



# Medical Guidance to Prepare for and Promote Household Health and Safety When Hosting Ukrainian Families and Individuals

Ukrainian community members and families, and members of the wider community, have graciously agreed to open their homes to assist Ukrainian newcomer families and individuals during the war in Ukraine. Your incredible generosity is crucial in supporting these newcomers in their transition to the U.S.

The **purpose of this document** is to provide medical guidance on how to keep you, your household members, and the resettling Ukrainian newcomers safe during this transition. Unlike most refugees who arrive in the U.S., Ukrainian families rapidly fled the Ukraine and their daily lives. During their evacuation, they may have experienced over-crowded conditions, lack of access and infrastructure to promote basic hygiene, health and sanitation. Ukraine has some infections that are rare in the U.S. In addition, the conditions and environments experienced during their displacement may have increased their risk of encountering certain infectious diseases. Many infections can be spread even when people don't have symptoms. Although some arrivals may have received some vaccinations, others have not. As such, there is a small risk that persons arriving could have a transmissible infectious disease. The good news is that the conditions of most concern can be prevented through routine immunization of the host household.

Understanding this, we recommend that **you take action to minimize any health risks** to yourself and household members. Things you can do include:

**Make sure everyone in your host household is up to date on their routine vaccinations. If unsure, share this guide with your health care provider and discuss the recommendations.**

## Vaccinations

Highly recommended vaccinations include:

### Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)

- Update for anyone who does not have measles immunity or at least 2 recorded doses of vaccine for all people born after 1957

### Varicella or “chickenpox” exposure (VAR)

- Update for anyone born after 1979 without a history of chickenpox or documented positive blood test (“serology”) and who has not had 2 recorded vaccine doses

**Hepatitis A** (this is part of routine childhood immunizations and for people who travel internationally, but many adults may not be immune)

- For adults and children  $\geq 1$  year of age

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- Update if not immune or has not received at least 2 recorded doses
- Avoid having guests move in if < 14 days have elapsed since the first vaccine was administered

### **Polio (IPV)**

- Update in anyone who does not have at least 3 recorded doses
- Adults who have not had a one-time booster should receive one additional IPV

### **COVID-19** (some evacuees may have had 1 to 2 doses of COVID vaccine by time of arrival)

- For adults and children  $\geq$  5 years of age
  - Note: for all approved age groups (e.g., < 4 years once approved)

### **Seasonal influenza**

- For adults and children  $\geq$  6 months of age

## Other routine immunizations should be up to date:

### **Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis**

- Update for anyone who does not have a shot recorded with the pertussis component (and a “P” attached to the vaccine name, e.g., DTaP or Tdap)
- Update anyone who does not have a recorded tetanus vaccine in the past 10 years

### **Hepatitis B**

- Update in anyone who does not have at least 3 recorded doses or documented immunity

## Immunocompromised or increased risk of infection

If you or any household members are immunocompromised or have increased risk of infection, we recommend caution when considering hosting a family or individual. Please discuss with your health care provider if you or a household member:

- Has a malignancy or are receiving chemotherapy, had a bone marrow or organ transplant, or are taking immunosuppressive medications
- Has a condition that might weaken the immune system (e.g. untreated or poorly controlled HIV, congenital immunodeficiencies)
- Has children < 1 year of age who have not been vaccinated against Varicella or MMR.

## Promote hygiene and sanitation

- Keep up with the cleaning and sanitation that you would normally do for yourself
  - Practice good handwashing
  - Clean shared spaces, bathroom and kitchen regularly
  - Wash regularly
- Do not share linens or towels
- Do not share razors or utensils.

## Promote a trauma-aware household

Ukrainian families and individuals have experienced and are undergoing severe trauma, including physical, emotional, and social stressors. Promoting a household of acceptance and safety can lead to successful cohabitation. This includes providing:

- Essentials of daily living (foods, water, place to sleep, place to bath/shower)
- Space and time for all household members to be alone
- Encouraging and supportive words
- Judgement-free space to listen and share concerns
- If possible, a connection with newly arriving families to other Ukrainian community members, community centers, faith-based organizations, and community resources
- Make kid-friendly spaces and activities available (e.g., toys, games), so kids get a chance to be kids
- Engage families in healthy well-being activities (e.g., nature walks, soccer games, reading, shared fun cooking or baking sessions)

**Connect to health care early if health concerns arise in you, household members, or resettled newcomers.**

*Adapted from the [Afghan Evacuees Health Resources: Household Health and Safety FAQs for Health Care Providers](https://sites.google.com/umn.edu/afghanevacueeresources/screening-tools-resources/household-health-and-safety) (<https://sites.google.com/umn.edu/afghanevacueeresources/screening-tools-resources/household-health-and-safety>) (developed by the Minnesota Afghan Evacuee Health Team, 2021).*

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