

Guiding Principles for OCJCR - August 2020

Our purpose is action to “welcome the stranger and protect the refugee.” Through education, advocacy, volunteerism, and fundraising, we live out our Jewish values here in Orange County. We follow in the footsteps of HIAS, the venerable refugee resettlement agency that welcomed many of our own families.

We actively engage in:

- **Education**—We raise awareness, conveying what we learn about the global refugee crisis to build connections between the Orange County Jewish and refugee communities.
- **Fundraising**—We support refugees and asylum seekers through collection drives and raising funds for distribution to non-profits providing direct service.
- **Direct service**—We encourage volunteerism among our members, as part of our work with local agencies serving refugees.
- **Advocacy**—We promote policies that protect refugees and asylum seekers, educating legislators, and building relationships.

We strive to be inclusive.

- We welcome all to our meetings and events.
- We avoid assumptions about people and institutions in both our diverse Orange County Jewish community and the refugee community we aim to serve.
- We listen with respect and value diverse opinions.
- We hold our meetings and events in venues across Orange County
- We include others in decisions and important conversations.

We seek to collaborate, by developing alliances and working in coalition with those who share our goals.

We honor our commitments to one another, supporting each other’s efforts and valuing the unique contributions of each person. We assume each other’s goodwill.

These are among the Jewish values that inform our work:

- *Ahavat ger*: Protecting refugees/strangers and upholding their dignity.
- *Hachnasat orhim*: Welcoming all, mindful that each human being is made *b’tzelem elohim*, in the image of God.
- *Hinuch*: Educating ourselves and others.
- *G’milut hasadim*: Acting with loving-kindness toward all people.
- *Tzedakah*: Giving funds and resources, not as charity but because it is right.
- *Tikkun olam*: Acting to repair what is broken in our world.

As HIAS puts it, “We used to settle refugees because they were Jewish. Now, we resettle refugees because we are Jewish.”