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**Sample Intensive Case Management Onboarding Guide**

# The Preferred Communities (PC) program provides intensive case management services to refugees and ORR-eligible populations with special needs within five years of arrival to the U.S. Intensive case management (ICM) staff support recipients in the areas of long-term case management, health and medical interventions, mental health interventions, and social adjustment services, among others.

# This Intensive Case Management Onboarding Guide is a framework for onboarding new staff members who will provide intensive case management services. It is meant to be customized to include organization-specific training. This guide shares reading materials, recorded webinars, and other resources to complement your other onboarding activities, which may include shadowing colleagues, discussing specific scenarios, reviewing materials and organization policies, and receiving training from supervisors.

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| Learn More About Who We Serve | |
| This first section provides you with an introduction to some of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)-eligible populations served within the Preferred Communities program.  Note:This is not a comprehensive list of ORR-eligible populations that may be enrolled in the Preferred Communities program. For a full list of eligibility documents for all eligible client populations, please refer to ORR State Letters [00-17](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/orr_state_letter_508_0.pdf); [01-13](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/archive/otip/policy-guidance/state-letter-01-13); [08-04](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/policy-guidance/state-letter-08-04); and [10-03](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/archive/orr/policy-guidance/state-letter-10-03) available on the [ORR website](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/resource-library). | |
| Due Date:  Completion Date: | |
| Refugees | Watch: [Who are refugees and how do they arrive in the U.S.?](https://switchboardta.org/resource/who-are-refugees-and-how-do-they-arrive-in-the-united-states/)  Read: [Resettlement in the United States](https://www.unhcr.org/us/what-we-do/resettlement-united-states)  Watch: [What is refugee resettlement and what is UNHCR’s role?](https://youtu.be/mPu12hOoAu8) |
| Asylees & Asylum Seekers | Review: [Steps of the U.S. Asylum Process](https://rcusa.org/resettlement/asylum-process/)  Review: [Who is a Refugee, Afghan Evacuee, and Asylum Seeker?](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/who-is-a-refugee-afghan-evacuee-and-asylum-seeker-2/) |
| Cuban & Haitian Entrants | Read: [ORR Fact Sheet for Cuban/Haitian Entrants](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/orr_fact_sheet_cuban_haitian_entrant.pdf) |
| Survivors of Human Trafficking | Watch: [Faces of Human Trafficking Series](https://ovc.ojp.gov/library/multimedia/list?series_filter=Faces%20of%20Human%20Trafficking)  Read:[An Introduction to Human Trafficking in the United States](https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/HT_Intro_to_HT_fact_sheet-508.pdf) |

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| General Case Management | | |
| The following section provides an introduction to case management and establishes standards and expectations for staff working within case management. These values draw heavily from the field of social work. Although not all ICM staff may be social workers, the services we provide are aligned with the standards found in the[National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English). | | |
| Due Date:  Completion Date: | | |
| Ethics of Service Provision | Read: National Association of Social Workers [Code of Ethics](https://www.socialworkers.org/about/ethics/code-of-ethics/code-of-ethics-english) | *Activity: Choose two principles that stood out to you and explain why.* |
| Case Management Foundations | Watch: [Case Management Foundations](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/case-management-foundations/) | *Activity: What are some contextual and cultural factors you should consider as a case manager? What are some practical ways you can support clients’ well-being?* |
| Strengths-Based Approach | Watch: [Demystifying Strengths-Based Services to Foster Refugees’ Resilience](https://switchboardta.org/resource/webinar-demystifying-strengths-based-services-to-foster-refugees-resilience/)  Read: [What is a Strength-Based Approach?](https://positivepsychology.com/strengths-based-interventions/) | *Activity: Review a sample client intake and note the client’s strengths.* |
| Principles of Trauma-Informed Care | Watch: [Trauma-Informed Care in Case Management](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/trauma-informed-care-in-case-management/) or Read: [Trauma-Informed Care: A Primer for Refugee Service Providers](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/trauma-informed-care-movement-towards-practice-2/) | *Activity: What are three principles of trauma-informed care? Why is understanding trauma-informed care important to serving refugee clients?* |
| Defining Professional Case Management Boundaries | Watch: [Client Boundaries](https://healtorture.org/courses/case-management-101-client-boundaries/)  Watch:[Boundaries in the Electronic Age](https://switchboardta.org/resource/boundaries-in-the-electronic-age/)  Watch:[Creating Balance in Case Management](https://switchboardta.org/resource/creating-balance-in-case-management/) | *Discuss with your supervisor: What are some challenges you anticipate with setting client boundaries? How can your supervisor assist with these challenges?* |
| Cultural Competency | Read: [Applying Cultural Humility, Awareness, and Competency in Refugee Resettlement](https://coresourceexchange.org/2023/06/13/applying-cultural-humility-awareness-and-competency-in-refugee-resettlement/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=applying-cultural-humility-awareness-and-competency-in-refugee-resettlement)  Read: Cultural Backgrounders for the most commonly served populations at your location ([Afghan](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/afghan-backgrounder-2/), [Bhutanese](https://switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-backgrounder-bhutanese-refugee-families/), [Burmese (Myanmar)](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-backgrounder-refugee-families-from-burma/), [Congolese](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-backgrounder-congolese/), [Iraqi](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-backgrounder-refugee-families-from-iraq/), [Rohingya](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/rohingya-backgrounder/), [Somali](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/cultural-backgrounder-refugee-families-from-somalia/), and [Ukrainian](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/ukrainian-backgrounder/))  Read: Refugee Wellness Guides for the most commonly served populations at your location ([Congolese](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-wellness-country-guide-democratic-republic-of-congo-2/), [Syrian](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-wellness-country-guide-syrian-arab-republic-2/), [Iraqi](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-wellness-country-guide-iraq-2/), [Burmese](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-wellness-country-guide-burma-myanmar-2/), [Somali](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-wellness-country-guide-federal-republic-of-somalia-somalia-2/), and [Rohingya](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-wellness-country-guide-burma-myanmar-rohingya-2/),) | *Activity: Why is cultural competency an ongoing process?*  *On your own, reflect on the results of your Implicit Bias Tests. Were there any surprises?* |

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| Intensive Case Management | | |
| This section provides ICM staff with information needed to provide services to ICM clients and manage a caseload within the Preferred Communities program. | | |
| Due Date:  Completion Date: | | |
| ICM Overview | Review: [Preferred Communities Overview](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/orr/programs/refugees/pc)  Review: [Preferred Communities Program Guidelines](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/preferred-communities-program-guidelines.pdf)  Receive: Orientation to the ICM program from your supervisor or organization’s training officer  Discuss:   * + Required Tools & Assessments   + Service Period   + Required Services | *Discuss with your supervisor: Clarify any questions that may have come up for you while reviewing the Preferred Communities Program Guidelines.*  *Activity: Become familiar with the forms and tools and when you should use each form.* |
| Intake & Assessment | Review: Intake processes and required ICM assessments with your supervisor or organization’s training officer  Observe: Two assessments with ICM clients | *Activity: List the forms that are required to be completed during intake and assessment.*  *Discuss with your supervisor: When should ICM assessments be conducted and how is client self-sufficiency evaluated?*  *Activity: Which ICM standards and expectations were implemented? What is one best practice that you took away from the observation?* |
| Setting Goals with Clients | Watch: [How to Write a SMART Goal](https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/learnstorm-growth-mindset-activities-us/elementary-and-middle-school-activities/setting-goals/v/learnstorm-growth-mindset-how-to-write-a-smart-goal)  Discuss with your supervisor: What is the purpose of self-sufficiency plans in the ICM program? | *Activity: Make a sign or poster to remind yourself to use SMART goals. Keep this at your desk.*  *Activity: Review three client self-sufficiency plans. Are they SMART?* |
| Regular ICM Direct Services | Review: [ORR Guidelines on services](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/orr/preferred-communities-program-guidelines.pdf) that are provided throughout the ICM service period (pages 9–10).   * + Reminder: ICM staff must have an interaction with clients at least once every month! | *Activity: Identify the types of direct and indirect services that are provided to clients by ICM staff.* |
| Client Referrals | Review: [Mental Health Referral Forms](https://switchboardta.org/resource/tool-mental-health-referral-and-new-provider-inquiry-forms/)  Watch: [Overcoming Barriers and Strengthening Enabling Factors](https://switchboardta.org/resource/webinar-access-to-mental-health-services-for-refugees-and-other-vulnerable-immigrants-in-the-u-sovercoming-barriers-and-strengthening-enabling-factors/) | *Activity: Discuss with your supervisor the types of referrals made for different client needs.* |
| Client Termination | Read: [Ethics: Terminating Services](https://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe_0506.shtml)\*  *\*Note that these articles are meant for social workers and MSW students, but the ethics and practices are applicable to anyone who works with clients.* | *Reflect: Why is appropriate client termination essential to case management? What are the steps of appropriate client termination?*  *Activity: Observe a client close-out. What information was covered during the close out? What is one best practice that you took away from the observation? Is there anything you would do differently?* |
| Interpretation | E-learning: [Introduction to Working with Interpreters](https://switchboardta.org/courses/introduction-to-working-with-interpreters/)  E-learning: [Overcoming Challenges in Interpretation](https://switchboardta.org/courses/overcoming-challenges-in-interpretation/)  Review: [Advocate for Clients’ Right to Interpretation Services](https://switchboardta.org/resource/language-access-understand-and-advocate-for-your-clients-right-to-interpretation-services-2/)  Review: [Scripts for Working with Interpreters](https://switchboardta.org/resource/scripts-for-working-with-interpreters/) | *Discuss with supervisor: Why is interpretation important? What are some considerations you should make when seeking interpretation for a client?* |
| Exception Requests | Discuss with your supervisor or organization’s training officer:   * + Purpose of exception requests   + When exception requests are needed   + Information needed to write an exception request   + Best practices for exception requests | *Activity: Review three approved exception requests from your office.* |

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| ICM Data & Documentation | | |
| The following section is meant to familiarize ICM staff with the different components of ICM data and documentation. Keeping timely and accurate documentation of services is a critical part of case management and may vary in different organizations. | | |
| Due Date:  Completion Date: | | |
| ICM Documentation | Discuss:with your supervisor or training officer how your organization stores ICM client information and documentation | *Activity: Review case notes for three cases.* |
| Case Note Documentation | Watch:[Writing Case Notes](https://healtorture.org/courses/case-management-101-writing-case-notes/)  Watch:[Creating High-Quality Case Management Documentation](https://switchboardta.org/resource/creating-high-quality-case-management-documentation/)  Review:[Creating High-Quality Case Management Documentation Guide](https://switchboardta.org/resource/creating-high-quality-case-management-documentation-2/)  Read: [Making the Paperwork Work for You](https://www.switchboardta.org/blog/case-management-documentation/) | *Discuss with your supervisor: How are case notes documented within your agency?*  *Activity: Observe an ICM activity and draft case notes based on the training you received. Make sure it contains all the information covered in the training.* |
| Reporting | Review:the processes needed for ICM reporting with your supervisor or training officer  Review: report templates and examples of previously submitted reports | *Activity: Run and export a list of all active clients that have been served in the last month.*  *Activity: Run and export the percentage of clients who have received a monthly service.*  *Activity: Identify what data and documentation is required when submitting reports.* |
| Case Files | Review: your local office ICM case file checklist  Review: your local office case file quality assurance procedure | *Activity: Using a local case file review checklist, review three case files (two open and one closed case).* |

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| Additional Resources and Tools for ICM Staff | | |
| This section contains additional resources that pertain to different issues and situations that may arise for ICM clients. We have also included some important frameworks that you can utilize on a regular basis when working with clients. | | |
| Due Date:  Completion Date: | | |
| Domestic Violence (DV) | E-Learning: [Responding to Intimate Partner Violence in Resettlement, Asylum, & Integration Settings](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/responding-to-intimate-partner-violence-in-resettlement-asylum-integration-settings/)  Complete: [Domestic Violence Training](https://sites.google.com/a/simmons.edu/dv-training/)  Watch: [Refugee Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence](https://switchboardta.org/resource/refugee-children-exposed-to-intimate-partner-violence-doubly-vulnerable-2/) | *Activity: Discuss the local DV protocol with your supervisor. What is required of you? What is required of your supervisor?* |
| Refugee Families & Children | Review: [Preventing Child Maltreatment Curriculum](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/child-maltreatment-prevention-curriculum/)  Watch: [Family Engagement with Refugee Populations](https://switchboardta.org/resource/family-engagement-with-refugee-populations-2/)  Read: [Guardianship Fact Sheet](https://switchboardta.org/resource/guardianship-face-sheet-for-staff-assisting-refugee-families/)  Read: [Growing Up in a New Country: A Positive Youth Development Toolkit for Working with Refugees and Immigrants](https://brycs.org/toolkit/growing-up-in-a-new-country-a-positive-youth-development-toolkit-for-working-with-refugees-and-immigrants/)  Read: [Child Care Resources for Refugee Service Providers: Ensuring Working Families Thrive](https://www.switchboardta.org/blog/child-care-resources-for-refugee-service-providers-ensuring-working-families-thrive/)  Watch: [Traumatic Stress Among Refugee Children: Responding to Abuse, Exploitation, and Trafficking](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/traumatic-stress-among-refugee-children-and-youth-part-3-responding-to-abuse-exploitation-and-trafficking/) | *Discuss with your supervisor: What are the local child abuse and neglect reporting protocols?*  *Activity: List all resources and programming available for refugee children and youth at your office. Discuss referral processes with your supervisor.* |
| Trauma-Informed Approach and Motivational Interviewing | Listen: [An Overview of Trauma-Informed Care](http://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/2013/04/an-overview-of-trauma-informed-care.html)  Listen: [What is Motivational Interviewing?](https://switchboardta.org/resource/podcast-what-is-motivational-interviewing/)  Watch: [Traumatic Stress Among Refugee Children and Youth Part 2: Implementing Trauma-Informed Care with Children and Families](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/traumatic-stress-among-refugee-children-and-youth-part-2-implementing-trauma-informed-care-with-children-and-families/)  Watch: [How Communities Can Respond to Grief](https://switchboardta.org/resource/how-communities-can-respond-to-grief-2/) | *Activity: What are the basics of trauma-informed care? What are some examples of how you can implement trauma-informed care in your work?*  *Activity: Describe three ways you will use motivational interviewing in your work with ICM clients.* |
| Self-Care and Staff Care | Watch: [Optimizing Your Self-Care Based on Your Coping Style](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=video&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjf7MHCgKDWAhUU84MKHdvCDeEQtwIIKDAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DcidrkVEjMzQ&usg=AFQjCNGPvUIlX8BwPs9Wd6TXRwR1KQ-Gzg)  Read: [Preventing Occupational Hazards by Promoting Organizational Resilience](https://switchboardta.org/resource/preventing-occupational-hazards-by-promoting-organizational-resilience/)  Watch: [Balancing the Demanding Needs of Case Management](https://switchboardta.org/resource/balancing-the-demanding-needs-of-case-management-recording/)  Complete: [Self-Care and Lifestyle Balance Inventory](https://www.headington-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/R16-self-care-lifestyle-inventory-for-emergency-responders_24051.pdf) | *Discuss with supervisor: What are some ways your office prioritizes self-care and staff care? What are some ways you can incorporate self-care into your work routine?*  *Activity: Review your Self-Care and Lifestyle Balance Inventory. What are one or two practices you will commit to in the next month to improve your self-care? Who will keep you accountable?* |
| Mental Health and Wellness | Watch: [Access to Mental Health Services for Refugees](https://switchboardta.org/resource/webinar-access-to-mental-health-services-for-refugees-and-other-vulnerable-immigrants-in-the-u-sovercoming-barriers-and-strengthening-enabling-factors/)  Read: [Alternative Therapeutic Approaches to Refugee Mental Health](https://switchboardta.org/resource/alternative-therapeutic-approaches-to-refugee-mental-health-2/)  Read: [Building a Culturally Informed Network of Refugee Mental Healthcare Providers](https://switchboardta.org/resource/info-guide-building-a-culturally-informed-network-of-refugee-mental-healthcare-providers/)  Watch: [Integrating Refugee Mental Healthcare](https://switchboardta.org/resource/integrating-refugee-mental-healthcare-rhs-15-and-healthcare-providers-2/) | *Discuss with supervisor: What are barriers to accessing mental health services for refugees at your office? What solutions have been implemented? If your office uses a standard mental health screening tool, how is it implemented?* |
| Immigration Assistance | Watch: [Overview of the U.S. Naturalization Process and Citizenship Benefits](https://switchboardta.org/resource/overview-of-the-u-s-naturalization-process-and-citizenship-benefits-2/)  Watch: [Helping Clients with Disabilities Naturalize](https://switchboardta.org/resource/helping-clients-with-disabilities-naturalize-2/) | *Discuss with supervisor: Why is it essential to educate clients about the path to U.S. citizenship?* |
| Physical Health and Medical Needs | Review: [Improving Well-Being for Refugees in Primary Care](https://switchboardta.org/resource/improving-well-being-for-refugees-in-primary-care-a-toolkit-for-providers/)  Read: [Assisting Newcomers with Navigating the U.S. Health Care System](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/assisting-newcomers-with-navigating-the-u-s-health-care-system/)  Review: [Helping Clients Prepare for Initial Medical Appointments](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/helping-clients-prepare-for-initial-medical-appointments/) | *Discuss with supervisor: What are the primary physical health needs of ICM clients in your location? Who are clients’ primary health care providers in the area?* |
| Indicators of Suicidality and Self-Harm | Read: [Suicidality Among Refugees](https://switchboardta.org/resource/suicidality-among-refugees-information-guide-2/)  Read: [Suicide and Refugee Children and Adolescents](https://switchboardta.org/resource/suicide-and-refugee-children-and-adolescents/) | *Activity: With your supervisor, review the protocol for escalation if a client discloses suicidal ideation. What is your responsibility? What is your supervisor’s responsibility?*  *Activity: Complete a mock safety plan with your supervisor.* |

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| Community Outreach | | |
| Community outreach and capacity building is an important part of ICM services to make sure clients are connected to the appropriate resources and referrals in the community. | | |
| Due Date:  Completion Date: | | |
|  | Watch: [Strengthening Refugee Integration through Community Resource Mapping](https://switchboardta.org/resource/webinar-strengthening-refugee-integration-through-community-resource-mapping/) | *Activity: Review case notes for three cases. Discuss with supervisor: What local resources are available? What community partners are you trying to establish relationships with this year?*  *Activity: Complete* [*Community Resource Mapping template*](https://switchboardta.org/resource/community-resource-mapping-templates/) *after viewing webinar. Discuss with team as necessary.* |

We encourage you to continue learning as you progress in your role within intensive case management. Please consult your supervisor or training officer with respect to additional opportunities to continue to grow within your role. Social learning opportunities, such as communities of practice or working groups, can also be a great way to exchange knowledge and learn from others! Lastly, ask your supervisor to connect you with the PC Learning Circle, which is a monthly training hosted by the national resettlement agencies’ Preferred Communities headquarters staff.

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