

Background

The Wilkinson-St. David’s Refugee Sponsorship Group (Sponsor Group) was formed on March 7, 2016 by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA), Wilkinson Community Sponsor Group and St. David’s Anglican Church, Donlands (St. David’s).

As per the MOU, our purpose is to work together for the sponsorship of a family who wishes to resettle in Canada and each partner organization has assumed specific responsibilities.

AURA has requested that we form an Executive Committee of 4-8 individuals to facilitate the work of the Sponsor Group, both in preparation for the sponsored family’s arrival and during their first year in Canada.

The below structure will be adopted in order to facilitate the efficient operation of the Sponsor Group.

Sponsor Group

The Sponsor Group consists of an Executive Committee made up of Officers who are voting members and volunteers who are not members of the Executive Committee and are non-voting members.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee will consist of not less than four (4) and not more than eight (8) officers who have voting rights, each of whom is either a parent or staff/volunteer of Wilkinson Public School, a member of the St. David’s Anglican Church congregation, or both (Officers).

All Officers must provide valid proof of police clearance to the Secretary before any interaction with the sponsored family. All members interacting directly with the sponsored family must also provide valid proof of police clearance to the Secretary.

Officer Roles of the Executive Committee:

1. Co-chairs x2: Ideally, one from the Wilkinson Community Sponsor Group and one from St. David’s
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Communications Officer x2
5. Resettlement Officer x2

Executive Committee Meetings

- The Executive Committee will meet regularly, either in person, by conference call, or via online meeting/webinar.
- A quorum of no fewer than three (3) Officers is required to be present at any Executive Committee meeting. If quorum is not reached, the meeting will be adjourned to another date.
- For a motion to be passed at an Executive Committee meeting, a vote in favour of by more than 50% of the Officers present will be required.
- When a decision must be made in order to address a time sensitive matter, motions may be passed by electronic message. A quorum of three (3) Officers and a majority vote of more than 50% will be required to pass motions made via electronic message.

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- Minutes will be distributed to members of the Executive Committee and posted in a shared folder that can be accessed by any member of the Sponsor Group.

Sponsor Group Meetings

- The Sponsor Group will meet from time to time as necessary, as determined by the Executive Committee.

Duties of the Officers

Co-chairs:

- Call and chair all meetings of the Sponsor Group and Executive Committee.
- Draw up the agendas for meetings and generally supervise the business of the Sponsor Group.
- Have the power to act together in all emergency matters for the benefit of the Sponsor Group or the sponsored family, according to their best judgement and acting reasonably.
- Working directly, or through others, are responsible for liaising with and preparing and presenting reports to AURA, representatives of Wilkinson Junior Public School, or St. David’s.
- Are responsible for being aware of the relevant policies of the partner organizations that apply to the actions of the Sponsor Group.
- The Co-chair who is the member of St. David’s may act as a co-signing Officer of the Sponsor Group.

Secretary:

- Assists the Co-chairs in the performance of their duties and in whatever matters the Co-Chairs may assign from time to time.
- Executive Committee and the Sponsor Group and makes the records available when requested by any Officers or Sponsor Group members.
- Issues advance notice of the Executive Committee meetings and distributes the meeting schedule and agendas to the Officers and/or the Sponsor Group members, as appropriate.
- Records and distributes minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee and the Sponsor Group and posts them in a shared folder that can be accessed by any member of the Sponsor Group.
- Maintains a central list of Executive Committee members, non-voting members and other interested parties.

Treasurer:

- Receives all monies directed to the sponsored family and keeps the financial records of the Sponsor Group.
- Reports to all Executive Committee meetings, in writing, the financial status of the Sponsor Group.
- Prepares a quarterly summary of receipts and expenditures.
- Maintains the Canada Helps donation portal for the Sponsor Group.
- Issues charitable receipts for qualifying contributions.
- Serves as liaison to the Anglican Diocese on matters relating to the Diocesan grant.
- Disburses funds to the sponsored family in accordance with budgets prepared and approved by the Executive Committee.

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- Disburses emergency funds for the benefit of the Sponsor Group or the sponsored family, according to their reasonable judgement.
- Is a signing officer of the Sponsor Group.

Communications Officer:

- Is responsible for the development of a Communications schedule to publicize the activities of the Sponsor Group.
- Handles the public relations for the Sponsor Group.
- Maintains the website and Facebook page of the Sponsor Group.
- Drafts and issues promotional and informational mailings through Mailchimp.

Resettlement Officer:

- Is responsible for overseeing the development of the Resettlement plan to support the sponsored family in its first year in Canada.
- Coordinates the team that will welcome and assist the sponsored family immediately upon their arrival.
- Advises volunteers in matters related to resettlement, including:
 - a. Documentation
 - b. Fundraising/Housing/Materials
 - c. Banking/Finance
 - d. Education
 - e. Healthcare
 - f. Social/Community Access
- Acts upon any decisions made by the Executive Committee and considers recommendations made by AURA concerning the resettlement process.
- Records any concerns expressed by either the sponsored family or the volunteers about the resettlement process and ensures that these are handled promptly by the appropriate resource.
- Works to foster a respectful and positive environment both for the sponsored family and the Sponsor Group volunteers throughout the resettlement process.

Resettlement Areas

- Documentation:
 - a. Assist the sponsored family in registering for and obtaining all required government documents including SIN, OHIP, IFH, Child tax benefits, permanent resident card.
 - b. Other Documentation related issues that arise
- Fundraising/Housing/Materials:
 - a. Raise funds to support the sponsored family through the course of one year.
 - b. Search for affordable housing for the sponsored family.
 - c. Develop a list of materials based on both anticipated and known needs of the sponsored family.

- d. Ensure that requests for funds and material support are issued and handled in a timely and appropriate manner.
- e. Ensure that contributors are thanked for their support.
- f. When a donation of materials cannot be accepted, help connect contributors to other organizations that can accept their contribution.
- g. Other Fundraising/Housing/Materials related issues that arise.
- Banking/Finance:
 - a. Help the sponsored family open a bank account
 - b. Provide an overview to the sponsored family about their finances/budget
 - c. Develop a list of government benefits which may be available to the sponsored family
 - d. Assist the sponsored family in completing the requirements to qualify for these benefits
 - e. Work with the sponsored family to adjust the budget, as needed
 - f. Other Banking/Finance related issues that arise
- Education/Employment:
 - a. Help the sponsored family enroll in ESL classes and school, facilitate language assessment for adults
 - b. Help connect adult sponsored family members to employment training and employment services
 - c. Other Education/Employment related issues that arise
- Healthcare:
 - a. Help the sponsored family connect with a doctor, dentist, pediatrician, eye doctor, etc.
 - b. Assist with paperwork, booking appointments, acquiring prescriptions, and understanding medical advice.
 - c. Other Healthcare related issues that arise
- Social/Community Access:
 - a. Help the sponsored family connect with community resources, including libraries, community centres, food and clothing banks, settlement services
 - b. Help orient the sponsored family on local transit and the local neighborhood
 - c. Help the sponsored family connect with neighbors, members of the local community, and other families and groups with shared interests
 - d. Organize social events and encourages Sponsor Group members to involve and invite the sponsored family in social events
 - e. Other Social/Community Access related issues that arise

Nominations and Elections

Nominations

- In the event of a vacancy of an Officer position, a call for nominations, including a description of the role (duties, time commitment, etc.) will be issued by the Secretary to all members of the Sponsor Group.

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- Nominees must be parents or staff/volunteers of Wilkinson Public School and/or of the St. David’s Anglican Church congregation and provide valid proof of police clearance to the Secretary or the Co-Chairs.

Elections

- The Executive Committee will hold a special meeting to review the Officer candidate(s) qualifications for the specific role(s) being recruited for.
- Election to the Executive Committee will be made by a show of hands by the Officers present using a plurality of votes (the candidate receives more votes than any other candidate, but may not receive a majority of votes) and the Secretary will record all votes in the minutes of that meeting.

Removal

- An Officer may be removed from office for cause by more than two-thirds of the Officers of the Executive Committee present at the vote in question.

Vacancy

- Should a vacancy occur due to lack of candidates volunteering the Executive Committee may appoint an individual to fill the vacant position.

Amendments

- Officers have the power to amend the governance document as needed with a majority vote of more than 50% the total number of Officers of the Executive Committee.