



Karen Organization of Minnesota

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KOM Volunteer Orientation

Created June, 2018

Updated: May, 2025



KOM Overview



KOM Overview (continued)

Our Mission

To build on the strengths of refugee and immigrant communities and remove barriers to achieving economic, social, and cultural wellbeing

Our Community

Over 20,000 Karen and other refugees from Burma live in Minnesota - largest Karen community in the country.

Our Programs

Serving over 2,000 each year, our success is due to programs designed by and for the community, providing wraparound support, and strong partnerships.

KOM History

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- **KOM was formed out of KCM** (Karen Community of Minnesota), a volunteer-led organization that began in 2003 and helped newly arrived Karen refugees in the Twin Cities maintain their culture, elect community leaders, and receive assistance beyond the initial resettlement period.
 - As many more Karen resettled in MN, KCM realized they **needed a staffed organization** to be able to better serve the community with social services
 - In 2005, they began a 3 year training with VSS (Vietnamese Social Services) **to establish a Karen-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit**, becoming formally registered in 2008.
 - They kept KCM as a volunteer organization to be able to support families in Burma and Thailand, and **renamed the newly established nonprofit as the Karen Organization of Minnesota.**

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KOM Programs

- New Arrivals Services
- Employment
- Social Services
- Community Health
- Youth Development
- Walk-ins



New Arrivals Services

KOM serves new arrivals from a variety of backgrounds who have been in the U.S. under 5 years, funded by the MN Resettlement Programs Office (RPO). Our staff work with individuals, families, and youth to provide access to employment, wraparound social services, and educational engagement.

- Employment & Career Supports
- Family Resource Connections
- Family Education Supports





Employment & Financial Services

KOM provides job counseling and vocational training to help refugees and immigrants find stable jobs and advance their careers. We also offer financial coaching to help participants increase their income and work toward financial goals.

- Youth Career Pathways
- Adult Career Pathways
- ESL Support
- Financial Coaching



Social Services

KOM's social service programs connects refugees and immigrants to resources related to health insurance, civic engagement, arts and cultural heritage, and support for caregivers.

- MNsure
- Weaving Circle
- Caregivers
- Civic Engagement



Community Health

KOM facilitates health trainings and education to prevent suicide, violence and alcohol/drug abuse. We also provide resources to support mental wellbeing, family planning, and positive family relationships.

- Mental Health and Family Relationships
- Karen Family Planning Program
- Karen Chemical Dependency Collaborative



Youth Development

KOM invests in the lives of youth through academic support, after-school programs, cultural activities, and leadership development.

- After-School Program
- Mentorship Program
- Youth Career Pathways

Walk-ins

KOM serves refugees who have immediate needs through a walk-in schedule. Services provided include filling out Ramsey County forms, reading mail, paying parking ticket fees, and more.

Schedule:

Monday & Thursday

9AM – 3:30PM

12 – 12:30PM closed for lunch





Youth Mentor



MSW Intern



Human Service Volunteers



Community Health Intern

Volunteer & Internships Program

- College/Career Tutors
- Youth Mentors
- Youth Tutors
- Civic Engagement Volunteers
- Human Service Volunteers & Interns
- Community Health Interns
- Communications Interns
- MSW (Masters of Social Work) Interns
- BSW (Bachelors of Social Work) Interns

Subject to change seasonally and dependent on need



KOM Office Hours & Contact Info

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 5:00pm

Walk-In Hours:

Monday & Thursday

9:00am – 12:00pm, 12:30pm-3:30pm

2353 Rice Street, Suite 240

Roseville, MN 55113

Main: 651-788-7593

Fax: 651-788-7909

Volunteer Policies



Karen Organization of Minnesota

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Your Rights as a Volunteer

- Work in a healthy and safe environment
- Be engaged in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation
- Given accurate and truthful information about KOM
- Given a copy of KOM's volunteer policy and procedure
- Have a position description and agreed working hours
- Provided with orientation to the organization
- Have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy Act
- Provided with sufficient training to do your job
- Have a supervisor/contact person to approach for help or to report concerns

Your Responsibilities as a Volunteer

- Work in accordance with KOM's values and policies
- Represent KOM in a responsible manner
- Be reliable and fulfill agreed commitments
- Ensure that confidential information is respected and treated appropriately
- Treat others with courtesy, respecting their rights, beliefs, values and dignity
- Undertake training as recommended
- Give and receive constructive feedback as appropriate
- Ask questions when unsure of how to do something or when unsure of KOM's policies
- Report any accident or injury immediately
- Give adequate notice of resignation
- Keep your contact information updated
- Present yourself in a professional manner (dress appropriately, maintain good hygiene, use respectful language)
- Use KOM materials and technology appropriately

As a KOM
volunteer,
please:

- Do not **impose** your personal views on politics, religion or other controversial matters.
- Do not **promote** your own personal or business interests.
- Do not **involve** yourself in the personal or financial affairs of clients (refer to KOM staff for complex cases).
- Do not **accept** cash from clients.
- Do not **collect** clients' health records.
- Do not **help** with tax issues or legal issues (i.e. child support, divorce, disability claims filing, etc.).

Policies and Procedures

1. Attendance
24 hour notice in advance of absence
(unless illness, injury or emergency)
2. Time Commitment
2 weeks notice in advance of leaving
3. Feedback
4. Non-discrimination
5. Inappropriate Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy
6. Smoking Policy
7. Drug & Alcohol Use
8. Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors and Vulnerable Adults
9. Client Confidentiality
10. Motor Vehicle Operation
11. Volunteer Development
12. Computer Use and E-mail Policy
13. Conflict of Interest Policy
14. KOM Ambassador



Mandated Reporting

- KOM volunteers and staff are required to report observed abuse or neglect
- It is not the role of the reporter to determine if abuse or neglect occurred, only to report it
- Reports are confidential
- Procedure:
 - **If it is an emergency, contact 911 then program staff**
 - **If it is not an emergency, contact program staff and they will guide you through reporting process**
- Minnesota Adult Abuse Reporting Center:
(844) 880-1574
- Ramsey County Human Services: **651-266-4500**

COVID/Sick Policies

- If sick...
 - Stay home, work from home if able
 - If you or household member tests positive for COVID-19, stay home 5-10 days and until recovered
- In Office
 - Masks are optional
 - Maintain hygiene: regular hand-washing, cover cough/sneeze



Consent & Background Check Forms



PHOTOGRAPH
RELEASE



REPORTING



CONFIDENTIALITY



CLIENTS/CONFLICT
OF INTEREST



DRIVING &
BACKGROUND
CHECK



WITHDRAWAL
OF CONSENT

Next Steps

- Complete Background Check and Consent Forms
- Complete any school paperwork or other required documents
- Meet with supervisor or program staff for training/shadowing
- Get a volunteer schedule
- Login to Apricot to start tracking hours

Logistics



Stick to a regular schedule



Set up a supervision style that works for you

Meet on a set schedule or check in as needed



Use Apricot account to track client case notes



Track your volunteer hours on Apricot