

Refugee Services operates a unique volunteer programme to help the country's annual quota of refugees settle into their new communities. The programme currently operates in the resettlement centres where we have offices – Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Hutt Valley, Porirua, Wellington, Nelson and Christchurch.

Our Volunteer Training Programme helps equip volunteers with the skills and knowledge and confidence needed to provide newly-arrived refugees with practical support, advocacy and friendship during the initial six months of their resettlement.

The work is challenging and involves commitment and responsibility but brings with it great rewards. Our volunteers come from every walk of life. If you:

- enjoy meeting people from other cultures and would like to share your own;
- want to help refugees adapt to life in NZ; and
- have time to spend with a refugee.

This could be the opportunity for you.

We operate an in-house training programme for volunteers at different times throughout the year in the different centres. The course is around 15 hours long and classes usually take place in the evenings or at weekends.

A broad range of topics relating to refugee and resettlement issues is covered including:

- the refugee experience;
- the role of the volunteer support worker;
- refugee cultures;
- support services and resources for refugees and their support workers;
- refugee health & well-being and education.

The programme is approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority and is designed so that all support workers can qualify for our Refugee Services Certificate in Refugee Resettlement Support.

After attending the programme and acceptance interview each successful support worker is placed in a small team and introduced to a refugee individual or family. When the refugees arrive in their new communities support workers offer practical help and undertake to be in weekly contact for a six month period. Our agency provides on-going support and supervision to all support workers.

If you're interested in volunteering as a support worker contact the Refugee Services office nearest you.