

Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSR) – Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of Sponsors and Settlement Workers

Sponsors have an obligation to provide income support and immediate and essential settlement support to the refugees they sponsor for a period of 12 months (sometimes longer depending on the type of sponsorship), or until they become self-sufficient, whichever comes first. Sponsors are not expected to become settlement experts. Sponsors are *the bridge* that exists between the refugee newcomer family and the settlement services that already exist in their community. It is their job to know what settlement services are available. They are encouraged to reach out to their nearest settlement service providing organization (SPO), prior to the refugee(s) arrival, to become familiarized with the services they provide.

Settlement services funded by IRCC are available to all permanent residents and protected persons, including PSRs. A list of IRCC-funded settlement services across Canada can be found at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/map/services.asp>. Additionally, other settlement service providing organizations can also be found at www.settlement.org. Many settlement supports continue beyond the sponsorship period and are available until the sponsored refugees become Canadian citizens.

To assist in fostering collaboration between sponsors and settlement workers, we have developed the chart below to clarify settlement roles and responsibilities. Information below has been taken from IRCC's document [here](#), and in consultation with SPO leadership.

Settlement Needs	Sponsor	Settlement Worker (SW)
Pre- Arrival		
Settlement Plan	<p>Complete the IRCC settlement plan provided by your Sponsorship Agreement Holder. It will outline the settlement arrangements you will put in place for the newcomer(s) including housing, education, work, and community connections.</p> <p>We encourage you to connect with a SW prior to the newcomer(s) arrival to become familiarized with services available.</p> <p>Once the newcomer(s) arrives,</p>	

	<p>arrange an initial intake interview with a SW and bring this settlement plan with you. This will help the SW create a plan that compliments yours.</p>	
Housing	<p>Given the short notice of arrival timelines, many sponsors initially secure temporary accommodation until permanent accommodation can be secured.</p>	<p>Some SPO's can provide a list of available affordable housing units in your area and/or refer you to agencies who specialize in supporting the search for affordable housing.</p>
Furniture and Household Items	<p>Reach out to your networks in the community to gather all of the necessary household items!</p> <p>Research community services where good quality used items can be found.</p>	<p>Some SPOs run furniture banks, where good quality used items can be found. They can refer you to thrift stores in your area.</p>
Interpretation	<p>Become familiar with both formal (certified interpretation) and informal avenues (ethno-cultural community connections) for interpretation.</p> <p><i>Note - You are responsible to arrange interpretation for pick up at the airport.</i></p>	<p>Offer certified interpreters, usually charge by the hour. Can suggest connections to specific ethno-cultural community groups.</p> <p>Funded to cover interpretation costs as needed whenever an appointment is scheduled at their office.</p> <p>Offer and charge for document translation services.</p>
Airport Pick Up	<p>Arrange for an interpreter to come with you to the airport. This person does not need to be certified.</p> <p>Malton Neighbourhood Services helps with processing at Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ). You can call them at <u>905-672-3660</u> to ask when would be a good time to arrive or if you experience any delays at the airport in Toronto.</p>	<p>See "interpretation section" above.</p> <p>Malton Neighbourhood Services is funded by IRCC to provide airport processing in Toronto. They also help families if they have a connecting flight to another airport in Ontario.</p>

Post Arrival		
Orientation	<p>Responsible to help newcomers settle in the community and become independent (e.g. using household appliances, opening a bank account, using public transportation, shopping for food, clothes, and household items, visiting schools, getting medication from the pharmacy, etc.).</p> <p>Arrange an appointment for the newcomer(s) with s SW and attend the initial intake interview. Call ahead to ensure interpreter available. Make sure to let caseworker know if there are children in the family so that they can refer them to services available.</p>	<p>Conducts needs assessment and provides referrals to other IRCC-funded settlement services and/or community-based supports (e.g. mental health facilities, community programming, etc.).</p> <p>Multiple languages available, SPO should provide an interpreter if a caseworker who speaks their language is not available.</p>
Education/Language Training	<p>School registration: Enroll children in school (if applicable); there are IRCC-funded Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS), if available in your area they may assist with school registration. Make sure to ask your SW.</p> <p>Sponsors should bring the adult sponsored refugees to their nearest language assessment centre soon after arrival. They undergo a language test and get referred to the appropriate language-training courses available. <i>Note - this language test takes half a day to complete, childcare not provided, consider booking parents at separate times.</i></p>	<p>Language Assessment and Language Training to develop official language skills to live and work in Canada.</p> <p>There are settlement workers at schools in every region (both public and catholic). They introduce newcomer(s) to the education system. This connection is made based on request – important for SW to know there are children in the family unit.</p>
Paperwork – Links to Essential Federal/Provincial Programs (ie. SIN Cards, OHIP, CCB, Hydro subsidies, Affordable housing waitlists)	<p>Within first week of arrival, take newcomers to the nearest Service Ontario Office to apply for SIN and OHIP cards. Their Interim Federal Health Care Program</p>	<p>Take the lead with any and all government paperwork/applications including: Child Canada Benefit, Hydro Subsidies, Community Housing</p>

	<p>(IFHP) Certificate is usually issued at the airport, if not ask a SW to help apply.</p> <p>SW's are experts at filling in these forms, involve them if you have trouble with the paperwork or need to appeal a rejection.</p>	Applications, IFHP, and Healthy Smiles.
Medical Support	<p>Newcomers are eligible for OHIP immediately (exempt from 3 months waiting period!) and receive additional healthcare coverage through IFHP (usually issued at the airport upon arrival) for their term of sponsorship.</p> <p>Assist with finding a family physician and dentist. If the family comes with significant medical health needs, involve the support of a SW who can help navigate some of these systems and supports available.</p> <p>Arrange interpretation for medical appointments as needed (note – hospitals should always provide an interpreter at no cost to the family).</p> <p>Waterloo Region note – Doctors must request interpreter directly to the SPO.</p>	<p>Can assist with making connections to family physicians and dentists who are sensitive and aware of refugee realities and health care coverage programs (eg. Billing to IFHP).</p> <p>Can assist in navigating complex medical health cases (potentially assign a case manager).</p> <p>Can provide interpreters for medical appointment.</p>
Community Connections	<p>This is your strength as a sponsor! Become friends and link the newcomer(s) to your social networks.</p> <p>Beyond this, SWs can guide and direct newcomers on how to access the various community programs available, including subsidies and free programs for sports and recreation.</p>	<p>Connect clients with the broader community, public institutions and community organizations (e.g. SWs in Schools, one-on-one or group mentoring with established immigrants and/or long-time Canadians, conversation circles, etc.)</p> <p>Offer programming adapted to the needs of clients who may face significant barriers to settlement, such as refugees, survivors of family and gender-based violence,</p>

		victims of trauma, youth, women, seniors, etc.
Employment	Provide support in finding employment, and/or link to appropriate employment-related services (IRCC-funded or other).	Offer a variety of supports. (e.g. mentoring and networking, employment and credential assessment counseling, skills development and training, etc.)
Month 13 and Beyond		
Ongoing needs	<p>Transition from sponsors to friends. Clearly explain to the family how your involvement in their lives will change, this helps manage their expectations and alleviate hurt that may come if you don't visit as often.</p> <p>Prior to the end of sponsorship, ensure newcomers are connected in the community and know who to go to for support, beyond your group, for settlement needs.</p>	Many settlement supports continue beyond the sponsorship period and are available until the sponsored refugees become Canadian citizens.