

Eliane Nieder '22

Praxis: Change Thru Service, Spring 2020

HIAS Pennsylvania, Jenny LaMotte

This semester I worked in social services on HIAS Pennsylvania's refugee resettlement team. Refugee resettlement is a highly involved process that requires assessing client needs and then referring clients to organizations and resources that can be of use. As the country shut down due to the coronavirus outbreak, being able to refer clients to various resources was just as important as ever. However, other departments at HIAS Pennsylvania, such as legal teams, now had to learn how to do this kind of social service referral that the resettlement team is experienced in. In an effort to consolidate resources and make them as easy to find as possible, a small group of us from the resettlement team set out to create a table of contents of COVID-19 related resources for staff to use themselves and to share with clients.

The table of contents (copied below) links to resources that have been sourced from other organizations and local governments, as well as resources created by various teams at HIAS Pennsylvania. It covers crucial basic needs such as finding food and cash assistance as well as more specific resources such as tips for online school and mental health tips to help deal with the stress of the pandemic. The table of contents is a living document-- it is updated as needed to keep up with the ever-changing nature of the pandemic. As new resources emerge or old resources are no longer relevant, the team works to make sure the table of contents is as relevant and accurate as possible.

Creating this table of contents allowed me to hone in on skills I already possessed to create a useful and meaningful product. Like many other students, I forget that what sometimes seems like basic technological skills are an asset. When we first began to envision this project, I was worried that my lack of knowledge of website building and design would not make me the

best person to help build this resource. In reality, we were able to use very simple technology, Google Documents to make an organized, clear, and user-friendly resource. Synthesis skills were crucial in consolidating and organizing information and my communication skills were needed to make this project a successful team effort.

Despite the setbacks of the coronavirus outbreak, creating the table of contents and working with the resettlement team allowed me to continue my Praxis Field Placement in a meaningful way. I am grateful to Prof. Martin and Lise Reno from the Praxis team and my supervisor Jenny LaMotte and the rest of the R&P team at HIAS Pennsylvania for making this experience possible. Thank you all!

HIAS PA COVID-19 Resources for Staff and Clients

Note that the original table of contents link to many internal resources that HIAS Pennsylvania staff and interns developed and continue to update. Links to publicly available webpages and resources remain active.

City & County Updates

Folder with brief routine (daily to weekly) updates on case prevalence, local safety guidance and public health updates, **school updates**, and resources

- [Philadelphia](#)
- [Montgomery County](#)
- [Delaware/Chester](#). Note that Delaware/Chester County are collaborating on combined COVID-19 responses.

Health

- **Health Resources for Undocumented Clients:**
 - [City Health Centers](#): sliding scale
 - [CLS Guidance on Immigrant Access to COVID-19 Care](#)
- [Urgent care clinics](#) (sorted by area of the city)
- [If I Think I Have COVID 19](#)
- [Emergency Rooms in Philadelphia](#)
- [CORONAVIRUS FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 Community Guide](#)

Schools

- [Philadelphia School District Closure Info](#)
- [Resources for Parents](#)
- [Non-internet based activities for kids](#)
- [Virtual learning resources](#)
- **Philadelphia:**
 - [Learning guides](#) are now available for students who are English learners and those with special needs.
 - **Chromebooks:** schools are now making robocalls to families regarding the extra chromebook distribution. Some families have reported confusion about the calls, please direct them to the school or the 10 language call lines.
 - There are [10 languages that the district has call lines](#) for

Housing

- [Housing Policy Updates/Overview](#) [living document]
- [Rental Assistance Programs](#) - this will continue to be updated as rental assistance programs become available.

- [Landlord Communication Talking Points](#)

Food Banks

- Many food banks are closing due to COVID-19 so it is **best practice to call** individual food banks before sending a client even if the document reflects that it is updated regularly. The [map made by the City of Philadelphia](#) is updated the most regularly.
- Full list of [food bank databases](#) covering Philly, other PA counties, and a national search engine
- [Philly Coalition Against Hunger list of food banks open during COVID-19](#) (last updated 3/19/20)

Domestic Violence Resources

- [Obtaining Protection from Abuse Orders](#)
- [Getting Protection From Abuse Orders in Philadelphia During the Pandemic](#)
- [Safety Planning for Domestic Violence Survivors](#)

Mental Health

- [Mental Health resource list](#)
- [Grounding and breathing exercises](#)
- [Managing anxiety: tips for staff](#)
- [Working and Learning from Home](#)
- [Managing Difficult Client Conversations](#)
- [Staying Active While Social Distancing](#)
- [Positive Home Workouts](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#)

Unemployment Compensation

- [Filing Materials Checklist](#)
- [Information for Pennsylvania employees impacted by COVID-19](#)
- [Unemployment Compensation for People Who's Businesses Have Closed](#)
- [PLA How to Apply for Unemployment Comp During Coronavirus Crisis](#)
- [PNG Flow Chart Reason for Separation COVID-19](#)
- [Applying for Unemployment Compensation \(UC\) Benefits in PA](#)
- [Unemployment Compensation and Covid-19](#)

Stimulus Payment/Economic Impact Payment

- [Economic Impact Payment FAQs](#) Presentation
- UniteHere Quick Facts about the Stimulus Payments
 - [English](#)
 - [Español](#)

- [HIAS Client Scenarios](#)
- [Q&A with a tax lawyer for Refugee Council USA](#)
- [Stimulus Check 1-pager](#)
- [Stimulus Check Eligibility](#)
- [Economic Impact Payment FAQs](#)

Other Financial Assistance

- Most up to date [list of local and national funds](#) available to clients
 - Includes some general funds, funds by industry, funds for business owners, and for undocumented folks.

How to Find Other Resources

- Consult Philadelphia Health Access Network ([PHAN](#)) [COVID-19 Briefing Memo](#)
- Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition [Resource Guide](#)
- Consult City and County websites
 - [Philadelphia](#)
 - For questions about resources call: 311
 - Greater Philadelphia Coronavirus Hotline (800) 722-7112
 - [Montgomery County](#)
 - [Chester County](#)
 - [Delaware County resources for the community](#)
- [Findhelp.org](#) (search by zip code)
 - Aunt Bertha, a robust social services search engine, has shifted its database management to focus on COVID-19 related resources

Public Charge Information

- [Public Charge & Public Benefits Info](#)

Client Outreach Scripts

- [Initial call script](#)
- [Second-round call script](#)

Reviewed and approved by Jenny LaMotte, HIAS Pennsylvania, April 28, 2020