

# What is Community Sponsorship?

## Overview

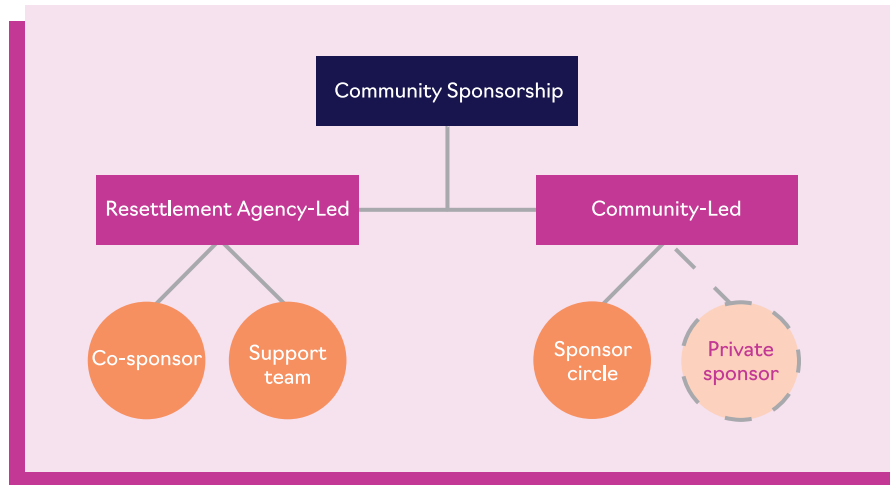
**Community sponsorship (CS) is a collaborative effort between groups of people that work together to prepare for and welcome refugees they are paired with.**

Community sponsor groups come from faith communities, businesses, other social groups, and can include individuals who come together to form a sponsorship group. Community sponsors are ambassadors of welcome in their cities and towns. They help equip, guide, and educate newcomers as they navigate their new home in the United States.

Activities will differ depending on the need and structure of each CS program and office, but regardless of the services provided, the benefits to community members and newcomers are significant

Community sponsorship can have different forms, depending on whether it is led by a resettlement agency or by the community. See **Image A** for an overview of community sponsorship.

Image A: CS Overview



## Resettlement Agency-Led Community Sponsorship

### U.S. National Resettlement Agencies

- Church World Service,
- Episcopal Migration Ministries,
- Ethiopian Community Development Council,
- HIAS, International Rescue Committee,
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, U.S. Committee for Refugee and Immigrants, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, World Relief

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is the agency with the mandate to provide resettlement services to newly arriving refugees. They contract with **nine national resettlement agencies** on an annual basis and outline a specific list of services, called **core services**, that must be provided during a 30–90-day period as part of its Reception and Placement (R&P) program. The national resettlement agencies have a network of affiliates in designated locations across the U.S. where they resettle refugees.

There are more than **250 local affiliates** across the country. Many resettlement agencies and their affiliates use community sponsorship programs to welcome and integrate newly arriving refugees into the community where they work. The different models of resettlement led community sponsorship programs (support teams or co-sponsorship) are defined by the requirements of each model. See **Table A** for a list of requirements.

Community Sponsorship programs are also being used to help with the resettlement and integration of Afghan arrivals through the Afghan Assistance and Placement (APA) program.



Required in-kind or financial contributions often go towards meeting the material support requirements of the R&P program. You can find a list of material requirements [here](#).

Table A: Resettlement-led CS requirements

Requirement	Support Teams	Co-sponsorship
Majority of core services provided by the sponsor	Not required	Required
Signed MOU with resettlement agency	Not required	Required
In-kind or financial contributions	Required	Required
Paired with a specific family or individual	Required	Required

## Good to Know

Resettlement sites have varying requirements, such as required training, minimum fundraising requirements, length of time commitment, and the core services they delegate to their sponsors. It's also important to note that not all sites have CS programs and some may be busy responding to the needs of their clients, which may result in a slow response time to inquires and requests.

To become a sponsor, you can reach out to your local resettlement agency for information on their sponsorship program. If you are not sure where to find your local office, visit the [Refugee Council USA website](#) for more information.

## Community-Led Community Sponsorship

PRM has expanded opportunities for groups to engage in community sponsorship through community-led programs in the following ways:

- **Sponsor Circle:** a group of at least five individuals that has been certified through the Sponsor Circle for Afghans and matched with a newcomer(s) from Afghanistan. These sponsors have agreed to provide financial support as well as services that are similar to the R&P services. Groups are overseen by the Community Sponsorship Hub (CSH). A group interested in becoming a sponsor circle can find more information [here](#).
- **Private Sponsors** are community groups that will have primary responsibility for all services and financial support. This program is currently being designed and is not in operation.