

## Volunteer Opportunity: Family Advocates (Limerick city & Newcastle West)

### About Doras Luimní

Doras Luimní is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation working to support and promote the rights of all migrants living in Limerick and the wider Mid-West region. We provide direct support services to refugees, asylum seekers and the wider migrant communities in the Mid-West region.

### About Family Advocacy Programme

We are currently seeking to engage volunteers in Limerick city and Newcastle West in our family advocacy programme, helping to support our refugee resettlement work in Limerick city and county.



The overall objective of the family advocacy programme is to give additional support to refugee families who have recently arrived in Limerick, ultimately aiding the integration process.

### What will be required of a Family Advocate?

A suitable advocate will be matched with a local family and will ideally spend 1-2 hours with the family per week to offer additional support with a variety of issues. All family advocates will be required to commit to volunteering for a 6-month period.

The aim of the Family Advocacy programme is to support and enable families to complete activities that may be difficult or confusing for them. Our advocates are urged not do everything *for* their families, but rather to provide assistance in order to encourage confidence, build capacity and enable effective integration in Limerick.

### Examples of the types of activities that may be required of advocates:

- **Assisting your match to make a dentist or doctor's appointment.** This may involve helping them to build confidence with their English by sitting alongside them while they are on the phone and be on hand if any difficulties arise.
- **Calling to confirm hospital appointments.**
- Telephoning hospitals to **request/confirm an interpreter.**
- **Checking any school/crèche correspondence** and ensuring that there is follow up if actions need to be taken e.g. money for swimming lessons, book rental schemes etc.
- Help with **completing forms** e.g. homework club registration form, disability allowance application, passport form, Back to Education allowance etc.

- **Dealing with other miscellaneous post/queries.** Some examples that have arisen to date at the Drop-in clinics include; booking NCT tests, motor tax renewal, booking driver theory test, medical card review form, calling bin collection company, confirm appointments, child benefit queries, water charges, contact housing agency, electricity bill queries, registering a new birth, school uniform information, registering supermarket clubcards online, transport information.
- For more complex matters such as Family Reunification, Travel Documents etc, or issues you may not feel comfortable dealing with, participants should be referred to Doras Luimní drop-in service.
- The Resettlement Support Worker is always available on the phone if support is needed.

### **An ideal Family Advocate will:**

- Be willing to volunteer 1-2 hours per week for 6 months;
- Be active in his/her community;
- Have intercultural experience;
- Be comfortable discussing sensitive topics;
- Be patient and respectful;
- Arabic language skills are very welcome but are *not* required.

### **How to apply?**

If you are interested in getting involved with this programme, please download and complete the volunteer application form. Completed forms should be returned to Monika Fallon at [m.fallon@dorasluimni.org](mailto:m.fallon@dorasluimni.org) or by post to Monika Fallon, Doras Luimní, 51a O'Connell Street, Limerick.

Note: We urge applicants to submit their applications as soon as possible, as the position will be closed once all of our resettled families are matched with suitable volunteers.

### **What happens if my application is successful?**

Following successful Garda vetting and reference checks, all advocates will receive intercultural training and a resource pack of useful contacts and information. The initial meetings between the advocate and the family will be in the family home, accompanied by the Resettlement Support Worker. Subsequent visits will be unaccompanied, unless the advocate requests additional support. The Resettlement Support Worker will contact you weekly to provide support to the advocate and address any issues there may be.

### **Further Information**

For further information on the work of Doras Luimní, our refugee resettlement work and to view our guide from the previous Family Advocacy Programme in Portlaoise, please visit [www.dorasluimni.org](http://www.dorasluimni.org)