Information for Outreach Partners

What is Welcome Start?

Welcome Start is a FREE program from the California Department of Social Services, Refugee Program Bureau, and Immigrant Integration, powered by Cell-Ed, a mobile-first education technology platform. Welcome Start helps Afghan and Ukrainian refugees get started in California.

Why Welcome Start?

Welcome Start supports Afghan and Ukrainian refugees transitioning into living in select counties in California by providing them with free courses and coaching in their own languages so they can improve their English, learn essential skills, and access more opportunities.

Plus, Welcome Start hours are countable for employment activity requirements under CalWORKs, CalFresh E&T, and RCA.

Welcome Start FAQ's

Who is eligible?
- Afghan and Ukrainian immigrant residents of Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus counties in California are eligible for Welcome Start.

Does Welcome Start cost anything?
- Welcome Start programs are always free for eligible applicants.

Is Welcome Start offered in multiple languages?
- Welcome Start offers courses, coaching, and full websites in English, Dari, Pashto, Ukrainian, and Russian.

Are courses available without a smartphone?
- Yes, Welcome Start programs are all accessible without a smartphone or Wi-Fi connection. Learning is convenient and available at any time through Audio lessons, the WelcomeStart.org website, WhatsApp, and the Cell-Ed apps.

What do Welcome Start coaches do?
- Welcome Start coaches speak participants' languages and provide guidance and encouragement.

To learn more, go to WelcomeStart.org and use the Outreach Partner Toolkit, filled with marketing materials to help you share Welcome Start with refugees in your networks. Thank you for sharing Welcome Start!