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**In-Home Health and Safety Checklist**

Refugee families, service providers, and health care providers have voiced concerns about monitoring the safety of refugees’ new residences, both inside and outside the home. This checklist, which focuses mostly on safety concerns inside of the home, is based on a survey of providers’ experiences. It can be a useful reference during meetings or home visits with clients.

This checklist is not a compliance tool for any specific grant or program; always reference your grant agreement and terms for specific program requirements. This is a starting point, not a comprehensive list. Feel free to add any additional checklist items or remove items as you deem necessary. You can also reference Switchboard’s resource [Safety Planning and Emergency Preparedness for Refugee Housing](https://www.switchboardta.org/resource/safety-planning-and-emergency-preparedness-for-refugee-housing/) for additional guidance.

Service providers should keep in mind that, due to a diversity of past living arrangements, some clients may be very familiar with these tenets of in-home safety, while others may be learning about them for the first time.

Document any next steps or issues in the Follow-up Notes section below this checklist.

**If an urgent and/or life-threatening safety concern is identified, providers should follow their organization’s protocol to address the issue as soon as possible.**

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| What to look for | Requirement met? Yes, No or N/A | Needs follow up?  |
| All rooms  |
| *Unit is free from visible, bare electrical wires* |   |  |
| *Interior paint is in good condition (not peeling or flaking)* |   |  |
| *Rooms are free of pest/insect/rodent infestation (or signs of infestation, such as rodent droppings)* |   |  |
| *If pest/insect/rodent traps are in use, they are safely out of the reach of people and pets (especially children)* |   |  |
| *Rooms are clean and sanitary (free of mildew, mold and unsanitary odors)* |   |  |
| *All doors and windows work*  |   |  |
| *All windows have locking features* |   |  |
| *Any door that can be locked can also be unlocked (have keys)* |  |  |
| *All lights, light switches, and ceiling fans (if present) work and are in good condition* |   |  |
| *All outlets work (test them by bringing a phone charger and plugging it into each outlet)* |   |  |
| *No outlets have obvious signs of electrical issues (e.g., broken outlets, scorch marks)* |   |  |
| *Unit has enough living space for each person according to local policies/standards*  |   |  |
| *Unit has enough bedrooms or sleeping areas for the whole family* |  |  |
| *Cleaning chemicals are clearly labeled, properly stored, and correctly used* |  |  |
| *If firearms are present in the home, they are securely and safely stored*  |  |  |
| *All water temperatures are within reasonable, safe limits (not too hot)* |  |  |
| *Flammable objects, such as curtains, clothing, and blankets, are kept away from heaters, radiators, fireplaces or other hot places* |  |  |
| *Heater and air conditioner (if present) are in good working condition* |  |  |
| Emergency preparedness |
| *There are working smoke detectors in or near each bedroom, by the front door, and near the kitchen* |  |  |
| *There are working fire extinguishers* |  |  |
| *There are working carbon monoxide (CO)/radon detectors—some states require these detectors, while in other states tenants must supply their own; check your state’s regulations* |  |  |
| *Emergency evacuation routes have been identified and are accessible* |  |  |
| *Clients know how to prevent fires and what to do in the event of a fire; family members have prepared for the use of evacuation routes in an emergency*  |  |  |
| *An* [*emergency kit*](https://www.settlein.support/en-us/articles/10905687945885) *is present in the home*  |  |  |
| *An emergency contact list—including 911, local police, Poison Control, relevant healthcare providers, school, family members, and friends—is visibly posted* |  |  |
| *Clients have memorized if, when and how to call 911; how to specify their home address; and how to request an interpreter* |  |  |
| *Clients know how to maintain, test, and change batteries in their smoke or carbon monoxide detectors* |  |  |
| Kitchen, cooking, and food  |
| *Clients know what can and cannot be cooked in different relevant appliances, such as the microwave, toaster, air fryer, stove, or oven* |  |  |
| *Clients are familiar with safe food practices regarding perishable food and kitchen cleanliness (refrigerator versus freezer, expiration dates, etc.)*  |  |  |
| *Clients know cleaning and food storage techniques to minimize pests* |  |  |
| *Clients know safe cooking practices when using stoves and ovens (particularly gas), especially when children are nearby* |  |  |
| Child-proofing (if relevant) |
| *Electrical outlets are covered with child-proof covers* |  |  |
| *Windows are kept locked*  |  |  |
| *Stairs are blocked with safety gates so that young children cannot access without adult supervision* |  |  |
| *Cleaning chemicals are stored out of the reach of children* |  |  |
| *Knives, scissors, candles, lighters, and other sharp or flammable objects are stored out of the reach of children* |  |  |
| *Medications are stored out of the reach of children, with child-proof lids if possible* |  |  |
| *Batteries and small battery-powered objects are stored out of the reach of children* |  |  |
| *Furniture and large household items are stable and cannot be pushed over; heavy, tall furniture (e.g., shelves) should be mounted to the wall if possible*  |  |  |
| *Floors and low tables are clear of small items and other choking hazards* |  |  |
| *Cribs meet current infant safety standards for infants, and are free of soft items such as blankets, dolls, bumpers, etc.*  |  |  |
| *Cabinets are closed with safety latches* |  |  |
| *Stoves, especially gas stoves, have child-proof knob covers, with pots out of the reach of children* |  |  |
| *Appliances are unplugged when not in use; electrical cords are stored out of the reach of children* |  |  |
| *Toilet lids are closed when not in use* |  |  |
| *Any bath tubs have nonslip mats* |  |  |
| *Children are never left unattended in the bath* |  |  |
| *Corner guards cover the edges of any tables or other sharp, angular objects within the reach of children* |  |  |
| *If possible, window blinds and curtains are cordless; any existing cords are wrapped around wall brackets to keep them from entangling children* |  |  |
| *Children are kept away from heaters, radiators, fireplaces, and other hot areas*  |  |  |
| *Car keys are kept out of the reach of children* |  |  |
| Client knowledge |  |
| *Clients know how to contact their landlord/manager regarding needs* |  |  |
| *Clients understand the terms and conditions of their lease agreement* |  |  |
| *Clients know how to use and store cleaning chemicals* |  |  |
| *Clients know the symbols indicating poison or hazardous materials, and know when and how to call Poison Control* |  |  |
| *Clients are familiar with requirements around adult supervision for children, and have identified trusted caregiver(s) for their children if needed* |  |  |
| *Clients know how to use the heater and air conditioner and what to do if they stop working* |  |  |
| *Clients understand child-proofing and safety techniques* |  |  |
| *Clients know to safely store medication and avoid sharing prescription medication with others* |  |  |
| *Clients know who to call if they smell gas* |  |  |
| *Clients are informed about the dangers of lead poisoning; they understand how to identify sources of lead and undertake preventive measures*  |  |  |
| *Clients understand the risks of possessing firearms and know to keep them safely locked and stored away*  |  |  |
| Outside the home |
| *If the unit is located within a building complex, hallways/common areas have fire safety features (alarms, sprinklers, etc.)*  |  |  |
| *External stairs are clear of obstructions, with safety railings and adequate nighttime lighting* |  |  |
| *The surrounding area is considered relatively safe (does not have significant issues with drugs, gun violence, alcohol)*  |   |   |
| *Bodies of water (e.g., swimming pools) have restricted or controlled access* |   |   |
| *There is space for children to play away from street traffic or other dangers* |   |   |

Follow-up Notes

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| *If there are next steps needed, document here what needs to be done, who is responsible (e.g., service provider, clinic or client) and the timeline for completion.*  |

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Signature of person conducting preparation meeting Date

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