

# OVERSEAS CULTURAL ORIENTATION OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS

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## Disclaimer:

*The Cultural Orientation Objectives and Indicators outline what is required in Cultural Orientation programming and what refugees are expected to do or say by the end of the Reception and Placement period. The examples provided throughout the document are not exhaustive. You are encouraged to localize the content to ensure refugees receive accurate, tailored information that supports their ability to achieve self-sufficiency in the U.S. You can learn more by visiting the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE) website: [COResourceExchange.org](https://www.COResourceExchange.org).*

# Cultural Adjustment

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that the U.S. is a nation of diverse communities and individuals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two examples of how diversity is reflected in U.S. communities and individuals (e.g., gender, sexual orientation)</li><li>• Participants can explain how diversity in the U.S. may be similar or different from other communities they have lived in</li></ul>
<b>Participants can identify that there are numerous phases of cultural adjustment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can identify that cultural adjustment is a multi-step, long-term process they will experience</li><li>• Participants can name at least two of the broad phases of cultural adjustment (e.g., honeymoon, cultural shock)</li></ul>
<b>Participant can identify that there are coping mechanisms that can assist in managing stressors and adjustment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two healthy ways of dealing with stress and cultural shock (e.g., faith community, mental health provider)</li><li>• Participants can identify that honoring and preserving their home culture can help facilitate successful adjustment to life in the U.S.</li><li>• Participants can identify that learning English will facilitate their adjustment to life in the U.S.</li></ul>
<b>Participants can identify that there may be cultural differences between their cultures and the culture in the U.S., including social norms and laws</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two examples of norms in the U.S. that may be unfamiliar or challenging to their traditions (e.g., appropriate noise level, family dynamics)</li><li>• Participants can identify at least two parenting practices (e.g., supervision, discipline) that may be unfamiliar or challenging</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that resettlement may have an impact on family roles and dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can give at least two examples of how resettling to the U.S. may impact family dynamics (e.g., children learning English faster than adults, women in the workplace)</li></ul>

# Digital Technology and Literacy

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain they will need to use digital communication tools to access services and connect with their community and local Resettlement Agency (RA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can name at least three instances in their early resettlement when they may be required to use technology (e.g., learning the public transit system, banking)</li><li>• Participants can list at least three methods of communication they will use to connect to their local RA or other service providers and demonstrate how to use one method (e.g., email, text messages)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain how to engage in safe digital practices to protect themselves, their families, and their digital information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two examples of risky behavior when using the internet on a digital device (e.g., using free Wi-Fi, sharing devices)</li><li>• Participants can list at least one way to protect their digital accounts, including Wi-Fi and online accounts (e.g., using a safe and secure password, not sharing passwords with others)</li><li>• Participants can name at least two ways to protect themselves from financial fraud and identity theft (e.g., do not open emails and select links from unknown senders, do not click on popup advertisements)</li></ul>

# Education

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that public school is free, is required by law for children, and there are legal requirements and expectations regarding schooling in the U.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can identify at least three basic characteristics of schooling in the U.S (e.g., public school is free, all genders attend public school together)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that education is a lifelong experience and should be weighed against the need to work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can identify that education is a goal to be achieved but should be weighed against other factors such as need for income/employment</li><li>• Participants can explain that there are educational and training options that allow them to work while going to school</li><li>• Participants can list possible choices for continuing or higher education that may be relevant to them (e.g., GED, university classes)</li></ul>

# Employment

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that refugees play a central role in finding/obtaining employment in the U.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants (if employable adults) can identify themselves as responsible for obtaining employment in the U.S.</li><li>• Participants can list at least two ways the RA may assist them with finding employment services and developing job skills (e.g., classes and trainings, referrals to employment services)</li><li>• Participants can list at least three ways in which they can search for employment (e.g., online, help wanted posters)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that a crucial way of finding better paying jobs is learning how to speak English</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two ways English language acquisition can support a more desirable job (e.g., English is the most common language in the U.S., learning English is necessary to thrive and advance)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that early employment and job retention are essential to self-sufficiency in the U.S., and it must be the primary focus for all employable adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least one positive consequence of early employment (e.g., pay bills, expenses) and at least one negative consequence of delayed employment or lack of employment (e.g., unable to buy personal items, deny benefits)</li><li>• Participants understand turning down any job could be used as a reason to deny benefits</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that a person's initial job might not be in their chosen profession</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two positive outcomes of accepting employment outside their chosen profession (e.g., gain experience, learn English)</li><li>• Participants can identify at least two types of entry-level jobs they may hold in the U.S. during the initial resettlement period (e.g., customer service, food service)</li><li>• Participants can explain that current job skills, professional development certificates, or education may not transfer immediately to their chosen profession</li></ul>

## Employment (continued)

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that employees have rights as well as responsibilities in the workplace</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can explain that they have the right to work in the U.S.</li><li>• Participants can list at least two rights in the workplace (e.g., to be paid for their work, work in a safe environment free from discrimination and harassment)</li><li>• Participants can list at least two responsibilities in the workplace (e.g., timeliness, respecting coworkers)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that there are general characteristics of U.S. professional and work culture to which refugees must adapt to be successful in finding and maintaining employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least two aspects of U.S. professional and work culture that may differ from their homeland (e.g., women in the workplace, taxes)</li></ul>

## Health and Hygiene

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that they should bring an initial supply of medications and relevant prescriptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can identify the guidelines on the number of weeks of prescription medication they should travel with and the need to have written prescriptions</li></ul>
<b>Participants can state that initial health screenings and immunizations take place shortly after arrival (30 days)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can identify that the RA will schedule a basic health screening and immunizations after their arrival</li><li>• Participants can identify that it is their responsibility to attend that health screening and any follow up appointments</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that only critical and immediate health care needs may be met in the initial weeks of resettlement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can explain that only emergency medical situations can be dealt with upon arrival</li><li>• Participants can list one example of each: when to go to the emergency room (e.g., heart attack, urgent medical need), when to go to urgent care (e.g., high fever, sickness on the weekend), when to go to primary care provider/regular doctor (e.g., annual physical, routine check-up), and what should be dealt with at home (e.g., mild headache, cold)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that the U.S. has no universal healthcare system and refugee medical assistance (RMA) differs state by state. In many cases, RMA is available for 12 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can identify that healthcare in the U.S. is very expensive and that the government will only pay for limited healthcare for up to the first 12 months. After that, it is the individual's responsibility to obtain insurance or pay for services</li><li>• Participants can identify that long-term health insurance is generally tied to employment</li><li>• Participants can name two reasons they may be responsible for paying their own healthcare after 12 months (e.g., not eligible for Medicaid, not receiving health insurance as a benefit of their job)</li><li>• Participants can identify who may be eligible for government health insurance (Medicare) after 12 months (e.g., persons 65 or older, those with disabilities)</li></ul>

## Health and Hygiene (continued)

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that public health is important to community and personal safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can describe the importance of basic health and hygiene and list at least two actions to help prevent illness (e.g., handwashing, cleaning their home)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain there are norms for good hygiene in the U.S.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can name at least two norms for basic hygiene that are similar to or different from norms in their home country (e.g., regular shower or bath, brushing teeth)</li><li>• Participants can identify at least two ways personal hygiene can affect relationships, particularly with coworkers, fellow students, and members of their community (e.g., stares/uncomfortable situations, losing employment)</li><li>• Participants can identify that traditional medicines could be considered unsafe or even illegal by U.S. standards</li></ul>

## Housing

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<b>Participants can explain that decent, safe, and sanitary housing will be provided by the local RA or, in some cases, by the U.S. tie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can name at least two types of housing they may expect to get (e.g., apartment, shared housing) and identify one reason why they may be placed in temporary housing upon arrival (e.g., lack of housing availability, last-minute flight bookings)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that there are a variety of types of housing arrangements in the U.S. (including shared housing, apartment, house)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can name at least two different types of housing (e.g., apartment, shared housing)</li><li>• Participants can explain that the affordability of housing differs across and within localities and may affect how the local RA makes housing choices</li></ul>
<b>Participants can articulate that housing comes with rights, responsibilities, restrictions, and regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can explain that in most cases they will sign a lease after arrival</li><li>• Participants can list at least two rights and responsibilities of landlords (e.g., upkeep the property in accordance with local and federal laws) and tenants (e.g., pay rent and utilities)</li><li>• Participants can name at least two behaviors that may lead to eviction (e.g., not paying rent, lack of cleanliness)</li></ul>
<b>Participants can explain that basic safety considerations and use of appliances/ facilities will promote safety in the home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participants can list at least one way to maintain basic fire safety (e.g., smoke detector, fire extinguisher)</li><li>• Participants can explain why they should keep their doors locked (e.g., prevention against crime, stealing) and not allow strangers into the home (e.g., prevent theft, fraud or scams)</li><li>• Participants know how to access emergency services and can demonstrate how to dial 9- 1-1</li></ul>

# Learning English

## OBJECTIVE

**Participants can explain that learning English is critical to successful adjustment in the U.S. and that there are a variety of ways to learn English**

## INDICATORS

- Participants can list at least three reasons why learning English is important for successful adjustment in the U.S. (e.g., employment, self-sufficiency)
- Participants can explain that learning English is their responsibility and can list three ways in which they can learn English (e.g., attend free classes referred by the local RA, utilize online learning apps and platforms)
- Participants can explain that limited English should not prevent them from pursuing employment, enrolling in school, applying for assistance, or participating in community life

# Newcomer Rights and Responsibilities

## OBJECTIVES

**Participants can explain that there are rights and responsibilities related to refugee status and status adjustment**

## INDICATORS

- Participants can state they are required to apply for permanent residency as soon as they become eligible
- Participants can articulate their legal responsibility to repay the travel loan and name one consequence for missed or late payments (e.g., poor credit score, difficulty getting loans)
- Participants can acknowledge their responsibility to submit a change of address form (AR-11) if they move
- Participants can articulate the importance of Selective Service registration and name one consequence if they do not register (e.g., felony, fines)
- Participants can list at least two behaviors that may hinder their adjustment of status or naturalization or lead to deportation (e.g., breaking the law, failure to report moving to USCIS)
- Participants can state that while learning English, they have the right to request an interpreter (e.g., in hospitals, in schools)
- Participants can state that they may be eligible to become U.S. Citizens
- Participants can articulate that their financial obligations in the U.S. (e.g., rent, travel loan) will affect their ability to remit money to relatives back home

# Role of the Local Resettlement Agency (RA)

## OBJECTIVES

**Participants can explain that the local RA is not a government agency**

## INDICATORS

- Participants can identify at least two differences between the local RA and local, state, and federal government agencies (e.g., the local RA is a non-profit agency, the government sets guidelines and provides funding to local agencies)

## Role of the Local Resettlement Agency (RA) (continued)

OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS
<p><b>Participants can explain that the local RA provides assistance to refugees through the provision of items and/or money to meet initial needs, basic services, and advocacy on refugees' behalf to receive services for which they are eligible</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants can identify at least three or more types of items that will be provided soon after arrival (e.g., initial housing, basic furnishings)</li> <li>• Participants can identify at least three basic services provided by the local RA (e.g., airport pick-up, applying for social security card and benefits)</li> <li>• Participants can state that money will have been spent on their behalf</li> <li>• Participants can state they will receive a small amount of money for personal spending when they arrive in the U.S.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants can explain that the quality and quantity of items provided will vary</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants can explain that the items they receive might not be new or what they would choose for themselves</li> <li>• Participants can identify at least two factors that impact the quality and quantity of items they might receive (e.g., availability of resources locally, needs and size of the family)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants can explain that assistance provided by the local RA is limited and that benefits vary across agencies, locations, and cases</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants can identify that the services they receive will be for a limited time</li> <li>• Participants can list two reasons why the money, goods, and services they receive may not be the same as what other participants will or did receive (e.g., family size, availability of goods)</li> <li>• Participants can identify that they will receive assistance, but non-urgent issues may not be addressed immediately</li> <li>• Participants can identify at least one possible consequence of moving away from their initial resettlement site before the end of the 90-day Reception and Placement (R&amp;P) service period (e.g., loss of access to certain government benefits, gaps in service provision)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants can explain that there are several organizations that will work alongside local Resettlement Agencies to assist with access to locally available programs and provision of services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants can identify the local RA as the first point of contact for accessing services</li> <li>• Participants can list two agencies or organizations that the local RA may refer them to for services (e.g., local government agency, employment services)</li> <li>• Participants can explain that public assistance varies from state to state and within states</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participants can explain that refugees are responsible for their own successful resettlement in partnership with the local RA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants can explain that refugees and the local RA work in partnership and have rights and responsibilities with respect to each other</li> <li>• Participants can explain that refugees are ultimately responsible for their own success</li> <li>• Participants can explain that the local RA case manager is a source of reliable and accurate information</li> <li>• Participants can explain the role of the U.S. tie and co-sponsor and identify two ways those roles are different from the role of the RA (e.g., RA is financially and legally responsible, U.S. tie assistance is voluntary)</li> </ul>

# Transportation

## OBJECTIVE

**Participants can state that transportation options exist in most communities in the U.S.**

## INDICATOR

- Participants can list at least three public transportation options available in the U.S. (e.g., buses, subways) and can explain these options vary based on location

# Travel

## OBJECTIVES

**Participants are prepared to travel from location of origin to final destination**

## INDICATORS

- Participants can list at least two travel steps they will go through when traveling to their final destination in the U.S. (e.g., obtain travel documents, flight check-in)
- Participants can list at least three restrictions in terms of baggage (e.g., size, weight) and one consequence of violating these restrictions (e.g., leaving behind personal items, unable to fly)
- Participants can identify who may meet them at their final destination airport (e.g., local RA staff, their U.S. tie)
- Participants can demonstrate at least three examples of appropriate airline etiquette and travel logistics (e.g., boarding plane, using toilet)
- Participants can list at least three basic airline safety requirements (e.g., wearing seatbelts, not smoking)

**Participants can explain they are responsible for the documents in their International Organization for Migration (IOM) bag**

- Participants can list three reasons it is necessary to travel with their IOM bag and not place it in checked luggage (e.g., to ensure access to documents, prevent losing the documents in checked luggage)
- Participants can list at least two reasons that the documents in the IOM bag are important and that they are responsible for keeping those items safe (e.g., contains identification cards, medical records)
- Participants can list two reasons why sharing their personal identifiable information (paper or electronic) with unauthorized individuals can put them at risk (e.g., identity theft, personal theft)

**Participants can explain they may have an escort if they are seriously ill or have mobility problems**

- Participants can state that the escort is there to guide them in their travel to the U.S.



# U.S. Laws

## OBJECTIVES

## INDICATORS

**Participants can explain that the U.S. is governed by the rule of law**

- Participants can state they have accountability under the law and can list at least two possible consequences for breaking the law (e.g., change in immigration status, mandatory community service)
- Participants can articulate three ways U.S. federal law prohibits discrimination (e.g., race, religion)
- Participants can name three of their legal rights in the U.S. (e.g., legal representation, right to an interpreter)
- Participants can name at least one legal right during police encounters (e.g., right to remain silent, right to a government-appointed lawyer)

**Participants can explain their responsibility to know and follow the law in the U.S.**

- Participants can identify their responsibility to know and obey the laws of the U.S.

**Participants can articulate there are legal rights and responsibilities related to family life in the U.S.**

- Participants can list at least two basic laws regarding child supervision, neglect, and abuse (e.g., illegal to abuse a child, children can't be left unsupervised), including one acceptable method of disciplining a child (e.g., time outs, taking away toys)
- Participants can identify one or more ways in which approaches to childcare and discipline may conflict with U.S. laws



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