

Topic: The Role of the Resettlement Agency
(IOM, Overseas Processing Entity, Nepal)

Activity: Resettlement Agency/Community Services Group Reading/Teaching

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants are responsible for their own learning. No one knows everything, and everyone knows something. Resources are available for help. It is up to the participants to proactively use the resources when needed.• Facts and related skills about resettlement agencies and community services can be found in the student handbook.
Lesson Time	45-60 minutes
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• USCO Student Handbook pages (included)• Pens• resettlement agency and community services pictures• Telephone• Optional: Additional supplementary reading material
Practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Divide participants into 4 small groups.2. Assign each group to read one page of the resettlement agency and community services unit (including 911) from the student handbook. Hand out appropriate resettlement agency and community services pictures for all groups as a study aid. Distribute any supplementary reading material.3. For the 911 group, also give them a telephone and have them practice calling.4. Groups read their page and seek assistance from the facilitator if necessary.5. Once groups are finished reading, ask half of each small group to stand up while the other half remains seated. Those standing move to the next group to learn from peers about what the other participants read. Those seated teach those who are moving.6. Remind those who are moving that they are responsible for their own learning. They must organize their own movements from group to group to ensure they learn from each group; the facilitator should not organize this movement for them.7. After the allotted time, participants switch places: those that were teachers stand up and become students; those that were students sit down in their original group and become the teachers.
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After you get to the U.S., what will you do when you need to know about something?• How would you learn new things?

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Handout: Group 1

The overall goal of resettlement agencies is to help refugees become self-sufficient as soon as possible. **Resettlement agencies cover all refugees' necessary and basic living costs for at least the first 30 days in the U.S.**

RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES HELP REFUGEES BY:

- Meeting them upon arrival at the airport (unless you have a relative or friend who agrees to do this)
- Obtaining short term housing and basic furnishing
- Applying for a social security card
- Referring them to social and community services
- Providing orientation on public transportation
- Orienting on U.S. money and how to budget
- Opening a bank account
- Enrolling children in school
- Referral for assistance in finding a job
- Arranging for a post-arrival medical exam
- Assist to Enroll in ESL classes (English as a Second Language)



Tip: Do not give out your Social Security number to just anyone. It is for official purposes: for employers, banks, schools, health care, social services, and when renting an apartment. Do not give out number over the telephone and do not carry it with you unless you must show it at an appointment.

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Handout Group 2

RESETTLEMENT

AGENCIES WILL NOT:

- WILL NOT: Buy brand new furniture for your apartment; most items in your apartment will be second-hand or used. Furniture in the U.S. is expensive!
- WILL NOT: Provide you with a mobile phone, television, DVD player, or computers. Some agencies can help you find these things, so ask, but don't presume they will be provide you with them.
- WILL NOT: Be available to you all the time. You must make and keep appointments with your caseworker.
- WILL NOT: Find and keep a job for you. They will certainly help, but it will be your responsibility.
- WILL NOT: Pay your bills and your rent.
- WILL NOT: Drive you to all your appointments. You will get orientation on transportation options in your community. You must learn the local public transportation system as soon as possible.
- WILL NOT: Provide the same Reception and Placement services to people who move to other states and show up unplanned and unannounced looking for help.

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**RESETTLEMENT
AGENCY
STAFF...**

- Will not necessarily be from the same country as you, so expect to work with a variety of different ethnicities.



- Could be a different race than you.
- They could be male or female.
- They could be younger or much older than you.
- Are very busy with other newly arrived refugees. Agencies do not have large budgets and their workload can be very heavy. Be patient and cooperative!

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Handout Group 3

COMMUNITY SERVICES

It is very difficult to pay all your bills and expenses on public assistance. Even with most entry-level jobs you will make more money working than you will on welfare. You are expected to go to work as soon as possible in America in order to become self-sufficient.

After the first month the resettlement agency will assist refugees in applying for social services through the local Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS). Services vary from state to state, city to city, or even from site to site. Examples of social services include:

- Food Stamps
- TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- RCA – Refugee Cash Assistance
- SSI – Supplemental Security Income (for the elderly, disabled or blind)
- RMA-Refugee medical Assistance
- WIC: Women, Infants and Children (a supplemental nutrition program for pregnant mothers and children up to the age of 5)
- CHIP: Child Health Insurance Program

Refugees are advised to comply with rules and regulation governing provision of such services. In order to continue to receive TANF and RCA, refugees will have to be actively involved in job search activities or job training classes. (Proof of attendance is required by social services in many states.)



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Cash and food benefits are kept in an **EBT card**. You can use this at bank (ATM) machines and at grocery stores to buy food items **only**.



Food Shopping in the U.S

- Most shopping is done in supermarkets but it is possible to find fruits and vegetable at outdoor markets.
- In the first months before you go to work you will buy food with your EBT card (shown above).
- It is important to carefully budget your food stamps. The money must last the full month and any unspent money does not carry over to the next month.

Food Stamps cover food items **ONLY**. The following items are examples of things that are **NOT** covered by food stamps!



Diapers



Shampoo



Cigarettes



Beer or any Kind of Alcohol

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Handout Group 4

Emergency Services (911)

Every community will have emergency services for the following:

Fire Ambulance Police

Dial '911', state your emergency¹, give your physical address, and if you cannot speak English, then say, "NO ENGLISH" and stay on the line. This will allow the operator taking the call to track your physical location on a computer. Practice giving your address.

Examples of When to Call "911"

- Heart attack or stroke
- Fire
- Domestic violence
- Burglary or theft in progress
- Car accident

"Do not call 911 in order to get information or as a prank. If 911 lines or call takers are busy with prank calls, someone with a real emergency may not be able to get the help they need. In most places, it's against the law to make prank 911 calls.

¹ An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police/sheriff, the fire department or an ambulance.

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