

Providing accommodation for refugees and internally displaced people



This guidance document provides practical tips for the hospitality industry wanting to welcome refugee and internally displaced guests during their transit.



1. Getting ready



2. During stay



3. Departure

- Provide a **welcome pack** to guests
- **Liaise with local authorities** to confirm details.
- **Pre-allocate rooms** based on guests' personal requirements (e.g. accessibility, family units).
- Ensure rooms are prepared with **extra amenities**.
- Ensure **guests are briefed** upon arrival and **hotel staff know any relevant procedures**.
- Consider the **check in experience** e.g.
 - set up a comfortable private area
 - have translators available where possible
 - provide refreshments and engagement for children
- Hotels should offer **usual housekeeping service** in line with brand standards.
- Ensure that **meals meet nutritional, dietary, religious and cultural needs**, and are varied.
- Ensure hotel employees understand the current situation and **feel emotionally supported** and equipped.
- Follow normal procedure for **assisting a guest who has become sick** and providing access to emergency healthcare.
- Ensure guests understand what do to in case of an **evacuation**.
- Consider **provisions for children and pets** throughout the stay.
- Consider assigning a '**liaison team member**' to bring together the community of refugees including from other hotels.
- **Liaise with guests and local authorities** on the departure details.
- Provide guests leaving the hotel after their stay with a **farewell pack** from the hotel for their onward journey, to include refreshments, amenities and activities.

Visit sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/refugee for further guidance and links to industry job opportunities and trainings.



1. Getting ready

Welcome packs

To ensure refugee and displaced guests feel welcomed, supported and understand what is available to them during their stay, hotels can provide welcome packs either on arrival or placed in their rooms in advance of check in.

This is offered in English, local language and relevant other languages, where possible.

The welcome pack should include:

- Overview of the hotel facilities and local area.
- Medical and welfare support available and how to access this.
- Details of food and beverages available, including the process for ordering, timing of service periods, restaurant location, etc.
- Housekeeping and maintenance availability e.g. guest laundry facilities.
- Useful contact details including Embassy / Consulate, NGO contact, local hospital emergency rooms, etc.
- Health and safety information, including what do to in case of an emergency – evacuation plan.
- Instructions for contacting hotel staff or management.
- Contact details for local charities who can support with clothing, basic household items.



Preparing for the guests' arrival

In preparing for arrival and to ensure guests have what they require for a comfortable stay, the below recommendations should be completed prior to check in:

Pre-arrival guidance:

- Liaise with the local authority or NGO for the following information:
 - Confirm guest details.
 - Approximate time of arrival.
 - If there's any specific concern raised by guests during travel journey (e.g. special needs for those with accessibility requirements or any illness).
- Pre-allocate the largest and or connecting rooms for families:
 - There should be no mixing of households and/or groups.
 - Consider how will you assign rooms in order to allow for efficient operational processes, i.e. room service and housekeeping.
- Ground floor rooms nearest to reception, should be reserved for those with mobility issues.
- Accessible rooms should be allocated as required, where available.
- Assume the guest may not have a credit card on file for incidentals.

Room preparation guidance:

- Ensure the room is prepared with **extra** amenities including shampoo, conditioner, soap, tea, coffee, etc.
- Additional towels should be provided as required.
- Water should be provided for each guest. Preferably reusable with opportunities to refill.
- Consider refrigerators (or empty mini bars) to be equipped in room or made available.
- Provide the welcome pack, if not provided on arrival.

Arrival guidance:

- To ensure guests are familiarised with the hotel and understand all relevant health and safety information, guests should be informed of facilities available to them along with relevant information.
- Additional hosts should be considered to support large numbers of people.
- Luggage assistance should be provided for guests as required, especially families.
- Hotels colleagues should be briefed to ensure guests show formal identification on arrival, which could be a passport, drivers license or paperwork from NGO, or as required by local legislation.

Other guidance considerations:

- A designated comfortable waiting area should be made available, separate from the reception area, to accommodate guests arriving at busy times. The area should be clearly marked to show guests where to stand/sit whilst waiting to check in.
- Consider setting up a separate check-in area for guest privacy and comfort.
- Where possible, have translator resources ready for guests on their arrival.
- Consider converting conference rooms into additional storage facilities for luggage, as some guests may arrive with a large quantity of belongings. Implement a system for identifying luggage, if this service is not usually provided.
- Provide food and refreshments on arrival, including snacks such as biscuits for children.
- Guests should be made aware of who in the hotel can speak their language if they are not comfortable communicating in the local language (if this is available within the hotel).
- Allocated guardians or carers should check in any persons under 18 (or younger if country law states otherwise) on their behalf with both parties present.

Forgot Something? Ensure levels of supplies are adequate for the additional need for these items, including ear plugs and eye masks to help with sleeping, especially in shared rooms.



2. During the stay

Housekeeping service

Hotels should offer usual housekeeping service in line with brand standards in terms of frequency and quality.

Guests may opt out of housekeeping service and may want to clean their own room everyday using hotel provided supplies.

Other guidance considerations:

- Hotel to provide guests with suitable disposable cleaning products and equipment so they can clean their own rooms while occupied, if required.
- Clean linen and towels should be provided regularly in line with brand standards.
- Ensure the room is prepared with extra daily amenities including shampoo, conditioner, soap, tea, coffee, etc.
- Ensure guests have sufficient facilities in their room to dispose of their waste. This will be the provision of a waste bin and additional bins bags.
- Waste should be collected during normal housekeeping. If rooms are cleaned by guests they should double bag rubbish, securely tie the top and leave outside their room for collection.
- COVID-19 protocols should be followed if the guest has tested positive.

Food and beverage service

Details of food and beverage services available to guests should be made clear in the welcome pack and during the arrival process.

Food and beverage guidance:

- Food and beverage should be made available every day, at least three time per day, to all guests.
- Guests should be informed at check-in of available F&B options, whether included in their stay or paid for on their own.
- Menus should be delivered to rooms (if relevant via the welcome pack, or electronically) with information on arrangements for food and beverage (e.g. in rooms, in designated restaurants).
- Ensure that meals meet nutritional, dietary, religious and cultural needs, etc.
- Ensure that meals are adequately varied day to day.
- Provide food and refreshments on arrival.
- Guests may order additional food and beverage as with regular guests.



Case study: Creating a welcoming environment

IHG Hotels & Resorts in Poland have been housing refugees displaced by the conflict in Ukraine and working to make their refugee guests feel comfortable. Examples include dedicating a stock room for their daily life needs and created an information room. Guests could store their personal items such as laundry and children's clothes, and the hotel also installed an information board with daily updates on activities, including free tickets to the zoo and other city attractions, as well as opening hours of local markets, stores and city offices. Most refugees arrived with children and did not have much with them. They needed medicine, clothes, food for their children and other personal items. The hotel therefore created an in-house coordinator position who helped refugees with shopping, translations and day to day requests. They were able to expand this role with the support of a volunteer and increase their support to refugees.

Wellbeing, safety and other considerations

Staff welfare:

It is essential that hotel employees are well prepared, understand the current situation and feel emotionally supported and equipped to welcome the guests.

- All colleagues should be briefed on the reasons for the guests' stay in order to empower the team to handle situations appropriately.
- The team should be made aware and briefed on cultural / language differences. All training should be recorded and records kept.
- With the difficult circumstances, management should promote mental health and wellbeing awareness to hotel colleagues.
- Line managers should check in regularly with staff and teams to offer guidance and support.
- An updated daily report should be shared with hotel colleagues to ensure everyone is up to date with any changes in operations or procedure.



Guest welfare:

It is important that if a guest starts to develop any symptom of illness during their stay, they should immediately notify the hotel and seek medical help.

- COVID-19 protocols should be followed if the guest has tested positive. Where they have shared a room, the co-habitant should also be checked and self-isolate if local legislation requires this.
- Should a guest become sick with non-COVID-19 type symptoms, the hotel should follow its normal procedure for assisting a guest who has become sick and provide access to emergency healthcare if required.
- Hotels should have access to local 24/7 medical assistance.
- Consider storage arrangements for guests' medicines.

Provision of additional facilities

- Activities should be made available for guests, especially those with children e.g. colouring books with crayons, board games, dedicated play areas etc.
- Though the responsibility for all of those under the age of 18 (or where applicable country law states younger) lies with their allocated guardian, the hotel should be sensitive to ensuring those under the age of 14 are not left unaccompanied.
- Consider setting up a 'guest information hub' including multiple computers with internet access, printing, etc
- Consider providing a children's play area for families including toys, etc.
- Guests maybe travelling with their pets and therefore provisions will need to be considered, including pet food, walking areas, etc
- Consider assigning a 'liaison team member' to bring together the community of refugees, co-ordinating with other hotels and being a point of contact.

Wellbeing, safety and other considerations

Fire and safety

The wellbeing of hotel colleagues and guests is of paramount importance and therefore all efforts must be made to ensure refugee guests understand what do to in case of an evacuation e.g. fire.

- We recommend that fire evacuation procedures should be made available in English, local language and relevant other languages, where possible.
- This will be basic information on what action guests need to take, including:
 - How to sound the alarm
 - What do to on hearing the fire alarm
 - Assembly point
 - Arrangements for guests who require assistance in the event of an evacuation.
- In the event of a fire evacuation, the hotel will need to ensure that full compliance of the evacuation plan is adhered to.
- Guests are to return to their rooms as soon as possible, once the hotel is deemed safe.
- If it is not possible to re-occupy the hotel immediate contact must be made to the authorities and reallocation of guests to alternative hotels will need to be arranged.
- All documents and fire records are to be updated accordingly.



3. Departure

The hotel should ensure that there is a smooth transition for guests leaving the hotel:

- When it is time for the guests to leave it is assumed that their onward journey and/or final destination has been determined by them or the authorities.
- If and when approved, all incidentals not covered within the pre-paid package should be settled by the individual directly with the hotel.
- Provide guests leaving the hotel after their stay with a farewell pack from the hotel for their onward journey, to include:
 - Packed meal and refreshments
 - Amenities
 - Activities for children, where appropriate

The guidance in this document has been prepared with the support of IHG Hotels and Resorts.



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