits on behalf of a client to hold an apartment/townhouse in anticipation of receiving a client assignment for volunteer support. Refugee resettlement is too volatile to anticipate arrivals when no timeline has been provided by Exodus, and to pre-emptively pay for housing is not only against Exodus' advice/policy, it puts the volunteer/volunteer group at great financial risk. Exodus does not and will not accept logistical or financial responsibility if a volunteer/Co-Sponsor pays for housing pre-emptively and a client/client family does not arrive to fill the vacant unit. To clarify, while Exodus welcomes Co-Sponsorship fundraised money to be allocated to assisting with rental payments *once* Exodus facilitates the client's occupancy of those units, Exodus does not condone using fundraised money to secure the housing on the client's or Exodus' behalf *prior* to the client's arrival. Exodus will not reimburse volunteers/Co-Sponsors Teams for expenses paid for client rental purposes per this policy.

Even when Exodus has an itinerary for client arrivals, please recognize that plans are subject to change at the last minute due to the volatile nature of refugee resettlement. Volunteers and Co-Sponsors alike should be prepared to pivot when necessary, especially when housing set-up furnishings are involved. It is strongly recommended that all donated furnishings per group is kept at a secure location until the day that the furnishings are needed for set-up – even then, if the plan for set-up changes suddenly, volunteers should be prepared to store said furnishing in a safe place amongst themselves until the furnishings are needed again.

## **No Policy Favoritism Clause**

There is no one that is exempt from following the rules and procedures outlined in this document. This includes not only volunteers, but Exodus staff members, Exodus donors, and Exodus Board Members.