



Welcome Campaign for Migrants and Refugees

Will you be one of the first to say "yes" to one bus of refugees from the border?

The Franciscan Network for Migrants invites you to join our **Welcome Campaign for Migrants and Refugees**. We are responding to the call from organizations at the border to organize churches and other groups to receive and care for people displaced by violence and extreme poverty. There is an overwhelming need for communities in the interior of the country to help out. We are grateful for your interest in participating.

This effort will involve some planning and logistics, and we want to help you as much as possible. We are happy to connect you with other parishes who have done this already.

About Your Guests

There are 54 - 56 seats on each bus. You can expect that the people arriving will be family units of 2-5 people in each unit. Your guests will have been processed through the border and will have requested asylum in the US. They have temporary permission to be in the United States. Most people will already have sponsors and a destination. They will just need a few days of help and rest before moving to the next destination.

Preparing for Arrival

1. Your parish will need to form a hospitality team. We will need:
 - Names, email addresses, and phone numbers of the 2-3 main site coordinators.
 - Name and exact address of the site where the bus will arrive, and phone number of someone at the site.
 - Preferred time frame for arrivals.
2. The hospitality team can collect resource information for your local area, make contact with Catholic Charities, and pro bono legal support services, translators, and other support organizations that can partner with you.
3. The hospitality team will identify a sleeping area, secure cots, and determine bathroom and shower facilities. People can also be housed with families or in off-site locations.
4. As you begin to prepare for your guests' arrival, you will want to collect the following items:
 - Cots with sheets, blankets, and pillows.
 - Food, clothing, hygiene items.
 - Monetary donations to supplement in-kind donations, for essential needs.



Upon Arrival

1. The first task is to provide food, showers, and rest for the families, and clothing if needed.
2. The second task will be to organize the team to conduct an intake interview with each family to ascertain their specific needs. You will need to collect: names, DOB, immigration number, country of origin, and the name, city, and contact person who will receive them. We can provide an intake form you can use. The families will be predominantly Spanish-speaking. At the moment most guests will be from Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, and other Spanish-speaking countries, but there may be Haitians and people from other countries as well. If you do not have translators, the Google translate app is free and extremely useful for both verbal and written translation.
3. You will then contact the person who will receive them, usually a family member or friend, and advise them that they need to buy bus tickets or plane tickets to the destination.
 - a. For plane tickets: most people will not have much in the way of identification cards, so getting through the TSA can take a lot longer than usual. Advise the contact of this and let them know that the departure time should therefore be after 10am as they will need to arrive at the airport 3-4 hours before their plane departs. They should NOT buy tickets that leave the same day or early in the morning. Volunteers will have to take them to the airport and accompany them as they go through security.
 - b. For bus tickets: make sure the family has appropriate clothing and some food for the journey.
4. Guests will stay until they can move on. We encourage the guests to put in the effort to move their contacts so that they can get tickets to their next destination. You should anticipate that for the majority of people, this could take up to a week. They will need to have food and shelter while they are preparing to move on, and help getting to the airport or bus station.
5. For those whose sponsors absolutely cannot get the money together for bus/plane tickets, the host site should be prepared to help them.. For example, if one family is having trouble getting the resources to move on, the host site may need to raise funds to buy the tickets. But we recommend that the host site strongly encourage the guest to identify support within their own networks, and only buy tickets when absolutely necessary.
6. Experience shows that most, if not all, guests will have a point of contact (sponsor) and will want to move on as quickly as possible. But we cannot ascertain if there will also be families that need extra help. For those do not have sponsors or anyone in the US, the committee will need to figure out what to do to help them become independent. For example, the committee may need to do some outreach to locate an apartment where they can stay until they can find a job and become independent, with help from the parish.

Promotion and Engagement

Your committee can decide the level of public education about this project. This is an excellent opportunity to educate and involve your local community through social media and mainstream media.