

Caring Circle Description

The goal of a Caring Circle is to help Afghan Ally individuals and/or families to be self-sufficient within six-nine months of arrival by promoting independence and teaching each family to use the resources available in the Rochester Community.

A KOP Caring Circle is a group of individuals, volunteers and Afghan friends, willing to work together to help newly arrived Afghan families to navigate their way through their new life in America. Each Caring Circle helps one individual/family. If individual volunteers show interest in participating in a Caring Circle, we form a Caring Circle. If, however, you and a group of friends/co-workers/parishioners want to work together, we will create a Caring Circle from this group of volunteers. Let us know if your church, temple or other organization might be interested in forming a Caring Circle.

Volunteers will be given a checklist that needs to be accomplished and a general timeline. We also have a supporting document available to our Caring Circle volunteers that provides information on where to find answers for questions they might have.

The number of volunteers in a Caring Circle will depend upon the needs and English skills. A single Afghan ally may be assigned only 2 volunteers, whereas a large family may be assigned several volunteers. It is important to consider adding an Afghan person as a member of the Caring Circle.

KOP Caring Circles volunteers do things like:

Take families grocery shopping (you will not be required to help them monetarily).

Help families to read and understand the mail they've received and act accordingly. Understand how to use the Post Office and how to purchase stamps.

Find the local Library and show them how to use it.

Take the family to playgrounds, parks, or museums. KOP does have free passes for RMSC. Please check local museum entry fees for families with SNAP cards.

Caring Circle Frequently Asked Questions

What is my average time commitment? The first 2 months of your Caring Circle involvement is typically busy with emails and appointments. After the first 2 months, usually everyone is in school and somewhat settled in. Initially, your commitment may be a visit (lasting a couple of hours) every other week.

Where will the Afghan family be located? We generally try to match up our volunteers to families based on location. Most of the families will be living in the city of Rochester, preferably on a bus line. Some KOP volunteers live outside of Monroe County but are willing to come into the city to volunteer in a Caring Circle.

How available do I need to be to be part of a Caring Circle? We generally try to match up working people, retired people, students and homemakers. This way there is more flexibility with availability. Plus, we have a team of drivers that we can reach out to if Caring Circle members are not able to drive to daytime appointments.

Please Note:

This is a Very Strict KOP Policy:

**Volunteers are NOT to offer any financial assistance/ cash / gift card
to any Afghan family or individual.**

If food is needed for any reason, including because a SNAP card doesn't work, please contact the Caring Circle Manager.

If rent and utility payments cannot be met, please contact the Caring Circle Manager.

It is necessary for a family to stay within a very strict budget in order to survive their first year. The Budget Coordinator will provide Caring Circles with a budget worksheet, upon request, and is willing to assist with questions and more once the worksheet is complete. Budget information may not be shared outside of the caring circle.

Being in a Caring Circle is a commitment.

It is work but, it is a great way to meet new friends,
learn about a different culture, and make a difference in someone's life.