

Developing a code of conduct

Many Community Sponsorship Groups find it helpful to create a code of conduct for their members to reference when providing support to a refugee family. This can help ensure that Group members respect the boundaries you wish to put in place so that everyone, including the family is on the same page when it comes to what you will and won't do as a Group.

Below we have included a suggested list of boundaries, which will help to create your code of conduct. Your Group may decide to use some and leave others. This list is not exhaustive. It's up to you to decide what works for you!

The last page of this resource gives an example of what your code of conduct might look like or include based on the boundaries you choose to put in place.

Suggested themes for boundaries

Boundary	Reason for boundary	Examples
Hospitality/gift giving	Accepting drinks/food from the family you are supporting might put pressure on their budgets. They may feel this hospitality is always expected of them. Accepting such hospitality can also delay your attendance at appointments if you had not anticipated stopping for food/drink.	We won't accept individual gifts from the family we support. We will not give money or gifts to the family we support as individuals – all monies and gifts will be made through the group. We will explain to the family why we do not expect refreshments when visiting. When meeting for an appointment with the family, we will meet somewhere neutral to avoid delays caused by accepting their hospitality.

<p>Attendance at medical appointments</p>	<p>Medical appointments contain personal and confidential information relating to individuals. Providing interpreters from your group in a volunteer capacity will bring them into contact with confidential information.</p>	<p>We will make the GP surgery aware that they will need to provide interpreters. We will explain to the family members we support that we will not go into a medical appointment with them.</p>
<p>Giving legal advice</p>	<p>Giving immigration advice if you are not an OISC regulated adviser is a criminal offence.</p>	<p>We will not provide legal immigration advice unless regulated to do so; we will instead connect those we support with those who can assist.</p>
<p>Time of day when the group can be contacted for non-emergencies</p>	<p>Being available to the family at all times of the day can lead to over-reliance on group members (n.b. this will be necessary during the first few days after arrival)</p>	<p>Calls of a non-emergency nature can be made up until 9pm (after first week of arrival).</p>
<p>Decision making</p>	<p>Wherever possible, the family we support will be enabled to make their own decisions; this could include utility contract arrangements, bank accounts, choosing GP surgeries (where available) etc. By putting the decision with the family, they will be empowered to manage and take responsibility for their own arrangements.</p>	<p>We will present the family we support with options to make decisions and support what they decide.</p>
<p>Identification of the family</p>	<p>The family you support might not want to be identified by their refugee status. Referring to them as 'the refugee family' may undermine them. Additionally,</p>	<p>We will refer to the family we support by their names. We will ask them how they would like to be introduced.</p>

	referring to them as 'our family/our refugees' might unintentionally imply a level of ownership.	
Roles of Group members	Your Group members will have certain responsibilities or expertise. Other Group members offering advice or support on the same area of work might cause confusion both the family and your group members. It may also cause overreliance on some Group members.	All Group members will adhere to their roles and will ask if they are not sure of their responsibilities.

Example code of conduct

Our Community Sponsorship Group: *<insert name>*

Our Community Sponsorship Group exists to enable a refugee family to gain independence to start their lives in the UK. To empower the family we support, each Group member will adhere to our code of conduct.

We will

- Assist the family to take actions for themselves
- Enable the family to make choices, and support their choices even if we do not agree with them
- Act professionally and within the roles we agree in the Group
- Discuss questions or concerns with *<core group/group lead/lead sponsor>* in a timely manner
- Adhere to the conditions of our sponsor agreement
- Adhere to our safeguarding and complaints policies
- Regularly review our progress

We will not

- Share or disclose confidential information relating to the group or the family we are supporting