This handbook has been adapted from the RSTP Sponsoring Handbook originally written by Loretta Rose, Coracle Consulting with the editorial support of the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) Steering Committee. The handbook has been produced and revised by the RSTP. The RSTP provides resources and services to meet the ongoing information and training needs of private sponsors of refugees in Canada.
Foreword

This handbook for the Private Sponsors of Refugees is envisaged to act as a hands-on material for groups who are already sponsoring refugees or intend to engage in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees. The handbook provides detailed information on Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program and the sponsorship process and is informed by the existing laws, policies and practices.

The handbook is drafted to be equally helpful for those who have many years of experience in sponsoring refugees and those with limited or no experience. In organizing training to Constituent Groups or Community Sponsors or assisting Groups of Five, Sponsorship Agreement Holders can utilize the content of the material based on the topic of their training. Community Sponsors and members of Group of Five can also benefit from the information provided in the material and improve the quality of the sponsorship application they submit.

The handbook is divided into nine chapters and includes various fact sheets. Some chapters of the handbook offer information generally applicable to all sponsoring groups (SAHs, Community Sponsors and Groups of Five) while some chapters have separate sections devoted to each sponsorship group. The fact sheets attached to each chapter are meant to provide a summary of the associated chapter and an easy-to-print material.

Acknowledgements

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Disclaimer

The information in the handbook is only intended to offer information to sponsors and others on the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program and the refugee sponsorship process. The material does not offer legal advice or counseling; readers are advised to consult the relevant Canadian laws as well as seek legal advice from duly authorized bodies. Readers are advised that Canada’s immigration policies and procedures are regularly revisited and that the content of this handbook reflects the policies current at the time of publication.
Handbook for Sponsoring Groups

Contents

Chapter 1: An Overview

Chapter 2: Who can sponsor?
Section 1: Sponsorship Agreement Holders
Section 2: Community Sponsors
Section 3: Groups of Five

Chapter 3: Who can be sponsored?

Chapter 4: Sponsorship Application Forms
Section 1: Sponsorship Agreement Holders
Section 2: Community Sponsors
Section 3: Groups of Five

Chapter 5: The Refugee Forms

Chapter 6: The Sponsorship Process

Chapter 7: Settlement Preparation

Chapter 8: The First Year and Beyond

Chapter 9: Joint Assistant Sponsorship

Appendix: Acronyms & CIC Coding for Resettlement Categories
Glossary

Accompanying information sheets with summarized information can be downloaded from the Resources section of the RSTP website (www.rstp.ca)
Who is a Refugee?

All kinds of people can become refugees; rich or poor; male or female; doctor or farmer. No one is a refugee by choice. Individuals are refugees because they are persecuted based on their ethnic background, faith, opinions, or because they flee an armed conflict.

In 1951 states signed the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. The 1951 Convention defines a refugee as any person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. To date, close to three-quarters of the world’s states have signed the 1951 Convention and its Protocol.

Over the years, the concept of a refugee has been broadened. Many states also accept people who flee armed conflict as refugees or persons in refugee-like circumstances. Legal definitions have been influenced by human rights treaties, such as the UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The 1951 Convention and these treaties are the basis of our refugee laws in Canada: the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR).

A refugee is, first and foremost, a human being, a person with rights and dignity. Despite all their differences, all refugees in the world have one thing in common: they cannot live peacefully, in safety and dignity in their home-country.

Refugees Worldwide

Some refugees are able to flee to a safe country where they are provided protection, and status – a long term solution which will permit them to live in their asylum country and perhaps even become a citizen. When these refugees apply for asylum, they are referred to as inland claimants or asylum seekers.

For most of the world’s refugees there is no immediate solution, and in some cases individuals remain in camp situations for years, decades or even generations. Most refugees seek asylum in countries neighbouring the areas of conflict. Often these are developing countries with limited
resources. These countries play an important role by temporarily providing protection to large populations. Unfortunately, they are not able to offer more permanent solutions to the large refugee populations in their country. Many refugees remain in camps or they live in urban settings without access to basic rights. They are often not allowed to work or go to school and start a new life.

More information on the global refugee situation can be found in UNHCR’s 2012 Global Trends Report available online at: http://unhcr.org/global trendsjune2013/

Each year, UNHCR publishes statistics about refugees in the world. According to UNHCR’s 2012 Global Trends Report, at the end of 2012 there were 45.2 million people who were forced to leave their homes due to conflict or persecution. Of these, 15.4 million were refugees - 10.5 million under UNHCR’s mandate and 4.9 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA; 28.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and nearly one million (937,000) asylum-seekers. Additionally, there are numerous refugees worldwide who are unwilling or unable to seek protection from the UNHCR but are also in need of assistance.

In the past, large numbers of refugees returned home, many after decades in asylum countries, and others after only a few months. And even though the number of refugees who returned home voluntarily has fallen steadily since 2004, this trend was reversed in 2011, with approximately 532,000 refugees worldwide returning home. One-third of the world’s refugees have been in their situation for over five years and for most of them the possibility of returning home seems doubtful.

In 2012, some 88,600 refugees were resettled with or without UNHCR assistance across 22 countries worldwide. The UNHCR encourages countries to introduce and increase resettlement programs to extend assistance to the millions of refugees worldwide for whom the two previous durable solutions remain impossible.

Durable Solutions for Refugees

States are obligated to protect refugees who are in their territory. This follows from the Refugee Convention. The Refugee Convention also stresses the importance of international solidarity with states which host large numbers of refugees. Internationally, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is mandated to protect the rights and well-being of refugees.

The UNHCR has identified three durable solutions for refugees:
  - voluntary repatriation
  - local integration
  - resettlement in another country

The UNHCR works with governments internationally to offer a durable solution to refugees.

Voluntary repatriation

Voluntary repatriation is only a durable solution when conditions in the refugees’ home country have improved in a lasting and meaningful way, and refugees are able to return to their home country in safety and with dignity.

It is important to take the individual’s circumstances into consideration when determining whether voluntary repatriation is an option. When the situation in the home country improves, some groups may be able to return
home while it may not be safe for members of other groups.

**Local integration in country of asylum**

When voluntary repatriation is not feasible local integration is a second solution for refugees. This entails that the refugees have the ability and right to stay in their current country of asylum. Refugees are considered locally integrated when they have rights similar to those of citizens in the country where they sought refuge. These include that:
- they can move around that country freely;
- they are allowed to earn a living;
- their children are allowed to attend school; and
- there is no threat of forcible return to their country of origin.

**Resettlement in a third country**

When refugees are not able to voluntarily repatriate and have no prospects to locally integrate in their current country of asylum, resettlement in another country is a third possible durable solution. Resettlement provides a durable solution for refugees and offers protection to those who are particularly vulnerable and whose life, liberty, safety, health or fundamental human rights are at risk in the country where they sought refuge. Resettlement is also used as a means of responsibility-sharing with a country that hosts large groups of refugees. Resettlement or sponsorship can bring families together when these were separated because of the flight or during the flight. Most often resettlement offers the refugee the right to remain in the resettlement country permanently.

**What does Canada do for Refugees?**

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR) outline the law and regulations for immigration and refugee protection in Canada. The introduction of the IRPA clarified and widened the humanitarian goals of Canada’s immigration program and modernised the protection mechanisms and durable solutions available to refugees in need of resettlement.

Refugees are only a small part of all newcomers in Canada. The economic classes which include skilled workers, live-in caregivers, and business immigrants generally account for sixty percent of permanent residents who arrive in Canada each year. About twenty-one percent of all immigrants arrive in Canada under the family class in Canada. Nine percent of all immigrants coming to Canada in 2010 consisted of refugees and other protected persons. Of these refugees more than half came as resettled refugees, either as privately sponsored refugees (PSR) or as government assisted refugees (GAR).
Canada’s response to refugees is two-fold:

1. As a signatory to the Geneva Convention, Canada is obligated to offer protection to refugees who arrive on its shores and claim asylum. Refugees seeking asylum in Canada are known as refugee claimants. In order to be permanently accepted in Canada they must first be determined eligible as refugees by the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).

2. Canada also offers protection in the form of resettlement or sponsorship to approximately 8,000-13,000 overseas refugees. Overseas refugees can be referred for resettlement to Canada by the UNHCR or another referral agency, or by private refugee sponsors. Canadian visa officers establish whether the refugee is eligible for resettlement to Canada. Selected refugees have to undergo medical, criminal and security checks before being admitted to Canada. They arrive in Canada as permanent residents with all the associated rights and responsibilities thereof. Canada is the second largest country of resettlement, with some 12,500 refugees resettled to Canada either as Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) or Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR) in 2009. Canada is considered the number one country of resettlement on a per capita basis.

**Types of Refugee Sponsorship**

Refugees resettled to Canada may be sponsored by the government or a private sponsoring group. Special needs refugees may be jointly sponsored by the government and a private sponsor.

In **Private Sponsorship**, sponsoring groups are responsible for all material and financial support of the refugee(s) as well as for providing orientation, settlement and emotional support during the sponsorship period (usually the refugees’ first year in Canada) or until the refugees become self-supporting. All government financed settlement services are usually available to the refugees as well; however refugees may not access social assistance because of the sponsor’s commitments.

Sponsoring groups may choose to identify the refugees they wish to sponsor (sponsor-referred cases), or may request to be matched with refugees through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (visa office-referred cases).

In **sponsor-referred sponsorship**, a group sponsors specific refugees or refugee families in need of resettlement which come to their attention through overseas contacts or through friends or relatives in Canada. The CIC process begins with the submission of the Sponsorship Undertaking.

By accepting a **Visa Office-Referred (VOR) sponsorship** the private group provides sponsorship for individuals or family members already identified and determined as in need of protection by Canadian visa officers abroad. Groups can specify certain criteria such as, for example, the ability to support a family of four. The **Matching Centre**, a department of the government, matches the group’s offer of a sponsorship to a refugee family in need. VOR cases have been interviewed and approved for resettlement by a visa officer and therefore may arrive more quickly.

! Under the IRPA, Canadians can reunite with their immediate family members such as their spouse, dependent children, parents, grandparents, orphaned minor brothers and sisters. These are considered Family Class Sponsorships. In this publication when referring to sponsorship, the family class is not included, as the criteria and context are different.
Special Programs

The **Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program (JAS)**, enables sponsors, service providing organizations and the government to work together to resettle refugees who are identified as having special needs. Examples of persons in this category include refugees with physical handicaps or especially large or single-parent families. The government provides financial assistance to the refugees, while sponsoring groups provide orientation, settlement and emotional support. Service Providing Organizations provide appropriate settlement services. Typically sponsors commit 2 years of support to a JAS sponsorship. *More information on JAS sponsorship is available in Chapter 9.*

The **Blended VOR program** (BVOR) is a cost-sharing initiative designed to resettle refugees selected by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR). In current Blended VOR program launched in 2013, CIC provides 6 months of RAP income support to refugees sponsored under this program while private sponsors are responsible for the remaining settlement costs and assistance.

The **Women at Risk program**, which is sometimes referred to as **AWR**, was set up to ensure that refugee women applicants are not unfairly disadvantaged when it comes to resettlement opportunities. The program is for women without the normal protection of a family unit and who require immediate protection or are in permanently unstable circumstances with no other solution. AWR cases will often require a Joint-Assistance Sponsorship but may also come as a government-assisted or privately sponsored refugee.

The **Urgent Protection Program (UPP)** allows Canada to respond to requests to provide urgent protection for refugees abroad. These include, but are not limited to individuals who may be deported home back to unsafe conditions and/or individuals who face a real threat to their physical safety in their current country of asylum. UPP cases are usually designated as government-assisted refugees. If they require a sponsor they can fall under the Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program (JAS).

In all these special programs cases considered to be either in ‘urgent need of protection’ or ‘vulnerable’ are usually exempt from the requirements to be able to successfully establish in Canada.
What is Sponsorship?

The Canadian Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program uniquely allows citizens to sponsor refugees from outside of Canada. What does sponsorship of refugees mean, who can sponsor a refugee and what are the obligations of a sponsor?

Sponsorship is a commitment to ensure that sponsored refugees have the necessary support to integrate into life in Canada. This is a legal commitment. Sponsors commit to providing basic financial support (e.g. for lodging and food) and care for the sponsored refugee for up to 12 months or until the sponsored refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first. In exceptional circumstances, the length of the sponsorship may be up to 36 months. Sponsorship is a three-way partnership between sponsors, the Government of Canada, and the refugees themselves. The sponsor commits to give the support by signing an ‘undertaking’.

Sponsorship can be best seen as a range, extending from full responsibility by private groups to full responsibility by the government.

Full Responsibility by Private Groups  

Privately Sponsored (PSR)  

Funded by the 

**sponsoring** group, who may be:

- Sponsorship Agreement Holders or their constituent groups
- Groups of Five
- Community Groups

For either sponsor-referred sponsorship’s or visa office-referred sponsorship

Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)  

Funded by the **government**

Logistical and other support provided by Sponsorship Agreement Holders or their constituent groups – the ONLY **sponsoring group**

For refugees identified by visa office as having special needs

Government Assisted (GAR)  

Funded by the **government**

Settlement agencies are contracted to provide reception and integration under the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)

For refugees who have been admitted to Canada as Government Assisted Refugees
Who are Sponsors?

Sponsoring refugees is a group commitment. A sponsor can be a group, a corporation or an unincorporated organization or association, or any combination of them.

It is important that sponsoring groups have a sufficient number of individuals to provide the refugee with support upon arrival. Sponsoring groups in Canada may include:

- **Sponsorship Agreement Holders** and their **Constituent Groups**
- **Community Sponsorship**
- **Groups of Five**

Sponsors may use co-sponsors to help them support the sponsored refugee.

**Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) and Constituent Groups (CGs)**

A Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) is an organization that has signed a Sponsorship Agreement with the Government of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism. A SAH can sponsor refugees itself or can work with Constituent Groups (CGs) that may sponsor refugees under the SAH's agreement. SAHs assume overall responsibility and liability for the management of sponsorships under their agreement. More detail on SAHs and CGs is available in Section 1 of this chapter.

**Community Sponsors**

An organization, association or corporation that meets the criteria for community sponsorship, has the ability to submit two sponsorship undertakings per year. They must undergo financial and settlement plan assessments by the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W) each time they wish to sponsor. More information on Community Sponsors is available in Section 2 of this chapter.

**Groups of Five (G-5)**

Any group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents who meet the criteria can also sponsor refugees. A group is defined in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations as "five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents, each of whom is at least 18 years of age, who are acting together for the purpose of sponsoring a Convention refugee or a person in similar circumstances". In G-5 sponsorships the individuals act as guarantors that the necessary support will be provided for the full duration of the sponsorship. More information on Groups of Five is available in Section 3 of this chapter.

**Forming the Sponsoring Group**

The sponsoring process begins with the formation of a sponsoring group.

While each sponsoring group has the same basic obligations towards the sponsored refugees, the composition of sponsoring groups can vary widely. You may already be part of an organized group or you may have come together solely for the purpose of sponsoring one particular refugee family.
Regardless of the type of sponsoring group you are in, the sponsorship process will be the same.

Taking into account both the application process and the sponsorship period, it is safe to assume that sponsoring group members will work together intensively for an extended period of time. Many people will eventually play a role in the settlement of the refugees, but one of the first steps is deciding who will be part of the sponsorship group and who will take on the official responsibility of signing the undertaking/application to sponsor.

Sponsoring groups may decide to partner with a co-sponsor and share the sponsorship responsibilities.

**Partners to a Sponsorship**

Sponsorship is a partnership between sponsors, the Government of Canada and refugees. It is also possible for SAHs and/or Community Sponsors to formally partner with an individual (e.g.: a relative of sponsored refugees living in Canada) or another organization to raise funds and carry out settlement duties. Such a partner is called a cosponsor.

**Cosponsor individuals**

If you are sponsoring a refugee who has relatives or friends in your community, it is important to decide how those individuals will be involved in the sponsorship. Has the relative or friend made a commitment to provide sponsorship support? If this is the case, consider making the individual a member of your sponsoring group, or asking him or her to formally partner with your group by signing the undertaking as a cosponsor (if eligible). Whether or not they are formally recognized as partners, the relatives or family members who are contributing financial support or settlement assistance should be included in the settlement planning process.

Cosponsors must provide details of all previous sponsorship commitments, including family class sponsorship obligations to CIC. Reviewing these obligations with a prospective cosponsor can help your group assess the level of support the individual can realistically be expected to provide. There is no obligation to formally recognize individuals contributing to the sponsorship as cosponsors. When an individual cosponsor signs the undertaking they officially commit themselves to sharing responsibility for the sponsorship. However, all parties are held **jointly and severally liable** for the sponsorship. Therefore, at the end of the day it is the official sponsoring group - a SAH or Community Sponsor or Group of Five - that must be ready to assume responsibility if the cosponsor is unable to provide the support promised.

**Cosponsor organization**

You can also include an organization as a formal partner in the sponsorship. Many sponsoring groups effectively combine the efforts of several different organizations. Formally recognizing a cosponsoring organization is an official indication of shared responsibility. However, the ultimate liability rests with the official sponsoring group whether a SAH, Community Sponsor, or Group of Five that submits the sponsorship.
**Sponsoring Group Responsibilities**

When signing a Sponsorship Undertaking, a sponsor assumes the following responsibilities with respect to the refugee family:

- **Reception:**
  - Meet the refugee upon arrival at the airport and welcome them in the community; provide orientation to life in Canada

- **Lodging:**
  - Provide suitable accommodation, basic furniture, and other household essentials

- **Care:**
  - Provide food, clothing, local transportation costs and other basic necessities of life

- **Settlement assistance and support by helping refugees**
  - Complete required forms including health insurance, social insurance, and child tax benefits;
  - Open a bank account;
  - Learn English or French (e.g.: get into an ESL/LINC or FSL/CLINC class);
  - Understand the rights and responsibilities of permanent residents;
  - Find employment;
  - Access resources (e.g.: community support groups, settlement services);
  - Register children in school and guide them in dealings with the school system;
  - Locate a family physician and dentist; and
  - Become independent.

The support begins on the date the sponsored refugee arrives in Canada. The sponsorship continues for a period of one year (can be longer in special cases) or until the refugee becomes self-supporting.

*Sponsoring groups are not responsible for repaying any immigration pre-arrival fees (such as transportation fees and the cost of medical examinations). The payment of these fees is the responsibility of the refugee applicant, who may be provided with a loan by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to cover these costs. Sponsors are also not responsible for any liabilities arising from the refugee applicant’s misconduct.*

**Who Cannot Sponsor?**

When forming your group, be aware that some people are not eligible to participate in a sponsorship. They include:

- Persons convicted of serious criminal acts, if five years have not lapsed since the end of the sentence;
- Persons in default of court-ordered support payments; and
- Removable and incarcerated persons or persons subject to citizenship revocation proceedings.

Each person who signs the Sponsorship Undertaking must also sign a **Sponsor Assessment Form**, which details the circumstances that exclude an individual from participating in a sponsorship. This includes the representative of the sponsoring group as well as any
cosponsors who have officially partnered with the sponsoring group. For Groups of Five each individual member will be required to sign and submit one. SAHs will not be required to submit a signed Sponsor Assessment Form with each Sponsorship Undertaking as the signing authority for the SAH will already have a signed Sponsor Assessment Form on file with National Headquarters of CIC.

It is important to be aware that privately sponsored refugees can be quite vulnerable and your group will have considerable power over their lives after their arrival. Your group needs to be aware of the potential for abuse of this power. Section K of the Sponsorship Undertaking outlines the Declaration by the Sponsoring Group which all parties must sign. Part of this declaration states that “to the best of my ability, I will not knowingly or deliberately allow any individual to participate in the group's settlement activities who may be considered a threat to the safety and security of the refugee(s)”. All individuals signing the undertaking have to also agree to this statement on behalf of the group.
Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs)

A Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) is an organization that has an agreement with the Government of Canada, permitting them to resettle refugees through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program. This agreement is a legal agreement between a corporation and the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism. When it is signed, the organization accepts the legal responsibility for all sponsorships it signs directly, as well as those it authorizes its Constituent Groups (CGs) to sign. Agreements can specify an expiration date and limit the number of individuals who can be sponsored.

Currently, there are 83 SAHs across Canada. While they vary in composition, type and organizational structure, the responsibilities of each SAH are generally the same. SAHs are responsible for managing sponsorships under their agreement and have the prerogative to identify refugees who they would like to sponsor. More information about the identification of specific refugees or refugee families in need of resettlement is provided in Chapter 3.

SAHs can also authorize CGs to sponsor under their agreement. The SAH is responsible for assessing the feasibility of a sponsorship, both in terms of the refugees’ eligibility and a group’s ability to carry out the sponsorship. Each SAH has its own procedures for assessing and approving potential sponsorships. SAHs are also responsible for the training, advising, assisting, monitoring and information-sharing of their CGs. A SAH may have many CGs across Canada, only a few in a specific region or area, or none at all.

Constituent Groups (CGs)

A Constituent Group (CG) is a group that sponsors refugees on behalf of a SAH. If your group is sponsoring with a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH), the first step is to contact your SAH representative to find out more about the process in their organization. Each SAH has its own process of recognizing sponsoring groups or Constituent Groups.

While each SAH sets its own criteria for recognizing CGs, CGs must be:
  - authorized, in writing, by the SAH to act on its behalf as sponsors of refugees;
  - located in the community where the refugee is expected to settle; and
  - be managed under the SAH.
The SAH bears the legal responsibility for all sponsorships submitted under its agreement. Given the legal responsibilities of the SAH for the activities of its sponsoring groups, and taking into account some of the liability considerations, SAHs must clearly define who is eligible to be a Constituent Group. CGs may or may not already be members of the SAH. As the animators of the sponsorship itself, the main role of a CG is to provide support for the newcomers during their first year in Canada. This includes preparing to receive the refugees.

If your group is interested in sponsoring, you can begin by contacting a SAH who will provide you with the required forms or instructions, and advise you on the criteria and the process. Your SAH will be a useful source of information and advice throughout the application process and the sponsorship period.

**Parties to a Sponsorship**

A SAH may choose to authorize a Constituent Group and/or a co-sponsor individual or organization or choose to work alone on a private sponsorship case. Where settlement responsibilities are shared through a sponsorship partnership between SAH, CG and/or co-sponsor, in case of a sponsorship breakdown or default by the CG and/or the co-sponsor, the SAH is ultimately responsible to ensure that the conditions of the sponsorship undertaking are met. Failure to do so may result in a default being declared against the SAH and the cancellation of their agreement. For this reason, all partners to a sponsorship should keep in touch throughout the application process and the sponsorship period to ensure that concerns that arise can be addressed and to avoid breakdown or default.
Community Sponsors

A Community Sponsor is an organization, association or corporation that sponsors refugees under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program. Unlike Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs), community groups that would like to submit a sponsorship undertaking as a Community Sponsor are not required to be incorporated under federal or provincial law.

Community Sponsors must:

- have the financial capacity to fulfill the sponsorship;
- provide evidence of ability to provide necessary emotional/social supports to refugees and their families; and
- be based in the community where the refugee is expected to live.

Once approved, each community group can submit up to two sponsorship undertakings a year. Each time they wish to sponsor, Community Sponsors need to undergo a financial and settlement plan assessment by the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W).

Forming your Group

Consider who you need as part of your group. For example,

- How much money can your organization contribute? How much still needs to be contributed by others?
- Is there a family member here in Canada who will also contribute to the sponsorship?
- Do you know others in your community that have been involved in previous sponsorships or other refugee related work who may be able to help with the processing, provide donations, or assist in the settlement of the newcomers?

As you consider the requirements of the sponsorship you will begin to find others who will be able to join you in the partnership of sponsoring.

Although the sponsorship will be submitted in the name of a community group, it is important to note that it will be necessary to provide evidence that there is a group of volunteers to assist in the sponsorship. It is the community group who must provide evidence of financial abilities, but they also must show that there are people who will meet the refugee upon arrival and provide the necessary settlement support.
Community Sponsors may also choose to formally partner with an individual, such as a relative of sponsored refugees living in Canada, or another organization to raise the funds and carry out settlement duties. This type of formal partner is called a **Cosponsor**. A community sponsorship can involve multiple cosponsors as part of the sponsoring group but the primary sponsoring organization is referred to as the Community Sponsor.

Keep in mind that even when another organization or an individual is identified as a formal partner in the sponsorship the ultimate liability rests with the Community Sponsor that submits the sponsorship.

**It is necessary for the person with authority or ownership of the organization’s finances (e.g.: Owner, President, Executive Director) to sign the Sponsorship Undertaking to indicate they approve the undertaking.**
Group of Five

A Group of Five is any group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents that has come together to initiate a sponsorship under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. The individuals who make up this group commit to providing financial, emotional and settlement support for the refugee(s) for the duration of the sponsorship period, which is usually 12 months or in exceptional cases up to 36 months. An assessment by the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W) will be done to determine if the group and the individual group members meet the eligibility criteria.

To qualify as a sponsor and a Group of Five each individual member of the group must:

- be 18 years of age or older;
- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident;
- live in the community where the refugee will live; and
- make a commitment to support the refugee financially and with settlement support for the duration of the sponsorship period, which is usually 12 months and in exceptional circumstances can be up to 36 months.

Members who wish to use their employment income to support the refugees must list their current dependants (including any other sponsorship both family and refugee that they are involved in) and give proof of employment and income.

**It is expected that no less than three members of the group make a financial commitment**

As with other sponsoring groups, the sponsorship Undertaking will be refused if a member of a Group of Five is:

- convicted of serious criminal acts (if five years have not lapsed since the end of the sentence);
- in default of court-ordered support payments; or
- removable and person, subject to citizenship revocation proceedings.
Forming your Group

There is no official way of forming a Group of Five or matching individuals interested in getting involved in this type of sponsorship. Most Groups of Five consist of individuals who are friends, family members or individuals with a common interest to come together to sponsor a refugee. Some settlement service providing agencies provide groups with support to form and sustain their Group of Five sponsorship.

When forming your group, consider who you need as part of your group.

For example,

- How much money can you and the other members of your group contribute? How much still needs to be contributed?
- Is there a family member here in Canada who will also contribute to the sponsorship?
- Do you know others in your community that have been involved in previous sponsorships or other refugee related work who may be able to help with the processing, provide donations, or assist in the settlement of the newcomers?

Being a member of more than one Group of Five depends on your financial capacity and your time. From your application, CIC will deduct any prior commitments from the sponsorship undertaking and consider the number of dependants you are currently financially supporting to assess whether you have the necessary funds and the time to support an additional undertaking based on your previous and present commitments.
Deciding who to sponsor

Refugees who qualify as refugees under the following two refugee classes may be sponsored under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program:

- The *Convention Refugee Abroad* Class
- The *Country of Asylum* Class

Many forced migrants, refugees and people in refugee-like situations want to be resettled to Canada. In order to make the best use of the limited resources available to sponsoring groups in Canada, it is important to consider the merits of a refugee case and assess whether the application will meet the criteria set by the Canadian government. Therefore, before submitting an undertaking/application to sponsor, it is important to consider whether the refugees will be **eligible** and **admissible** according to Canadian law.

The following chapter will further explain these criteria for resettlement and how to make a decision on who to sponsor.

**How does a Sponsor get in contact with a Refugee?**

There are two ways for a sponsoring group to get in contact with a refugee to be sponsored:

- Visa Office-referrals, or
- Sponsor-referrals.

In the case of **Visa Office-referrals** the refugee has already been identified as in need of protection by the UNHCR (or another referral organization overseas) and the Canadian Visa Office abroad, but requires a sponsor in Canada. In **sponsor-referred** cases, the sponsoring group has direct knowledge of particular refugees or refugee families overseas who have been brought to their attention and then makes a request to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for sponsorship.

**Visa Office-Refereed (VOR) sponsorships**

If your group chooses to sponsor refugees already identified by a Canadian visa office it will not be necessary for your group to consider questions of refugee eligibility. In Visa Office-referred cases, a visa officer has referred a profile to CIC’s **Matching Centre** in Ottawa which administers an inventory of visa office-referred cases. These are refugees who have already
been provisionally accepted but require a private sponsorship before a permanent resident visa can be issued. The acceptance of these refugees to Canada is usually conditional on being matched with a sponsoring group. The Matching Centre seeks to match the refugees with sponsors through Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) or directly through sponsoring groups who have submitted a request for a refugee profile.

**Submitting a request for a refugee profile does not commit your group to a sponsorship, it is simply a request for information.**

Before requesting a refugee profile, your sponsoring group may want to obtain information on particular refugee groups who are in need of resettlement. Some general information can be found in this chapter. When preparing your request for a profile it is important to assess the needs of the refugee or refugee family, including settlement needs and the size of the family, in relation to the resources of your sponsoring group and that of your community. If your group is interested in sponsoring a refugee or refugee family from a particular country or with particular needs you can provide this information in the request for a refugee profile. However, keep in mind that the more specific your requested profile is, the longer the matching process could take.

If you are working with a SAH, your SAH representative can help match you with a VOR case that has already been interviewed. SAHs may request additional information through the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W) on Visa Office-Referred cases listed on the website and then pass it on to interested sponsoring groups. In some situations CIC will ask sponsoring groups to respond quickly if there is a need to expedite the refugee processing.

An advantage of VOR cases is that the refugees have already been found eligible and the resettlement process overseas can be relatively quick. Because the refugees have completed most of the overseas processing it is likely that they will arrive within a few months of the submission of your sponsorship. The Visa Office-referred cases normally take the UNHCR’s priorities for resettlement into account. This can help in finding a more coordinated solution for specific refugee situations in the world or to help refugees with urgent resettlement needs.

**How to request a refugee profile**

Sponsoring groups can make a request for a refugee profile for the group to consider sponsoring. To start, obtain the application kit entitled *Request for a Refugee Profile* and complete the form contained within (IMM 5438). This should be done prior to submitting the undertaking. Following your group’s submission of this form the matching centre in Canada will work with the visa offices overseas to find a profile on a refugee case that may be suited to your community.

Once you have received a match and you decide to proceed, the formal application process will start.

*Sponsorship application and refugee forms are further discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 5 of this handbook.*
Sponsor-referred sponsorships

If your group has knowledge of a particular refugee who you would like to sponsor it is important to consider the refugees’ personal stories and particular circumstances before making the commitment to sponsor. The relevant Canadian Visa Office will not have identified the individual as being in need of protection yet. In addition, not all refugees are eligible for resettlement to Canada. It is therefore important to assess if the person to be sponsored is likely to be in need of protection and eligible and admissible for resettlement to Canada. Sponsorship applications should not be submitted for someone unlikely to meet the eligibility criteria. More information on who is eligible to be sponsored can be found below.

Although it is the Visa Officer’s mandate to accept or refuse refugee sponsorship applications, it is important for the sponsoring group to carefully review the details of the refugee’s situation before submitting a Sponsorship Undertaking to CIC or their SAH (as in the case of Constituent Groups).

An advantage of sponsor-referred sponsorship is that the sponsoring group has a better knowledge of the background of the applicant. Often there are friends, family or community networks in Canada who can help with the integration process or who can act as co-sponsors. The disadvantage is that the eligibility process can be complex and can take a long time, even years for some visa offices.

Eligibility

Eligibility is one of two factors in the refugee selection decision with admissibility being the other factor. Refugee sponsorship is a solution of last resort and thus the applicant must show that he or she has attempted all the other durable solutions as discussed in Chapter 1. The following is taken into consideration when determining if someone is eligible to be sponsored as a Privately Sponsored Refugee:

**Does the refugee(s) meet the requirements of one of the two refugee classes as laid out in Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR)?**

The two classes, as described in IRPR, for persons who may qualify for Canada’s refugee and humanitarian resettlement program are the Convention Refugee Abroad Class and the Country of Asylum Class.

These classes and designations are defined as follows:

**Convention Refugee Abroad Class**
A member of the Convention Refugee Abroad Class is any person who:

- is outside their home country, or the country where they normally live, and cannot return to that country because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on:
  - race,
  - religion,
  - political opinion,
  - nationality,
• membership in a particular social group, such as women or people with a different sexual orientation.
• is outside Canada
• does not have a prospect of any other durable solution within a reasonable period of time

**Country of Asylum Class**

A member of the Country of Asylum Class is a person:

- who is outside of his or her country of citizenship or habitual residence;
- who has been, and continues to be, seriously and personally affected by civil war or armed conflict or who has suffered massive violations of human rights; and
- for whom there is no possibility of finding any other adequate solution to his or her situation within a reasonable period of time.

Once it has been determined that the refugee(s) fit into one of Canada’s refugee classes the following questions should be considered:

i. Can the refugee **return** home in safety and dignity because the situation in the home country has changed in a meaningful and lasting way?

ii. Does the refugee have a prospect to reside and **integrate** in the current country where they are located, with rights **similar** to those of nationals? *This does not necessarily entail the refugee receiving citizenship.*

iii. Does the refugee have an opportunity for resettlement in another country?

If the answer to all these questions is no, then it would seem that resettlement to Canada would be a viable option.

It is important that you consider under which category a case could qualify for sponsorship. If applicants are outside of their own country consider the Convention Refugee Abroad Class and then examine the Country of Asylum Class. The factsheet **Case Assessment Chart** in this handbook may be useful in helping you determine under which category a case may qualify and subsequently ensuring that you have considered the refugee’s story and circumstances before submitting your case.

An immigration officer at a Canadian visa office overseas will make the final decision as to whether someone meets the eligibility requirements set out in Canadian law. The visa officer of the visa post where the refugee’s application has been filed will make the eligibility decision based on the applicant’s file, supporting documentation submitted by the applicant and the sponsoring group, additional information available to the officer (such as country condition updates) and a personal interview with the applicant.

**Groups of Five and Community Sponsors** can only sponsor applicants who **are recognized as refugees** by either the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or a foreign state. **Proof of this recognition (UNCHR Refugee Certificate – Mandate Letter of Protection or a foreign state recognition document) is required upon submission of the sponsorship application.**
Adaptability

While protection is the overriding goal of the PSR program, refugees will also be assessed on their ability to resettle successfully in Canada. In making this assessment the visa officer will consider whether the refugee has relatives (or a sponsor) in Canada, the refugee’s ability to speak or learn to speak English or French and the potential for employment and resourcefulness. When a family unit is applying, the settlement potential of all family members is assessed as a single determination. The visa officer is looking to determine the likelihood that the person will be able to provide for themselves and their dependants and not rely on social assistance once they have been in Canada for over 5 years.

**Exception:** Refugees deemed by the visa officer to be in urgent need of protection or in vulnerable circumstances will not be assessed on their ability to establish.

Assessing eligibility and strengthening a case

The importance of a good assessment prior to the sponsorship undertaking and during the sponsorship process cannot be underestimated. The assessment can help in getting to know the background of the refugee. It can help a sponsoring group decide whether to proceed with the sponsorship process. A timely assessment can avoid spending unnecessary resources for the sponsoring group and the Canadian authorities, and avoid false hopes for the refugee and his or her relatives. A positive assessment can be a strong motivation for a sponsoring group to support a refugee and to try to strengthen and advocate the case during the determination process at the visa office.

The assessment of eligibility is not an easy task. There are many elements which are of importance: the situation in the country of origin, the background of the refugee, the criteria under the two refugee classes, the availability of other durable solutions, the adaptability of the refugee and special circumstances to consider a refugee vulnerable. A significant complicating factor is that the group often does not have the opportunity to interview the applicant. In refugee cases the interview is a key source of information. If possible, sponsoring groups are encouraged to contact the applicant to learn more about their current circumstances and details on why they fled their country of origin and cannot return.

For an assessment the sponsoring group can use various sources including, but not limited to:
- the refugee
- family and friends of the refugee in Canada
- a referral organization
- the country packages of the Immigration and Refugee Board
- reports of human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch;
- databases containing country of origin information, such as UNHCR’s Refworld

Based on this and other information the sponsoring group can make an assessment of the refugee’s needs for protection and resettlement. Relevant questions are for example:
- Is the refugee’s account consistent with the information on the country of origin?
- Is the refugee’s account generally consistent and credible?
- Is there any evidence which can support the refugee’s eligibility?
- Is the refugee individually at risk?
- Could the refugee have found protection in his/her own country?
- Are other durable solutions available to the refugee?
Eligibility is only the first step in determining whether a person qualifies for resettlement to Canada as a refugee. The next step after a positive decision on eligibility involves screening.

**Admissibility**

Once a refugee has received a positive eligibility determination they must undergo an admissibility screening in order to be accepted for resettlement to Canada. This includes medical, criminality and security checks. The sponsoring group is often not in the position to assess inadmissibility.

**Medical check**

The refugee and all dependants must complete a medical examination in order to determine whether any family member has a medical condition that presents a danger to Canadian public health or safety. In the case of resettled refugees medical screening is not as strict as in other immigration programs and most applicants would not be disqualified for a medical reason. Even people with serious medical conditions or disabilities who might require extensive treatment in Canada could still qualify to come as refugees if the other criteria are met. However, people who are considered a health threat to the Canadian public are not permitted to settle in Canada as sponsored refugees.

**Security and criminality checks**

The refugee and all of his or her dependants who are 18 years of age and over are subject to a security check and a criminality check to verify information in the application and to ensure that the applicant is not inadmissible under these criteria.

Refugees are criminally inadmissible to Canada if they have been convicted of serious crimes or have committed acts or omissions. In general it is difficult to know if a crime committed outside of Canada would still be considered a criminal offence in Canada as this involves comparing elements of Canadian law with those of the foreign jurisdiction. As a sponsor your job is not to undertake this determination as this assessment will be conducted by the Canadian Government. However, if you are aware that the refugee you would like to sponsor has been convicted of a crime or is a fugitive from a legitimate legal prosecution, you may want to take this into consideration before submitting the case. It should be noted that the Geneva Convention indicates that states should not impose penalties on refugees on the grounds of illegal entry to a state. The Geneva Convention is meant to give protection against such treatment, but it does exclude persons from protection when they have committed crimes against humanity or serious common crimes (so-called ‘non-deserving’ cases).

People who pose a risk to Canada’s security are not allowed to enter the country. Refugees who are deemed to have been members of terrorist organizations are excluded from settling in Canada. People who have committed serious human rights violations, crimes against humanity or war crimes are also not admissible. Additionally, the Canadian government has designated certain regimes as perpetrators of gross human rights violations. Senior officials of designated regimes are consequently considered inadmissible to Canada.
Family members and dependants

In case of a refugee family, only the principal applicant needs to be eligible for private sponsorship – his or her family members will get a derivative status. In the context of refugee resettlement, family members include:

- the spouse or common law partner of the principal applicant;
- dependent children of the principal applicant or of his/her spouse or common law partner; and
- dependent children of dependent children.

A dependent child is the biological/adopted child of the principal applicant or the applicant’s spouse/common law partner, and is under 19 years of age or is 19 and over but depends on the parent financially since before the age of 19 and is unable to be financially self-supporting due to a physical or mental condition.

While eligibility can be derived from the principal applicant, EACH adult family member needs to be found admissible. In addition, de facto dependants need to qualify as refugees as they do not automatically get a derivative status from the principal applicant. In fact, a separate application must be submitted for each de facto dependant.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **If the refugees are recognized by the UNHCR, do they still need to have an interview with a Canadian visa officer?**
  The Canadian government, similar to other states, conducts its own eligibility assessments. This means that, even if an individual is accepted as a refugee in need of resettlement by the UNCHR, they will still have to go through the same process with a visa officer overseas and could even be rejected.

- **What are the benefits of registration with the UNHCR?**
  The UNHCR provides many different registration types which vary from country to country. In general it is important for the refugee to register with the UNHCR upon arrival in the country of asylum. This will provide them with an ID document as well as access to basic necessities. At this time the refugees can also indicate that they would like to have a Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interview. If they are successful in their RSD interview they will then receive documentation that indicates they are recognized as Convention Refugees, under the mandate of the UNHCR. This provides them with the possibility of being referred by the UNHCR to resettlement countries.

**Remember:** Refugees sponsored by Groups of Five or Community Sponsors must have refugee status recognition from either the UNHCR or the state.
authorities of the country of asylum in order for the refugee sponsorship
application to be accepted for consideration.

Even if an applicant has been determined to be a refugee by the UNHCR, Canadian
authorities will still make their own determination of whether or not the applicant
qualifies for private refugee sponsorship.

- **What if the sponsor wants to identify a refugee already in Canada to be
  sponsored under the Private Sponsorship Program?**
  Unfortunately refugees already in Canada are not eligible to be sponsored. They can
  make a claim to have their case heard by the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).

- **Are there any other reasons why someone might not be eligible for
  resettlement?**
  In addition to being inside Canada, the following people do not qualify for private
  sponsorship:
  - People who were the subject of a previous sponsorship application and were refused,
    unless
    - their circumstances have changed;
    - new information, which was not presented in the previous application has
      come to light; or
    - Canadian laws affecting the case have changed.
  - Persons who have other durable solution, such as voluntary repatriation or local
    integration in the current country of residence;
  - Persons who have not been recognized as refugees by either the UNHCR or state
    authorities in the country of asylum (if sponsors are a Group of Five or a
    Community Sponsor).

- **How can a sponsor determine if the refugee(s) is able to stay in their current
  country of asylum?**
  Although a sponsor will not make the final determination on a refugee’s ability to stay in
  their current country of asylum, they could make a preliminary assessment by asking
  the refugee about their status in the country of asylum. Answers to questions such as:
  do they have an ID document issued by the country of asylum; what rights do they have
  in that country; are they able to work; can their children go to school; can they move
  around freely within that country or is there an encampment policy; will assist in
  providing more information regarding the refugee’s current situation. CIC’s **Operational
  Manual 5** provides a guide for assessing local integration as a durable solution, which
  sponsors can use to screen whether there is a possibility of local integration in the
  country of asylum. Additionally, information online regarding country conditions can also
  be of assistance.

- **What if the refugee is in a European country?**
  Signatories to the international convention, protocol and
  treaties regarding refugees are deemed to be able to provide
  local remedies to refugees residing on their soil. In general,
  European and other Western democratic countries are
  presumed to have effective refugee protection systems.

  If a refugee is integrated and established in the first country of asylum, resettlement to
  Canada is not an option. If refugees can live in safety and independently with human
  and civil rights, such as the right to marry, practice their religion, own property, work
  and have access to education, housing, etc. as laid out in the Convention, they will not
  qualify for resettlement. For a visa post to consider the application of a refugee residing
  in one those countries it requires that the applicant provides documents of the last non-
appeal-able rejection verdict(s), and documents containing all arguments of the local immigration authorities against the refugee’s resettlement in that country.

The acceptance rate of rejected refugees in Europe applying for resettlement to Canada is minimal. However, making a sponsorship application in some cases may delay deportation because some European countries postpone deportation pending the outcome of the Canadian sponsorship process.

Summary

To help avoid refusals based on eligibility, carefully review the details of the refugees’ narrative and supporting documents before signing a sponsor-referred sponsorship. Be aware that many sponsorships are refused because the circumstances have changed in the refugees’ country of origin or their country of asylum, and they are considered to have another durable solution. If you conclude that the refugees’ situation would not qualify under any of Canada's refugee programs submitting a sponsorship will only result in disappointment for them and your sponsoring group. Your group should be aware that even though refugees may be found to be eligible, they may be determined inadmissible to Canada for medical, security or criminal reasons. Refusals are difficult to accept and, unfortunately, there is no formal appeal mechanism. Therefore, it is important to seriously consider all cases before proceeding with a sponsorship.
Introduction

To begin the formal sponsorship process your group must submit an application to sponsor. Make sure that you fill out the latest forms which are made available by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) on their website. It is important to be conscientious when filling out these forms as they provide CIC with the detailed information about your group and the refugee(s) you have chosen to sponsor. The forms that your sponsoring group is required to fill out are included in the Application for Refugee Sponsorship. The application package includes forms which need to be completed by sponsors, and forms that need to be completed and signed by the refugee applicant(s).

The Application for Permanent Residence – referred to collectively as IMM 6000 – contains all the forms that the refugee applicant(s) is required to complete. Chapter 5 will provide more information about the IMM 6000.

All sponsoring groups must complete a set of forms which consist of an Instruction Guide, the Undertaking/Application to Sponsor, Sponsor Assessment, Use of Representative Form (optional) and the Document Checklist. For Groups of Five there is also a Financial Profile form. There are also different Settlement Plan forms for each type of sponsoring group (i.e.: Group of Five, Community Sponsor and Sponsorship Agreement Holder/Constituent Group). This section deals with the sponsors’ forms.

Instruction Guide

The Instruction Guide for your sponsoring group is an important part of the application package and will:

- Provide you with information you should know about the application before submitting it
- Explain how to fill out the forms and what supporting documents are required
- Outline the basic steps that you need to follow in order to submit your application

You are advised to read the instruction guide before filling out each of the applicable forms.

The Undertaking/Application to Sponsor

The Undertaking, or Application to Sponsor, is the basis of all sponsorships. This form is the same for all types of sponsoring groups; however, you are required to identify whether you are a SAH, a Group of Five or a Community Sponsor in the very beginning of the form and then carefully follow
the instructions to make sure you are completing the parts of the form that correspond to your group. Filling out and signing the form makes the sponsor legally responsible for providing settlement assistance to any and all individuals listed on the Undertaking. It is important that the sponsoring group reviews the obligations and the declaration on the Undertaking before signing and committing itself to the associated settlement and financial responsibilities.

Separate undertakings must be filled out for de facto dependants and children who are 19 years of age or over because they are no longer considered part of the family unit by CIC.

Exceptions: Children who are 19 years or older may still be considered dependent if they have been financially supported by the parents because of a physical or mental condition.

The Undertaking must be signed by all parties involved in the sponsorship. All signatures must be original.

Please note that some items on the form are mandatory and others are only filled out if applicable. CIC prefers that the forms are completed electronically.

When completing sponsorship application forms you must make sure that the forms included in the IMM6000 are completed and signed by the refugee applicants and submitted as part of the sponsorship application. The IMM6000 package includes: an instruction guide (IMM 6000), Generic Application Form for Canada (IMM 0008), Additional Dependents /Declaration form (IMM 0008DEP), Schedules A and 2, and Use of Representative (IMM 5476).

For sponsor-referred cases, there are two options for submitting the sponsorship application package to the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W):

The sponsoring groups send the IMM 6000 package to the refugees they wish to sponsor. The refugee applicant completes it and returns it to the sponsor, along with supporting documents and photographs. The sponsor ensures that the forms have been completely filled and that no required information is missing. The sponsor submits the IMM 6000 forms, along with all the supporting documents, photographs and the sponsors’ forms to the CPO-W; or

The sponsoring groups send the completed sponsorship undertaking form to the refugees overseas they wish to sponsor. The refugee applicants send the completed IMM 6000 package along with supporting documents and photographs together with the sponsorship undertaking form to the CPO-W.

The first submission method has the advantage of reducing the processing time overseas as well as providing sponsors with an opportunity to review the content and completeness of the refugee’s application before it is submitted.

Sample Case

Malu Frederic (DOB: March 15, 1970) is a refugee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Due to the conflict in East Congo, the family had to leave Congo and go to Tanzania to escape persecution. Malu currently resides in a refugee camp in Tanzania with his wife Yala Kobongo (DOB: May 10, 1975), son James Frederic (DOB: January 05, 1995) and his nephew Kimbala Frederic (DOB: February 02, 1990). Malu’s brother, Ezekiel Frederic resides in Canada and works with the Centre for Francophone of Blue Knife. He is a Canadian citizen, well established and lives with his wife Suzan Frederic and daughter. He wants to bring Malu and his family to Canada.

Depending on the sponsoring group you are using, refer to the appropriate section to learn more about filling out the appropriate Refugee Sponsorship Application:

1. Sponsorship Agreement Holders and Constituent Groups – Section 1
2. Community Sponsors – Section 2
3. Groups of Five – Section 3

The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program
Tel: 416.290.1700, 1.877.290.1701
Fax: 416.290.1710
E-mail: info@rstp.ca, Website: www.rstp.ca

Last updated: August 2014
The application instruction guide for private refugee sponsoring groups, IMM 5413, includes various forms that must be completed as part of the sponsorship application your group submits to the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg.

**Undertaking/Application to Sponsor IMM 5373**

At the top of the Undertaking, sponsors must identify the type of their sponsoring group: SAH or CG, Group of Five, or Community Sponsor.

The first few sections of the Undertaking are for the personal and contact information of the Constituent Group representative (if applicable), SAH representative and co-sponsor (if applicable). At a minimum, **Section B** must be filled out and include the formal name of the organization that has signed a sponsorship agreement with the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration as well as the accurate personal contact information of the SAH representative. The SAH representative in this case is the person who has the authority to sign the Undertaking/Application to Sponsor on behalf of the organization.
Ezekiel manages to find a SAH (The Diocese of Blue Knife) to sponsor his brother and his family. He will be working with them as a cosponsor individual. Figure 1 provides an example of how the first page of the Undertaking should be filled out in this instance.

He has received the completed IMM 6000 and required documents from his brother. When submitting the Undertaking / Application to Sponsor, the sponsor will be required to fill out two Undertaking / Application to Sponsor forms - one for Malu and his family, and one for Kimbala, because Kimbala is not his biological son nor legally adopted son. Kimbala is a de-facto dependant of Malu. Both files need to be linked so that they can be assessed at the same time. Figure 2 demonstrates how in Malu’s application form Kimbala’s is being linked. Similarly, Malu’s application can be linked to Kimbala’s application by putting his name and date of birth in section G of Kimbala’s undertaking form.

Figure 3 outlines the settlement details of this case.

If your SAH will be working with Constituent Groups and/or cosponsor individuals and/or organizations, it will be necessary to include this information in Section B and C respectively. When working with individual cosponsors, the personal details of that individual are required. In the case of an organization, the name of the organization and the personal details of its representative will be required.

For Constituent Groups, it is important to identify one person in your group as the contact person. The identity of this individual should be indicated in Section B; this person will receive communication regarding the sponsorship process from CIC. As this contact person plays an important role, the person should have the knowledge and resources available to act as the prime contact. Having internal mechanisms in place to share information between parties involved in the sponsorship will also help in ensuring that information flows smoothly among all parties.

Section E will allow your sponsoring group to list the personal details and contact information of the refugee(s) you are identifying for sponsorship. The individual with the stronger refugee case should be the principal applicant. It is important to list all family members in this section whether they are accompanying the principal applicant or not. The One Year Window of Opportunity provision provides a mechanism to reunite spouses and dependent children who are missing or unable to be processed together with the principal applicant as long as they are listed on the IMM 0008. The sponsor undertakes the legal responsibility to support all family members listed, even if they arrive through the One-Year Window of Opportunity Application.

Take care to ensure that the spelling of the names and dates of birth are consistent with the refugee family’s documents. Inconsistencies will cause delays.

If a family member has not been included in the Undertaking and IMM 0008 forms, they will be excluded from coming to Canada as family members.

One Year Window of Opportunity (OYW) is a regulatory mechanism that allows non-accompanying family members to submit an application and be eligible to be processed in the same class and category as the principal applicant (PA) for up to one year following the PA’s arrival in Canada. All family members must be identified on the PA’s application form. For more details refer to Paragraph 141(1) (b) of IRPR, IP3 and OP5.

Sample Case Continued

Ezekiel manages to find a SAH (The Diocese of Blue Knife) to sponsor his brother and his family. He will be working with them as a cosponsor individual. Figure 1 provides an example of how the first page of the Undertaking should be filled out in this instance.

He has received the completed IMM 6000 and required documents from his brother. When submitting the Undertaking / Application to Sponsor, the sponsor will be required to fill out two Undertaking / Application to Sponsor forms - one for Malu and his family, and one for Kimbala, because Kimbala is not his biological son nor legally adopted son. Kimbala is a de-facto dependant of Malu. Both files need to be linked so that they can be assessed at the same time. Figure 2 demonstrates how in Malu’s application form Kimbala’s is being linked. Similarly, Malu’s application can be linked to Kimbala’s application by putting his name and date of birth in section G of Kimbala’s undertaking form.

Figure 3 outlines the settlement details of this case.
applicants’ names are accurate and consistent with what has been included in the IMM 6000 package and supporting documents.

**Figure 2**

In instances of sponsorship of cases that require separate undertakings but that relate to and/or emanate from the same grounds of persecution or involve family members (i.e. adult children, siblings, etc.) **Section G** allows you to link multiple undertakings so that they can be processed at the same time. To do so simply indicate on each undertaking the name and date of birth of the principal refugee applicant that corresponds to the case you would like linked.

In **Section H** the group should list any close relatives of the refugee who are already living in Canada. Relatives include parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and adult children. Friends are not considered relatives. If family members are already listed elsewhere in the application and their familial relationship is indicated, it is not necessary to list them.

If sponsors wish to state their reasons for sponsoring the applicants mentioned in the form, they can provide a “Sponsorship Rationale” on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the Undertaking. Sponsors can also explain why they consider the refugees to be eligible for sponsorship, that the refugees do not have any other durable solution, and why Canada is the preferred choice for resettlement. Even though providing this information is optional, sponsoring groups are encouraged to do so.

**Section J and K** – each party to the sponsorship (SAH representative, CG group representative and the co-sponsor, if applicable) must read this section, check the appropriate box, and then sign and date these sections, preferably in pen with blue ink.

The application will be returned if all relevant partners to the sponsorship do not sign it. **Signatures have to be original and dated.** Any photocopy, including a scanned copy, might not be accepted. By signing this section, each part to the sponsorship undertakes the legal responsibility of upholding the obligations of the sponsoring group that are listed in **Section I** of the Undertaking and the settlement plan.

**Settlement Plan IMM 5440**

The **Instruction Guide** defines the settlement plan as a “planning tool for sponsoring groups to formulate how they intend to deliver the various aspects of settlement assistance needed to help the refugee applicant(s) establish successfully in Canada.” All sponsors, including experienced sponsors, are expected to prepare a Settlement Plan.

**Exception:** While experienced SAHs may not be required to submit their Settlement Plan as part of their application package, the CPO-W can request it if CIC has concerns.

As a Constituent Group or Cosponsor, you will be required to submit your Settlement Plan to your SAH for approval. If satisfied, your SAH may issue a letter of approval authorizing your group to sponsor under their agreement.
When completing the Settlement Plan the most important thing to keep in mind is that it should provide a clear and detailed explanation of how the sponsoring group plans to settle the refugee applicants should they come to Canada. If there are multiple partners to the sponsorship - SAH, CG, Cosponsor individuals and/or organizations – this plan should outline each party’s involvement in the settlement of the newcomers. This can be done by utilizing the Settlement Checklist in Section B and then providing detailed information regarding these responsibilities in Section C. It is important that the Settlement Plan identifies enough volunteers that will fully support the newcomer upon arrival.

Another important point to consider when preparing the Settlement Plan is the expected costs of the sponsorship and possible in-kind donations (see Fact Sheet 7.3 Sponsorship Cost Table in this handbook). In question 4, the sponsoring group should describe the anticipated expenses such as cost of rent, clothing, transportation, furniture, telephone, food and other items. If the sponsoring group has collected donations or plans to use in-kind deductions, they should clearly state this in question 5.

Sponsors should also consider unexpected eventualities and have a contingency plan. A contingency plan offers an alternative arrangement if, for instance, members of the group are not available to offer settlement assistance or the in-kind donation does not fit the newcomers’ needs or the planned financial arrangements are not sufficient.

**Figure 3**
**Sponsor Assessment IMM 5492**

As stated in the Sponsorship Application Guide IMM5413, the representative of a Sponsorship Agreement Holder may complete the Sponsor Assessment form and submit it to CIC National Headquarters to be kept on file instead of having to complete the form for each sponsorship application. The representative signing for the CG, however, must complete a Sponsor Assessment and submit it with each undertaking. By completing this form, individuals declare that they are eligible to participate in the sponsorship of refugees.

**Document Checklist IMM 5437**

This form must be completed and submitted with your completed Refugee Sponsorship Application. The document checklist is the same for all three types of sponsors and it is important that sponsoring groups identify the type of their sponsorship group in the top of the first page before completing the form.

**Use of Representative IMM 5476** – this form is optional

CIC defines a representative as “someone who has provided advice, consultation, or guidance to you at any stage of the immigration application process, or in an immigration proceeding. If someone represented or advised you to help you submit your application, then that person is your representative. A representative is also someone who has your permission to conduct business on your behalf with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)”.

In the context of private refugee sponsorship, a representative may be a third party (e.g. a relative, a friend, an immigration consultant) authorized by the sponsor or by the principal applicant to enquire about the sponsor/refugee application on their behalf. In some cases sponsors may ask the refugee(s) to fill out this form to identify the sponsor as their representative.

**Application for Convention Refugees Abroad and Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad IMM 6000**

In order for the application package to be complete sponsors must ensure that IMM 6000 forms are completed and signed by the refugee applicants and that all required supporting documents are enclosed. The IMM 6000 application package has to be submitted to the CPO-W together with the sponsor’s forms.
The instruction guide IMM 5413 contains various forms that must be completed as part of the sponsorship application your group submits to the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W).

**Undertaking/Application IMM 5373**

At the top of the Undertaking sponsors must identify the type of their sponsoring group: SAH or CG, Group of Five, or Community Sponsor.

The first few sections of the Undertaking are for the personal and contact information for the sponsoring group. At a minimum, **Section B** must include the details of the Community Sponsor organization’s representative (the person who has authority or ownership of the organization’s finance), his or her date of birth and contact information. This individual must also sign the Undertaking. By signing it, the individual demonstrates his or her approval of the sponsorship and commitment to the associated legal responsibilities.

**Figure 1**

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**SECTION 2:** Community Sponsors

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**Undertaking/Application IMM 5373**

At the top of the Undertaking sponsors must identify the type of their sponsoring group: SAH or CG, Group of Five, or Community Sponsor.

The first few sections of the Undertaking are for the personal and contact information for the sponsoring group. At a minimum, **Section B** must include the details of the Community Sponsor organization’s representative (the person who has authority or ownership of the organization’s finance), his or her date of birth and contact information. This individual must also sign the Undertaking. By signing it, the individual demonstrates his or her approval of the sponsorship and commitment to the associated legal responsibilities.
One Year Window of Opportunity (OYW) is a regulatory mechanism that allows non-accompanying family members to submit an application and be eligible to be processed in the same class and category as the principal applicant (PA) for up to one year following the PA’s arrival in Canada. All family members must be identified on the PA’s application form. For more details refer to Paragraph 141(1) (b) of IRPR, IP3 and OP5.

In cases where the organization will be working with co-sponsor individuals and/or organizations, it will be necessary to include this information in Section C. When working with co-sponsors, in the case of an individual, the personal details of the individual are required; whereas in the case of an organization, the name of the organization and the personal details of its representative are required.

Section E will allow your Sponsoring Group to list the personal details and contact information of the refugee(s) you are identifying for sponsorship.

The individual with the stronger refugee case should be the principal applicant. It is important to list all family members in this section whether they are accompanying the principal applicant or not. The One Year Window of Opportunity provision provides a mechanism to reunite spouses and dependent children who are missing or unable to be processed together with the principal applicant as long as they are listed on the IMM 008. The sponsor undertakes the legal responsibility to support all family members listed, even if they arrive through the One-Year Window of Opportunity Application.

If a family member has not been included in the Undertaking and IMM 0008 forms, they will be excluded from coming to Canada as a family member.

The group representative mentioned in the Section B will be used as a contact person for the sponsoring group. This person will receive communication regarding the sponsorship process from CIC. It is important that the contact information (e-mail address in particularly) is up-to-date to ensure timely exchange of correspondence. It is also advised to have internal mechanisms in place to share information among parties to the sponsorship, to ensure that information flows smoothly amongst all parties.

In cases where the organization will be working with co-sponsor individuals and/or organizations, it will be necessary to include this information in Section C. When working with co-sponsors, in the case of an individual, the personal details of the individual are required; whereas in the case of an organization, the name of the organization and the personal details of its representative are required.

Sample Case Continued

As a Community Sponsor, the Centre Francophone of Blue Knife is interested in sponsoring Malu and his family. They have agreed to work together with Ezekiel as a co-sponsor individual. See Figure 1 for an example of how Section A of the Undertaking should be filled out in this case.

The group representative mentioned in the Section B will be used as a contact person for the sponsoring group. This person will receive communication regarding the sponsorship process from CIC. It is important that the contact information (e-mail address in particularly) is up-to-date to ensure timely exchange of correspondence. It is also advised to have internal mechanisms in place to share information among parties to the sponsorship, to ensure that information flows smoothly amongst all parties.

In cases where the organization will be working with co-sponsor individuals and/or organizations, it will be necessary to include this information in Section C. When working with co-sponsors, in the case of an individual, the personal details of the individual are required; whereas in the case of an organization, the name of the organization and the personal details of its representative are required.

Section E will allow your Sponsoring Group to list the personal details and contact information of the refugee(s) you are identifying for sponsorship.

The individual with the stronger refugee case should be the principal applicant. It is important to list all family members in this section whether they are accompanying the principal applicant or not. The One Year Window of Opportunity provision provides a mechanism to reunite spouses and dependent children who are missing or unable to be processed together with the principal applicant as long as they are listed on the IMM 008. The sponsor undertakes the legal responsibility to support all family members listed, even if they arrive through the One-Year Window of Opportunity Application.

If a family member has not been included in the Undertaking and IMM 0008 forms, they will be excluded from coming to Canada as a family member.

It is important to provide the exact mailing address of the refugees, which should be accurate and kept up-to-date throughout the application process as it will be necessary for the visa office to contact the refugee applicants during the sponsorship process. If applicable, the group can also provide an alternate address.

Any discrepancy or contradiction of the refugee’s personal information could raise credibility issues. Sponsors should, therefore, ensure that the personal information and spelling of the applicants names are accurate and consistent with what has been included in the IMM 6000 package and supporting documents.
In instances of sponsorship of cases that require separate undertakings but that relate to and/or emanate from the same grounds, of persecution or involve family members (i.e. adult children, siblings, etc.) **Section G** allows sponsors to link multiple undertakings so that they can be processed at the same time. To do so simply indicate on each undertaking the name and date of birth of the principal refugee applicant that corresponds to the case you would like linked.

**Figure 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Other Principal Refugee Applicants Linked to This Undertaking</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kimbala Frederico</td>
<td>1/31/90, 2/10/2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the **Section H** the group should list any close relatives of the refugee who are already living in Canada. Relatives include parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and adult children. Friends are not considered relatives.

**Sections J & K** – each party to the sponsorship (Community Sponsor representative and the co-sponsor, if applicable) must read this section, check the appropriate box, and then sign and date **sections J and K**, preferably in pen with blue ink.

The application will be returned if all relevant partners to the sponsorship do not sign it. **Signatures have to be original and dated.** Any photocopy, including a scanned copy, might not be accepted. By signing this section, each part to the sponsorship undertakes the legal responsibility of upholding the obligations of the sponsoring group that are listed in **Section I** of the Undertaking and the settlement plan.

If sponsors wish to state their reasons for sponsoring the applicants mentioned in the form, they can provide a “Sponsorship Rationale” on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the Undertaking. Sponsors can also explain why they consider the refugees to be eligible for sponsorship, that the refugees do not have any other durable solution, and why Canada is the preferred choice for resettlement. Even though providing this information is optional, sponsoring groups are encouraged to do so.

**Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment IMM 5515**

The **Instruction Guide** defines the settlement plan as a “planning tool for sponsoring groups to formulate how they intend to deliver the various aspects of settlement assistance needed to help the refugee applicant(s) establish successfully in Canada.” The Settlement Plan for Community Sponsors also includes an organization profile as well as a financial assessment portion. The financial assessment allows the CPO-W to assess whether your group will be able to provide the appropriate financial support. It is important that all organizations participating in the sponsorship (including co-sponsor organizations) complete these forms.

The organization profile contains information pertaining to the organization’s structure, purpose, leadership, and membership. Additionally, it provides information related to the type of activities in which the organization is involved in, including any refugee or humanitarian related activities, as well as income sources and capacity to manage debt. This type of information provides CIC with a perspective on how stable and solvent the organization is.
The **Settlement Needs Checklist** allows the group to indicate the monetary and in-kind support they are offering to the refugee, and its corresponding dollar figure. It also allows the group to indicate who will provide the support if there are multiple parties working on the sponsorship. In-kind deductions are donations that the group is committing to provide to the refugee in the form of goods, commodities or services. There is a cap on how much a group is permitted to pledge as in-kind donations to reduce the cost of the sponsorship; this calculation is given in the table on page 4 of the **IMM 5515** (see also Fact Sheet 7.3 Sponsorship Cost Table in this handbook).
By using in-kind deductions a sponsoring group can reduce the amount of financial commitment that they need to show to CIC. However, if in-kind deductions are above the permitted maximum, the CPO-W will either reduce the amount to the permitted maximum or return the application in instances where the finances are insufficient for the refugees’ settlement needs.

**Figure 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement Needs</th>
<th>Sponsored</th>
<th>Copassor #1 (individual)</th>
<th>Copassor #2 (organization)</th>
<th>In-Kind</th>
<th>In-Kind Deduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>START-UP COSTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start-up costs (household effects, bedding and linens)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School startup costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food staples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hook-up costs (rent deposit, telephone, utilities, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONTHLY EXPENDITURES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (public transit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Living allowance (food, incidentals, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet refugee(s) at the airport and provide transportation to the final destination</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet refugees upon arrival at the final destination (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Locate an interpreter (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for provincial health plan and Interim Federal Health plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for Social Insurance Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select a family physician</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Select a dentist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan for medical emergencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide orientation (public transportation, banking services, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide assistance in linking refugee(s) with community activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enroll children in school (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make child care arrangements (if applicable)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Register for child tax benefit (if applicable)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enroll adult in language training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide assistance in finding employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total In-Kind Deduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detailed information regarding the settlement responsibilities are outlined in **Section C**. Each settlement need is explained in the instructions guide, which should be referred to before completing the plan. For all the different areas outlined the group should earmark at least one person, give his or her availability and come up with a contingency plan should the member be unavailable for any reason.

It is important that the Settlement Plan identifies a number of volunteers who will fully support the newcomer upon arrival. Additionally, when the group assigns the settlement tasks to members, they should use reasonable judgment to ensure that the responsibilities are fairly distributed among group members. Also, it is important to consider each group members’ availability and capabilities when assigning tasks.

Sponsors should also consider unexpected eventualities and have a contingency plan. A contingency plan offers an alternative arrangement if, for instance, members of the group...
are not available to offer settlement assistance, the in-kind donation does not fit the newcomers needs or the planned financial arrangements are not sufficient.

**Figure 5**

Finances are an important part of any sponsorship. In **Section E**, the sponsoring group must outline its financial capability to sponsor the refugee(s). The financial commitment of the group plus the amount of in-kind deductions being utilized should be equal to or greater than the total cost of sponsorship, as outlined by CIC in the **Sponsorship Cost Table** found on page 4 of the IMM 5515.
Sample Case Continued

Figure 5: For the sponsorship of the Frederic family the total financial commitment of the group is $17,000, the amount of in-kind deductions is $17,800, equalling $34,800 together. The cost of sponsoring a family of three according to the Sponsorship Cost Table is $23,000. Given that the de facto dependant has to be considered as an additional single individual, we must add $11,800 to that amount. The total sponsorship costs in this case would be $34,800 which equals the financial

Sponsor Assessment IMM 5492

All individuals who sign the Undertaking/Application are required to fill out the Sponsor Assessment form to confirm their eligibility as sponsors. This includes the Community Sponsor representative as well as any Co-sponsor individuals and/or Co-sponsor organization representative, if applicable.

Document Checklist IMM 5437

This form must be completed and submitted with your completed Refugee Sponsorship Application. The document checklist is the same for all three types of sponsors and it is important that sponsoring groups identify the type of their sponsorship group in the top of the first page before completing the form.

Use of Representative IMM 5476

CIC defines a representative as “someone who has provided advice, consultation, or guidance to you at any stage of the immigration application process, or in an immigration proceeding. If someone represented or advised you to help you submit your application, then that person is your representative. A representative is also someone who has your
permission to conduct business on your behalf with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)”.

In the context of private refugee sponsorship, a representative may be a third party (e.g. a relative, a friend, an immigration consultant) authorized by the sponsor or by the principal applicant to enquire about the sponsor/refugee application on their behalf. In some cases sponsors may ask the refugee(s) to fill out this form to identify the sponsor as their representative. This form is optional.

**Application for Convention Refugees Abroad and Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad IMM 6000**

In order for the application package to be complete sponsors must ensure that IMM 6000 forms are completed and signed by the refugee applicants and that all required supporting documents are enclosed. The IMM 6000 application package has to be submitted to the CPO-W together with the sponsor’s forms.
The instruction guide IMM 5413 contains various forms that must be completed as part of the sponsorship application your group submits to the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W).

**Undertaking/Application IMM 5373**

At the top of the Undertaking sponsors must identify the type of their sponsoring group: SAH or CG, Group of Five, or Community Sponsor.

The **Section B** of the Undertaking requires the Group of Five to provide its name and personal details of the group representative. It is important to provide a group name and to remain consistent in all of the forms with the group's name. Some groups choose to name themselves after the refugee or group representative, while others simply put the name of their favourite club.

The group must also identify a group representative. Be sure to identify someone who is capable of effectively communicating in either of Canada’s official languages and can be easily reached by the local CIC office and the CPO-W. The CPO-W will communicate with the group representative when issues arise in regards to the sponsorship application. Group representatives may also designate an individual as their representative in dealings with CIC, by filling out an IMM 5476 (discussed later).

In the **Section D** all five members of the sponsoring group must provide their personal and contact information. If your group has more than five members, they should include a copy of the relevant page of the form with the additional information. It is important that all group members or representatives indicate if they have ever signed any other undertaking to sponsor refugees or family members. If they have sponsored someone before they should provide the details of the other sponsorship(s) including name, date of birth, immigration file number, period of sponsorship and status of the sponsorship on a separate sheet and attach it to the Undertaking. This question is meant to assist the CPO-W in reviewing the sponsorship history of the group members and assessing whether group members or representatives are eligible to participate in the sponsorship. The CPO-W officer will have access to past sponsorship information and will verify if the groups members are involved in other sponsorships. The questions must be answered in an honest and truthful manner.
Sample Case

Ezekiel and his wife want to sponsor Malu and his family using a Group of Five. They have discussed this with their cousin, Rachel Toko (DOB: January 11, 1980), and friends, Samuel David (DOB: June 29, 1985) and Mohammad Ahmad (DOB: July 07, 1981). Ezekiel has known them since he started working with the City of Blueknife. All of them earn a decent income while his cousin owns a restaurant. All group members are Canadian citizens and reside in Blueknife and the surrounding areas.

Figure 1 illustrates completed sections of the undertaking for the group representative and one group member.

Figure 1

Section E will allow your sponsoring group to list the personal and contact information pertaining to the refugee(s) you are identifying for sponsorship.

The individual with the stronger refugee case should be the principal applicant. It is important to list all family members in this section whether they are accompanying the principal applicant or not. The One Year Window of Opportunity provision provides a mechanism to reunite spouses and dependent children who are missing or unable to be processed together with the principal applicant as long as they are listed on the IMM 008.
The sponsor undertakes the legal responsibility to support all family members listed, even if they arrive through the *One-Year Window of Opportunity* Application.

**One Year Window of Opportunity** (OYW) is a regulatory mechanism that allows non-accompanying family members to submit an application and be eligible to be processed in the same class and category as the principal applicant (PA) for up to one year following the PA’s arrival in Canada. All family members must be identified on the PA’s application form. For more details refer to Paragraph 141(1) (b) of IRPR, IP3 and OP5.

**If a family member has not been included in the Undertaking and IMM 0008 forms, they will be excluded from coming into Canada as family members.**

It is important to provide the exact mailing address of the refugees, which should be accurate and kept up-to-date throughout the application process as during the sponsorship process it will be necessary for the visa office to contact the refugee applicants. If applicable, the group can also provide an alternate address.

*Sample Case Continued*

Ezekiel has received the completed IMM 6000 and required documents from his brother. When submitting the Undertaking/Application to Sponsor, the sponsor will be required to fill out two Undertaking/Application to Sponsor Forms - one for Malu and his family and one for Kimbala, because Kimbala is not his biological son nor legally adopted son. He is thus a de-facto dependent of Malu. Both files can be linked so that they can be assessed at the same time.

*Figure 2 demonstrates how in Malu’s application form Kimbala’s is being linked. Similarly, Malu's application can linked to Kimbala’s application by putting his name and date of birth in section G of Kimbala’s undertaking form.*

Any discrepancy or contradiction of the refugee’s personal information could raise credibility issues; sponsors should ensure that the personal information and spelling of the applicants names are accurate and consistent with what has been included in the IMM 6000 package and supporting documents.

In instances of sponsorship of cases that require separate undertakings but that relate to and/or emanate from the same grounds of persecution or involve family members (i.e. adult children, siblings, etc.) **Section G** allows sponsors to link multiple undertakings so that they can be processed at the same time. To do so simply indicate on each undertaking the name and date of birth of the principal refugee applicant that corresponds to the case you would like linked.
Ezekiel and the other group members have collected some in-kind donations i.e. furniture and clothing, and the estimated dollar figure of these items are $2,000 and $1,000, respectively.

Figure 3 illustrates how Section B would be filled out in this case.

NOTE: Since the application involved two linked cases, the group should be prepared to provide the required financial amount. The sponsorship costs of the family equal $34,800. That is: $23,000 (for Malu, his wife and son) plus $11,800 (for Kimbala). Although the group completes two undertaking forms, if the family will be living together they can choose to fill out only one settlement plan.

In Section H the group should list any close relatives of the refugee who are already living in Canada. Relatives include parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and adult children. Friends are not considered relatives.

Sections J and K – each party to the sponsorship (all members of the Group of Five and the co-sponsor, if applicable) must read these sections, check the appropriate box, and then sign and date sections J and K, preferably in pen with blue ink.

The application will be returned if all relevant partners to the sponsorship do not sign it. Signatures have to be original and dated. Any photocopy, including a scanned copy, might not be accepted. By signing this section, each party to the sponsorship undertakes the legal responsibility of upholding the obligations of the sponsoring group that are listed in Section I of the Undertaking and the settlement plan.

If sponsors wish to state their reasons for sponsoring the applicants mentioned in the form, they can provide a “Sponsorship Rationale” on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to the Undertaking. Sponsors can also explain why they consider the refugees to be eligible for sponsorship, that the refugees do not have any other durable solution, and why Canada is the preferred choice for resettlement. Even though providing this information is optional, sponsoring groups are encouraged to do so.

Settlement Plan IMM 5373A

The Instruction Guide defines the settlement plan as a “planning tool for sponsoring groups to formulate how they intend to deliver the various aspects of settlement assistance needed to help the refugee applicant(s) establish successfully in Canada.” This is the tool used by the CPO-W to assess whether your group is providing the resettled refugee with the necessary settlement and financial support. The more details provided the easier it will be for the officer to make this assessment.

Section B allows for the members of the Group of Five to indicate the monetary and in-kind support they are offering and its corresponding dollar figure. In-kind deductions are donations that the group is committing to provide to the refugee in the form of goods, commodities or services. There is a cap on how much a group is permitted to pledge as in-kind donations to reduce the cost of the sponsorship; this
calculation is given in the table on page 4 of the IMM 5373A.

By using in-kind deductions, a sponsoring group can reduce the amount of financial commitment that they need to show to CIC. If in-kind deductions are above the permitted maximum, the CPO-W will either reduce the amount to the permitted maximum or return the application if the finances are insufficient for the refugees’ settlement needs.

**Figure 3**

![B - Settlement Needs Checklist](image)

Detailed information regarding the settlement responsibilities are outlined in Section C. Each settlement need has been duly explained in the instruction guide. The sponsoring group is advised to refer to the guide before completing the settlement plan. For all the different areas outlined the group should earmark at least one person, give his or her availability and come up with a contingency plan should the member be unavailable for any reason. The group should also indicate clearly in this section if they are using any in-kind donations and how they will gather them.

When the group assigns the settlement tasks to members, they should use careful judgment to ensure that the responsibilities are fairly distributed among group members. Also, the group should keep in mind each member’s availability and capabilities when assigning them various tasks.

**Figure 4**

![Sample Case Continued](image)
Sponsors should also consider unexpected eventualities and have a contingency plan. A contingency plan offers an alternative arrangement if, for instance, members of the group are not available to offer settlement assistance or the in-kind donations do not fit the newcomers needs or the planned financial arrangements are not sufficient.

Finances are an important part of any sponsorship. In Section D the group members will outline their financial capability to sponsor the family. This section should be filled out in conjunction with the Financial Profile form, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Under the financial commitment section, group members will specify the amount of money they have pledged to contribute towards the sponsorship (this can be found in Box B of their individual Financial Profile form).

A note on Trust Accounts

Semi-trust accounts are a great way of keeping money safe until the refugees arrive. It is necessary for the account to be in the name of at least two group members and require both members’ approval for any withdrawals. By ensuring that you open a semi-trust account your money will be accessible in emergency situations or in the case that the refugee does not arrive. You will need a letter from the bank.

Beyond the monetary and in-kind contributions of each individual group member, the group may also choose to use other sources of funds including pensions, investments, and/or trust accounts and must indicate the amount of the contribution.

The financial commitment of all group members combined plus any other sources of funding added to the amount of in-kind deductions being utilized should be equal to or greater than the total cost of sponsorship as outlined by CIC in the Sponsorship Cost Table found on page 4 of the IMM 5373A.

Sample Case Continued

Figure 5: For the sponsorship of the Frederic family the total financial commitment of the group is $18,000, the amount of in-kind deductions is $16,800. When added together, this equals $34,800. The cost of sponsoring a family of three according to the Sponsorship Cost Table is $23,000. Given that the de facto dependant has to be considered an additional single individual, we must add $11,800 to that amount. The total sponsorship cost in this case would be $34,800 which equals the financial commitment of the group plus the in-kind deductions.

Figure 5
Financial Profile IMM 5373B

CIC uses the financial profile to determine whether the sponsoring group will be able to provide the financial support and settlement assistance required to support refugee applicants in establishing themselves successfully during the sponsorship in Canada. All group members who are contributing financially to the sponsorship are expected to fill out this form and indicate how much they are earning and contributing towards the sponsorship.

Sample Case Continued

The amount of funds committed by group members is indicated in Section G, Box B of the Financial Profile form. How much one can contribute varies but must be reasonable considering the income of the member and taking into consideration their other financial commitment including responsibility for themselves, family members and other sponsorship responsibilities, if any. For more information, please refer to the instruction guide pages 24-26.

Figure 6 illustrates the Financial Profile form for Ezekiel.

Figure 6

![Image of Financial Profile form]

Please be sure to answer question 4!
**Sponsor Assessment IMM 5492**

For Groups of Five, each member of the group who also signs the Undertaking/Application is required to fill out the Sponsor Assessment form. By completing the form, individuals confirm that they are eligible to participate in the sponsorship of refugees.

**Document Checklist IMM 5437**

This form must be completed and submitted with your completed Refugee Sponsorship Application. The document checklist is the same for all three types of sponsors and it is important that sponsoring groups identify the type of their sponsorship group in the top of the first page before completing the form.

**Use of Representative IMM 5476** - This form is optional.

CIC defines a representative as “someone who has provided advice, consultation, or guidance to you at any stage of the immigration application process, or in an immigration proceeding. If someone represented or advised you to help you submit your application, then that person is your representative. A representative is also someone who has your permission to conduct business on your behalf with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)”.

In the context of private refugee sponsorship, a representative may be a third party (e.g. a relative, a friend, an immigration consultant) authorized by the sponsor or by the principal applicant to enquire about the sponsor/refugee application on their behalf. In some cases sponsors may ask the refugee(s) to fill out this form to identify the sponsor as their representative.

**Application for Convention Refugees Abroad and Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad IMM 6000**

In order for the application package to be complete sponsors must ensure that IMM 6000 forms are completed and signed by the refugee applicants and that all required supporting documents are enclosed. The IMM 6000 application package has to be submitted to the CPO-W together with the sponsor's forms.
Overview

It is a requirement to submit completed forms contained in the IMM 6000 package together with the sponsors’ forms. These include the IMM 0008 Generic Application Form for Canada form, the Additional Dependants/Declaration form (if applicable), the Schedule A form, the Schedule 2 for and the Use of Representative form (optional). All these forms can be downloaded from the CIC website. Although it is the refugee applicant who completes these forms, the sponsorship group can facilitate the process and ensure that they are properly filled out.

Generic Application Form for Canada IMM 0008

Since this form is utilized for various immigration streams, it is important that the refugee applicant selects “Refugee” from the drop-down menu as the program under which they are applying. Question 2 asks about the category under which the applicants are applying. Once they have selected “refugee” in Question 1, the options in the drop-down menu in the Question 2 will include different categories of refugee applications. Refugees who are being privately sponsored from abroad should select “Outside Canada – Refugee”.

Question 6 relates to the intended place of residence in Canada. It is important here that this answer match with the community where the sponsor is located. Should the applicant state that they would like to live outside the community where the sponsor has agreed to provide settlement support, red flags could be raised about the possibility of secondary migration and sponsorship breakdown.

Important Tips

Sponsors are advised to make sure that the refugee applicants are using the most current application; the date is given at the bottom left corner of the form and can be compared with the online form at: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/conref.asp

Sponsors should ensure, to the best of their ability, that the refugee applicant provides correct and up-to-date personal information.

The applicants should not leave out information because there is not enough room on the form. Instead, they are encouraged to attach extra pages when needed indicating in the space provided for the reader to ‘see attached’.

Sponsors should indicate to refugees the importance of ensuring that all information provided is truthful and accurate. Any discrepancies and/or contradiction could lead the officer examining the application to conclude the applicant is not credible and reject the application.
Questions 1 through 14 in the Section called Personal Details are personal information related items. It is important that the applicants provide their accurate personal details including full name, date of birth, place of birth and other information. In cultures where family names are uncommon the applicant could choose his or her middle name, grandfather’s name or other name as the last name and remain consistent in its usage throughout all the application forms and process.

For people who may have difficulty recalling their own or their parent’s actual date of birth, they are expected to provide the approximate date, month and year and again remain consistent in its usage.

Contact Information

When providing contact information in questions 1 to 6 of this section it is important that the refugee applicants provide a reliable mailing address, including an alternative mailing address, where the visa office could reach them. Not providing a correct address could result in the loss of important correspondence, delay and possibly fraud. Should the applicants use email and have regular access to the internet, they are encouraged to provide their email address as it could enable the visa office to correspond with them electronically.

Applicants should also provide their actual residential address including street name and house number and, if applicable, town, city and country. If the place does not have street name or house number, they can put the name of the neighbourhood or township. If the refugees are staying in a refugee camp, detention centre, prison or hospital, they should provide the name of the camp or institute where they currently reside.

Dependant(s)

The third page of the Generic Application for Canada is where the applicant must list ALL family members, whether they will be accompanying the applicant to Canada or not. The principal applicant should list all his or her dependants, i.e. spouse or common-law partner, dependent children and dependants of the applicant’s spouse (if applicable). The applicant should also include those family members whose whereabouts are unknown or who are deemed deceased.

By default, one dependant can be listed on the form; to add more dependants, please click on the blue “add dependant” button. You can include up to five (5) dependants on this form. If you have more dependants, you will need to use the Additional Dependents/Declaration (IMM 0008DEP) form for each additional family member. To remove a dependant from the application, click the “Remove Dependant” button.

Make sure that you answer all questions in the form. When you finish completing the form, click the “validate” button to generate a barcode, print and sign the page and attach it to the application.
**Additional Dependents/Declaration IMM 0008DEP**

This form should be completed by the principal applicant on behalf of his/her dependants. The *Additional Dependents/Declaration* form is only required for the applicants who have more than five (5) dependants and who cannot list all of them in the *Generic Application Form for Canada IMM0008*. If the applicant has less than five (5) dependants and if all of them are listed in the *Generic Application Form for Canada* then he/she does not need to complete this form.

**Schedule A - Background / Declaration IMM 5669**

The principal applicant and all family members who are 18 years of age and over must complete this form. For this reason, the applicant and family members are required to check the applicable box at the beginning of the form and identify whether they are the principal applicant or a dependent family member.

Personal information in this schedule should be consistent with what is outlined in the IMM 0008 Generic Form.

The information provided in question 6 will assist the visa officer to determine inadmissibility issues. The applicants should ensure that the information provided here is consistent with the other explanations provided in the application package and specifically the refugee’s narrative. For instance, if the applicant claims that he/she was detained in the refugee narrative, he/she should then check YES next to the appropriate statement in question 6 and provide detailed information in the space provided below.

**Questions 8 and 12** should be looked at together and be consistent with one another. Here, the applicant is asked to provide the details of his/her personal history (question 8) and residential addresses (question 12), since the age of 18. Dates and locations should be consistent within these two questions. Additionally, it is important that the details provided are complete without leaving any gaps in time.

Often applicants tend to write only the period when they were working and leave out the time when they were unemployed, hospitalized or imprisoned. However, they should indicate these under activities with the corresponding hospital or prison listed as their address. They need to be accountable for every activity performed and every address where they resided since the age of 18, no matter the length of time.

**In questions 9 and 10**, applicants are required to provide detailed information about their memberships or associations, including the nature of the organization, as well as the position and role they held. The same applies for government positions. If the applicant was neither a member of any organization nor held any government position, they should put “NONE” in the appropriate space. It is important to never leave any question unanswered.

**Question 11** asks about any military service that the applicant has undertaken. This question should not be left blank. If the applicant has done military service, he/she should indicate all the specifics of their involvement including the unit, rank and any participation in combat. **Remember:** merely serving in the military does not exclude applicants from getting refugee protection.

Finally, refugee applicants must ensure to sign and date the declaration on the last page. It is best to sign in blue ink so that it is evident that the signature is an original.
Schedule 2 - Refugees Outside Canada IMM 0008

Schedule 2 provides the backbone of the applicant’s refugee claim. As a result, the applicant should take the utmost care in providing accurate and genuine information. The principal applicant and all family members who are 18 years of age and over must complete this form. Applicants and their family members and de facto dependants are required to check the applicable box at the beginning of the form and identify whether they are the principal applicant, a dependant or a following One Year Window family member (see Chapter 4).

Personal information on this schedule should be consistent with what is outlined in the IMM 0008 Generic Form and Schedule A.

Question 1 in part A asks if you have applied for resettlement before. If you did, please remember to provide compelling reasons such as change in circumstance to reapply again.

Questions 3 - 6 deal with the refugee narrative. The refugee narrative is key to the application and should provide a truthful, detailed and personalized account of the refugees’ sufferings in their home country, their escape as well as their current situation including security issues and any challenges they may encounter in working, attending school and mobility.

Sponsors should convey to applicants the importance of a truthful narrative and warn against providing non-genuine or embellished stories and becoming victims of ill-advised or unscrupulous ‘consultants’ or so called ‘experts’. Failure to provide a genuine story may lead to a rejection by a visa officer due to lack of credibility.

Question 7 provides one final opportunity for the refugee applicants to include any additional information for the visa officer. This could include information that can assist in substantiating the applicant's story, for example written proof (if available) or general country condition information.

When identifying additional family members in Part C questions 13-15 please include all de facto dependants, non-dependent children and those who will not accompany the principal applicant to Canada and siblings. All names should be written in English or French and the refugee’s native language.

Should applicants want to authorize CIC to release their information to their sponsors in Canada they must check the correct box for the ‘Authority to disclose personal information’ in question 16.

Finally, refugee applicants must ensure to sign and date the declaration on the last page. It is best to try and do this in blue ink so that it is evident that the signature is an original.

If refugee applicants received assistance in completing these forms, they need to truthfully indicate this in the final question.
**Use of Representative IMM 5476**

A representative is someone who has permission to conduct business on behalf of the applicant with CIC. The refugees should consider completing this form as it allows someone in Canada, a paid or unpaid person, a friend or family member, an immigration consultant or a member of a Non-Governmental Organization, to act on the refugees’ behalf in Canada. This can keep the processing time to a minimum as it may avoid delays in communication issues.

**Supplementary Forms and Documents**

**Appendix A** (the Checklist) of the IMM 6000 refugee application kit provides a list of forms and supporting documents required by specific visa posts for all refugee applications. In addition to the Generic Form for Canada, Additional Dependents/Declaration, Schedule A, Schedule 2, and the Use of Representative form, applicants are required to provide copies of their identification and travel documents, photos and other supplementary documents/forms that are specific to the visa office where the application will be processed. Applicants can also submit any other documents that can corroborate their refugee claims over and above those listed in Appendix A. For more information, please visit: www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/pdf/Ea6000.pdf.

At any time after the initial application is received, visa offices reserve the right to request additional information which is reasonably required to assess a case. After reviewing the application, the visa office may request supplementary forms to be completed and submitted.
The sponsorship process involves many steps, some in Canada and others at an overseas visa post. As described in previous chapters, sponsorship of refugees consists in part of the sponsoring group and the accepted Undertaking by CIC in Canada. The other part entails the refugee and his or her dependants who apply from overseas to be accepted as refugees in need of resettlement to Canada. Every party requires a clear understanding of how the sponsorship process unfolds.

This chapter outlines this process starting with the initial step of the undertaking after you have formed your sponsoring group, up to the point of the refugee’s arrival.

Assembling the Application Forms

To officially initiate the sponsorship application process, sponsoring groups need to complete and submit the forms contained in the Application for Refugee Sponsorship package. There is a separate application package for Sponsorship Agreement Holders and their Constituent Groups who are submitting an Undertaking under the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (IMM 5493) program.

If your group is sponsoring a Visa Office-Referred case, the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg (CPO-W) will provide the group with detailed information about the refugee in order for the group to complete the application. In such cases, it will not be necessary to submit any forms other than the sponsorship application forms. However, when sponsoring a sponsor-referred case, the refugee applicants will be required to complete all of the forms contained in the IMM 6000 application package. For detailed information on filling out the refugee forms, please refer to Chapter 5.

For sponsor-referred cases, the forms which are contained in the Application for Refugee Sponsorship, including all the forms of the IMM6000 application package, need to be submitted together to the CPO-W.
In-Canada Processing

After the sponsoring group has completed their part of the application forms and has obtained completed and signed forms and supporting documents from the refugee applicant, the group will need to send them together in one envelope to the CPO-W. The mailing address of the CPO-W is:

Centralized Processing Office – Winnipeg
Box #1B
400 – 25 Forks Market Road
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4S9

The CPO-W will review the received application package to determine whether:

- The undertaking is accurate and complete
- The individuals meet the requirements to participate in a sponsoring group
- The group has a reasonable budget and the necessary funds available to meet the sponsorship obligations (SAH and CGs may be exempt)
- There is a back-up plan in case of change of circumstances
- There is a clear plan of orientation and support for the newcomers throughout the year
- There is consideration as to how to use available settlement services
- The applicant intends to live in the same community as the sponsoring group
- There are enough individuals who are willing to provide support
- The time they plan on providing to the settlement of the refugees seems reasonable
- The settlement plan includes arrangements for: housing, interpreters, settlement services, transportation, health care, education, schooling, dealing with crisis or trauma, etc.
- The in-kind donations seem reasonable and have been explained in detail
- The responsibilities are shared among all parties to the sponsorship

CPO-W also:
- Returns an application package to the sponsoring group if major documents or information is missing
- Contacts the sponsoring group for minor omissions or corrections
- Approves the undertaking if it is completed properly, group members meet the sponsorship eligibility criteria and all supporting documents have been provided
- Enters information into the CIC data system (the GCMS) and sends a letter of acknowledgement to the sponsoring group
- Provides a file number indicating that the application is now in process to the sponsoring group’s main contact or representative
- Sends the entire package to the appropriate visa post for further assessment and processing

New Information

If the sponsoring group has submitted its application but becomes aware of new information important to the application or relevant to the applicant’s safety, this information must be provided by the sponsoring group to the local CIC.

Such information might include:
- Change in family configuration
- Change in contact information
- Change in level of security of the applicant
- New information about the refugee case regarding eligibility and/or admissibility

CIC will forward the information to the appropriate contact at the visa office abroad to ensure timely processing.
**Overseas Processing**

The second part of the process takes place at a Canadian visa office overseas. This process begins with receiving the approved sponsorship undertaking and application for permanent residence forms and continues to the arrival of the refugee(s) in Canada.

**Overseas preparation of the refugee’s file**

When CPO-W forwards an application to an overseas visa post, it is opened in order of receipt. The overseas process begins with the following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overseas Processing Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIC will provide the refugee and the sponsoring group contact with a report on the application process at two stages in the overseas processing:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receipt of the completed refugee application</strong> and estimated time until an interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To inform of the outcome of the selection interview</strong>, and, in positive cases, pending the final results of the medical, security and admissibility checks, the estimated time to visa issuance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The visa post receives the undertaking information, the IMM6000 forms and supporting documents. If needed, the visa post may send an update request to the refugee regarding the information provided in the forms of the IMM 6000 application package.

2. Upon receipt, the visa officer opens a file and assigns the refugee applicant a **B-number** (if the CPO-W has not already done so). This number is important for identification of the refugee’s file and will be needed for any requests for updates and communication with the visa post regarding the sponsorship.

3. The visa officer notifies the sponsoring group contact or representative that the application is complete and sends the **1st benchmark letter** indicating an estimate of the number of months until the interview date. The refugee is put on a wait-list for an interview. The wait for an interview can range from a few months up to a few years.

**Processing times**

Processing times refer to the period of time it takes from the point at which the application to sponsor and completed refugee forms are received by a visa office abroad until the time the refugee arrives in Canada. Processing times vary according to the referral method of the case (sponsor, JAS or visa-office referred) and the workload of the visa office. You can find the average application processing times **online** at:


**Paper screening**

An application for private refugee sponsorship may be subject to paper screening at the visa office to assess basic eligibility criteria and admissibility elements. The application may be refused if it is apparent that the applicant does not meet any of Canada’s criteria for admission. Applicants do not automatically have a right to an interview; if the applicant passes the paper-screening, an interview is scheduled. In cases where the sponsoring group assessed the case prior to submitting to CPO-W, and where the refugee applicant has presented a complete application including substantive information on his/her protection needs, there is a good chance that the refugee will be screened for an interview.
A visa officer conducts the interview, although in some posts other staff may hold a preliminary interview.

**During the interview process the visa officer:**

1. first confirms the refugee’s information in the IMM 0008 and then assesses the refugee’s story to determine **eligibility**;
2. reviews security and criminality information (the officer may forward the refugee’s details to the Canada Border Services Agency);
3. interviews the principal applicant and family members/de facto dependants to assess **eligibility, credibility, admissibility, adaptability** as well as **special needs**, and to ensure the family composition is complete and accurate; and
4. expects that the applicant answers all questions truthfully and, if possible, produces documents to substantiate the application. Credibility is very important, and if the undertaking or accompanying materials contain any misleading or contradictory information, the applicant may be in a very difficult position. **Note:** Chances of appeal against refusals are **small**, as are the chances of reviews after a refusal. A thorough preparation of the case before an interview is therefore strongly recommended.

After the interview, the applicant may be provisionally accepted or refused. If she/he is refused, both the applicant and the sponsoring group contact or representative should receive notification from the visa post of the outcome of the selection interview.

For information on **negative** decision, please refer to the [RSTP information sheet on Responding to a Negative Decision](#).

**Expedited and Urgent Processing**

In exceptional cases, interviews and decisions can be prioritized. In ‘urgent’ cases there is an immediate risk to the life of an applicant. ‘Vulnerable’ cases involve persons with greater protection needs than other refugees in a country of asylum. Vulnerability can be related to medical needs, trauma, women-at-risk or other individual circumstances. A sponsor can flag such circumstances and request the visa office to process the case expeditiously. **Note:** such requests should only be made in **exceptional** cases, and the need of prioritizing should be substantiated.

**After a Positive Interview Decision**

A positive interview decision (provisional acceptance) does not necessarily mean that the applicant(s) will be resettled to Canada. Each applicant will still have to pass an admissibility screening. If one applicant is found to be inadmissible, all family members are inadmissible.
After a positive interview outcome, the visa officer:

1. refers the applicant for medical testing;
2. conducts a criminality and security screening;
3. decides whether another interview is needed for a final decision;
4. makes the final decision as to whether a person is admissible to come to Canada;
5. facilitates the acquisition of travel documents in cases where the applicant has no passport;
6. issues instructions to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) regarding travel booking, and Canadian Orientation Abroad; and
7. issues admissibility and travel loans if needed.

**Medical exams**
The visa officer refers the applicants to designated medical staff for medical tests. The medical exam is mandatory for refugees and all of their dependants and serves to determine whether applicants have medical conditions that present a danger to Canadian public health or safety. The applicants will receive instructions regarding the time and place of the medical exam. In most cases, the IOM or Red Cross will pre-pay the medical exam to be repaid by the refugees at a later date. If the refugee cannot afford to pay for the exam, he or she can be issued a loan by the government of Canada to pay for these expenses.

Under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), refugees **will not be found inadmissible** on the basis that their health condition is expected to cause an excessive demand on Canada’s health or social services. Your sponsoring group should be informed of any significant medical issues that will impact the settlement of the refugee family. Applicants with a condition considered a danger to public health or safety are inadmissible to Canada. If the condition is treatable the applicant may be scheduled for a follow-up medical exam after the treatment.

**If any one member of the family is found to be inadmissible, the entire family will be deemed inadmissible.**

**Security and criminality checks**
Refugees and all their dependants who are 18 years and over, including non-accompanying family members are subject to security and criminality checks to verify information in the application and to ensure that the applicants are admissible under these criteria. There may be long delays involved in the security check process, especially if there are concerns about membership in an organization that is suspected of being involved in terrorist acts or war crimes.

**Travel and Arrival**

Once the refugee applicant has been accepted the visa office will provide an estimated processing time for visa issuance.

In most cases, travel arrangements are made by the IOM. The IOM can arrange for accompaniment within airports when the applicants must change airlines during their journey. Without the support from the IOM, this may be a difficult procedure as refugees are unable to obtain transit visas to be within the country where they change airlines. IOM is also able to make special arrangements for children traveling unaccompanied. IOM will
provide travel services where a transportation loan is not required or has not been approved.

Once the visa officer is satisfied that all preparations have been made, the officer will give instructions for the visa to be issued. The visa officer will send a Notice of Arrival Transmission (NAT) to the Matching Centre which will send a copy to the local CIC responsible for the area where the applicant is expected to settle. The local CIC will then get in touch with the contact person or representative listed on the Undertaking.

Additionally, the Canadian Orientation Abroad Program, a project of the IOM, offers orientation covering a range of topics related to life in Canada to refugees before they travel to Canada. The orientation ranges from a three day orientation up to one week and aims to prepare refugees for life in a new country and environment.

A few of the large Canadian international airports have a CIC funded reception service for Government-Assisted Refugees which may also assist Privately Sponsored Refugees who have an onward flight from the port of entry. Costs for overnight stays in hotels and meal expenses are usually added to the refugee’s transportation loan.

**Examination at port of entry**

Upon arrival at the Canadian port of entry, the refugee applicant must be examined by an immigration officer. The purpose of this examination is to establish that, at the time of the examination, the applicant and his or her accompanying family members and/or de facto dependants meet the requirements of the IRPA and regulations. Where the officer is satisfied that it would not be contrary to the Act or the Regulations to grant permanent residence, the officer will grant permanent residence. The port of entry officer then signs the document and the applicant is no longer a refugee but a permanent resident of Canada. **Sponsors should ensure that the newcomer goes through this process before they leave the port of entry.**

**Reception by sponsors**

Sponsoring groups are responsible for receiving the refugees at the airport when they arrive. This is the beginning of the sponsorship period and the time for sponsoring groups to get acquainted with the newcomers and implement the settlement plans.

### Status Update Requests

The sponsoring group may request updates on the overseas processing from the CPO-W, but only within the guidelines established by CIC. The guidelines are intended to reduce the number of status update requests that divert visa officers away from the actual task of processing refugee cases for resettlement. At the same time, CIC agrees to update the sponsor within reasonable timeframes when there appear to be unexplained delays in processing.

The **PSR Case Status Update/Information Change Request** outlines when a SAH or another sponsor may request a status update from the CPO-W and expect to receive a response from the visa post. This can occur when:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e-Client application status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private sponsors can use CIC’s online status update service to check the status of an application. Sponsors can check the file status by entering a principal applicant’s name, date and country of birth and client ID or file number. This service is available at: <a href="https://services3.cic.gc.ca/ecas/?app=ecas&amp;lang=en">https://services3.cic.gc.ca/ecas/?app=ecas&amp;lang=en</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Processing time has exceeded the mission’s completion time for **75%** of PSR applications, based on the calculated processing start date from the date the IMM 0008 and accompanying forms and documents were received at the mission abroad or three months from approval of undertaking.

The completed application kit was submitted to the visa office. Three months have passed, and the first benchmark letter has not been received.

First benchmark letter was received. **Two months** have elapsed since estimated date given for the selection interview, with no subsequent contact from the mission.

Second benchmark letter was received. **Three months** have elapsed since the estimated date given for visa issuance, with no subsequent contact from the mission.

**Six months** have passed since second benchmark letter was received, which did **not** contain an estimated time frame for visa issuance.

**Three months** have passed since selection interview and no second benchmark letter was received.
This chapter provides information about preparing for the refugees’ arrival and supporting them during the settlement phase.

**Getting Started**

As discussed in chapter 4, the Settlement Plan is a plan detailing what you and members of your group will do to orient and support the newcomer(s) during the sponsorship. It will provide your group with a framework for working through the many details of who will do what, when, how, with what resources and where those resources will come from. This Plan should be used as a guide with the understanding that circumstances may change and that it may need to be revised and updated to reflect these changes during the settlement period. Your settlement planning should also take into account the settlement needs of non-accompanying family members listed on the IMM 0008, as your group will be expected to sponsor them as well if they submit an IMM 0008 within one year of the arrival of the principal applicant.

Being prepared involves learning about all the local resources available. This may require you to research about anything that will help you accomplish the tasks in the following checklist:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PREPARATIONS</strong></th>
<th><strong>RESOURCES</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOUSING and STOCKING</strong></td>
<td>Getting Started and Important Issues to Consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Scout appropriate housing before the newcomers arrive.</td>
<td>You will need to find out about affordable housing options in your community, venues for searching for rental units, and the specifics of the rental laws and local bylaws that apply in your community. Most importantly, you will look at housing to get an idea of what is available and affordable. When the newcomers arrive, it may be with very little notice, so it is good to have scouted out the possibilities in advance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Is rent within the guidelines? At a level that’s affordable after sponsorship ends, including utilities?</td>
<td>Having an interim housing option is ideal, as this gives the newcomers the chance to participate in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Is the location convenient for transit, stores, schools, etc.?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Is the landlord sensitive to cultural issues?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Will the refugees feel safe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREPARATIONS</td>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things you need to make sure you do</td>
<td>Getting Started and Important Issues to Consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Prepare temporary housing before the newcomers arrive.</td>
<td>permanent housing decision. When stocking the apartment with food, take into account the kind of food the newcomers are used to. Stocking <strong>food from home</strong> can go a long way toward easing the stress around all the new things newcomers face.</td>
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<tr>
<th>SHOPPING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Help newcomers learn to shop for food in Canada.</td>
<td>Since newcomers will have limited funds, learning how to shop economically will be a priority. Shopping may be quite different in their country of origin—for example, they may be used to bargaining on prices; or alternatively, they may be used to fixed prices for staple foods, and may not realize they need to compare prices. Find out what economical shopping venues are available in your community: from bulk food to discount stores, to second-hand shops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Take into account the newcomers’ need to have national foods in their diet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Introduce them to Canadian food and cooking.</td>
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<tr>
<th>FINANCES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Assist newcomers with opening a bank account, handling money, using bank services, understanding their rights and obligations, income tax, etc.</td>
<td>Some multicultural groups and settlement agencies offer financial planning and management counselling in specific languages. Although you will provide orientation in this area, it can be tremendously helpful for newcomers to have someone from their own culture—who understands the differing cultural perceptions around handling money—provide the bridge into the Canadian way of approaching money matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Find out about support provided by community groups which can provide financial counselling to newcomers in their language.</td>
<td>As well, you may want to talk to bank managers to find out whether any banks in your community have special cross-cultural sensitivity or expertise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Provide guidance on budgeting, including costs of utilities and other variable costs.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>INTERPRETERS</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ You may need an interpreter often, especially at first.</td>
<td>Many refugee newcomers require the use of interpreters at some point. At the beginning, this may be extensive and indispensable. Identify interpreters before arrival. Settlement agencies or multicultural councils may be able to make recommendations. Since you will depend on the interpreter to accurately convey information and place a great deal of confidence in this person, consider:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Find out about interpreters in your community. In choosing an interpreter, take into account age, gender, and political sensitivities.</td>
<td>• Is the interpreter’s gender and age appropriate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Interpreters may deal with very personal matters, so they must be highly trusted.</td>
<td>• Is the interpreter from a group that has historical hostility with the newcomers’ group? This situation can be both explosive and painful for everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ As soon as possible, newcomers should be encouraged to interact without the use of an interpreter. This will build their confidence and help them build other connections to become independent.</td>
<td>• Does the interpreter have an understanding of refugee situations and issues?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is the interpreter easily available? At the beginning especially, the interpreter may be needed on short notice, and at any hour of the day or night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is the interpreter recommended within the</td>
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<tr>
<td>PREPARATIONS</td>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things you need to make sure you do</td>
<td>Getting Started and Important Issues to Consider</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                          | community?  
|                                          | • Does the interpreter adhere to confidentiality?                          |
|                                          | Many non-profit organizations provide counselling, support, referrals, and  |
|                                          | a variety of on-going services, and can provide invaluable advice, contacts |
|                                          | and opportunities for the newcomers to meet others and make friends. Visit  |
|                                          | your local settlement agency to understand exactly what services and resources |
|                                          | will be available to the newcomers. Plan to build on this and work in      |
|                                          | partnership.  
|                                          | Service providing agencies can be identified at  
|                                          | www.servicesfornewcomers.cic.gc.ca.                                         |
|                                          | Many non-profit organizations provide counselling, support, referrals, and  |
| SETTLEMENT SERVICES                       | a variety of on-going services, and can provide invaluable advice, contacts |
| ✓ Find out what settlement agencies,      | and opportunities for the newcomers to meet others and make friends.       |
| refugee/ethno-cultural groups and        | Visit your local settlement agency to understand exactly what services and resources |
| community social support groups exist in  | will be available to the newcomers. Plan to build on this and work in      |
| your community and the services they offer. | partnership.  
| ✓ Help the newcomers connect with those   | Service providing agencies can be identified at  
| groups or organizations that will be able  | www.servicesfornewcomers.cic.gc.ca.                                         |
| to offer appropriate assistance or        | Many non-profit organizations provide counselling, support, referrals, and  |
| ongoing support.                         | a variety of on-going services, and can provide invaluable advice, contacts |
|                                          | and opportunities for the newcomers to meet others and make friends. Visit  |
|                                          | your local settlement agency to understand exactly what services and resources |
|                                          | will be available to the newcomers. Plan to build on this and work in      |
|                                          | partnership.  
|                                          | Service providing agencies can be identified at  
|                                          | www.servicesfornewcomers.cic.gc.ca.                                         |
|                                          | When checking out transportation options, keep in mind the limited resources  |
| TRANSPORTATION                            | of the newcomers, and make sure you find the most economical options. As    |
| ✓ Find out about public transportation    | well, consider the convenience of bus routes. Remember that the newcomers    |
| passes.                                  | will be juggling many things: housing and employment search, child care,  |
| ✓ Show the newcomers how to use the      | and ESL classes.                                                            |
| transit system.                          | Be sensitive to issues of cultural appropriateness, especially concerning the  |
| ✓ Show them around your town.            | use of second-hand clothing. Budget for at least some new clothing.         |
|                                          | Adequate winter clothing is essential.                                     |
| CLOTHING                                 | Research what language training courses are available in your community. The |
| ✓ Help newcomers buy clothing, and show  | newcomers may be eligible for government-funded language instruction courses |
| them how to make use of second-hand and  | specifically organized for newcomers. Language classes are available through |
| bargain stores.                          | various types of organizations (educational institutions, non-profit        |
| ✓ Advise on how to dress appropriately   | organizations, local school boards, government organizations), and in various |
| for the Canadian climate.                | formats (community-based, workplace-focused). Newcomers may even want to   |
|                                          | consider distance education courses in English or tutoring with a private    |
|                                          | volunteer. When researching courses, find out about their focus, the target  |
|                                          | student group, and how, where and when assessment and placement is conducted.|
|                                          | Different kinds of ESL programs can be reviewed at  
|                                          | sponsorship budget should                                                   |
| LANGUAGE TRAINING                         | Research what language training courses are available in your community. The |
| ✓ Research available ESL (English as a    | newcomers may be eligible for government-funded language instruction courses |
| Second Language) courses in your         | specifically organized for newcomers. Language classes are available through |
| community. Settlement agencies may offer  | various types of organizations (educational institutions, non-profit        |
| such courses and can explain testing/     | organizations, local school boards, government organizations), and in various |
| referral processes in your area.         | formats (community-based, workplace-focused). Newcomers may even want to   |
| ✓ Help newcomers find and register for   | consider distance education courses in English or tutoring with a private    |
| the most appropriate course (e.g., some   | volunteer. When researching courses, find out about their focus, the target  |
| ESL courses focus on language in the     | student group, and how, where and when assessment and placement is conducted.|
| workplace related to a specific job;     | Different kinds of ESL programs can be reviewed at  
<p>| others are more general).                | <a href="http://www.settlement.org/sys/faqs_detail.asp?k=ESL_ADULT&amp;faq_id=4001176">www.settlement.org/sys/faqs_detail.asp?k=ESL_ADULT&amp;faq_id=4001176</a>. Your      |
|                                          | sponsorship budget should                                                   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>PREPARATIONS</strong></th>
<th><strong>RESOURCES</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Things you need to make sure you do</td>
<td>Getting Started and Important Issues to Consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>allow newcomers to take language classes when they first arrive rather than requiring them to begin working immediately.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EMPLOYMENT**

- Find out about employment counselling services provided in your community that is tailored to the needs of newcomers.
- Find out about the services of the Employment Resource Centres such as access to the Internet, fax, computers, printers, workshops on job search, and counselling services.
- Help the newcomers learn the *how to* of searching for and securing jobs in Canada.
- Provide practical help and emotional support.
- If applicable research re-qualification procedures for newcomers who have professional skills and education.

Looking for employment is one of the most important tasks facing newcomers during the first year of settlement. It will be daunting to walk into an office where everyone speaks a different language and the rules of seeking employment are foreign. If you know anything about the newcomers’ skills set and background, you can start researching employers in your area needing those skills. Visit your local Service Canada centre to find out what resources are offered, and where job counselling is available. You can also begin to check out some of the job hunting Web sites, such as +Jobs Canada, (www.canada.plusjobs.com), Service Canada's Job Bank, (www.jobbank.gc.ca), Canada Jobs (www.canadajobs.com), Charity Village (www.charityvillage.com), the Job Bus Canada (www.JobBus.com), Workopolis (www.workopolis.com) and Working.Com (www.working.com). Some of these sites also provide information and resources on writing resumes. Local libraries can also provide valuable job-hunting advice material and services such as resume-writing workshops. Keep in mind that newcomers will need to learn how to find and use all these resources for themselves.

**CHILD CARE**

- Find out about child care options in your community.
- Keep in mind access to public transit, proximity to ESL classes, cost, and cultural sensitivity.

When researching child care resources in your community, keep in mind the likely income level of the newcomers after support ends. In addition to the normal care and safety concerns, consider cost, access to transport and sensitivity to cultural issues. Consider also that parents may be uncomfortable leaving their children with strangers and will only participate in programs where child care is on site. Remember that for parents to attend ESL classes, child care may be one of their first needs.
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>RESOURCES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Things you need to make sure you do</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEALTH</strong></td>
<td>Privately sponsored refugees are typically exempt from provincial health coverage waiting times due to being protected persons. They are also eligible for basic Interim Federal Health coverage until they become eligible for provincial health coverage. Resettled refugees who receive financial support through the RAP Program (e.g. JAS, BVOR and GARs) are eligible for IFH’s Expanded Health Care Coverage which includes supplemental benefits for the duration of the sponsorship period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Get forms to register for provincial health insurance.</td>
<td>You will need to be aware that some medical costs will not be covered by either IFH or provincial health insurance, and be prepared to help the newcomers understand them, as well as budget for costs not covered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Ask your local CIC about the process of registering for Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Assist in finding a family doctor and explain the Canadian medical system.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Investigate which vaccinations are required for school registration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ If sponsoring a refugee family with special medical needs, research the sources of special equipment, care and support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION/JOB TRAINING</strong></td>
<td>In addition to ESL courses, there are a variety of workplace training, adult education, and targeted skills development courses available both in-class and through distance learning. Organizations such as the Centre for Education and Training (CET) have services that are developed specifically to help newcomers assess and build their skills and language competency for the Canadian job market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Identify schools in the area and assist the newcomers with registering and preparing their children for school.</td>
<td>Many local school board’s continuing education departments and community colleges also offer bridging training courses for newcomers with international professional training and other courses that are intended to develop specific skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Provide information about the Canadian school system and Canadian views towards education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Support newcomers as they learn about school resources, trips, expectations, graduation requirements, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Find out about job training, credential assessment and upgrading possibilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREPARATIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>RESOURCES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Things you need to make sure you do</strong></td>
<td><strong>Getting Started and Important Issues to Consider</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELIGION</strong></td>
<td>Religion is a sensitive matter. Sponsoring groups are advised to be careful not to impose their religious beliefs on newcomers. Newcomers have the right to religious freedom, and cannot be required to join a group’s church, mosque, temple or other worship group. Invitations to religious activities and worship must be approached cautiously and sensitively even if the newcomers are of the same faith as the sponsoring group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ If appropriate, and the refugee family has informed you of their religious observance, locate places of worship in your community.</td>
<td>Newcomers of different faiths than your own may not feel comfortable coming to a meeting or social event at your place of worship. If issuing an invitation to an event, explain the context carefully. Some newcomers may welcome an invitation to your group’s religious service, whereas others might prefer to meet and express their appreciation to their sponsors outside of a place of worship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Discuss with your group how to ensure that meetings with the newcomers are planned in locations where they feel comfortable if they are not of your faith.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CULTURE</strong></td>
<td>Apart from increasing your cultural awareness – and, if appropriate - you may want to find out specifically about ethno-cultural groups, multicultural societies/councils, or community groups that the newcomers may be interested in affiliating with upon their arrival. Keep in mind, however, the pluralism of a community and the refugee experience. Newcomers may not necessarily feel affinity with a certain group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Find out about the newcomers’ culture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Raise your own awareness about culture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Learn how your cultural assumptions may affect and even cause stress to the newcomers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Plan how you will support the newcomers’ cultural adjustment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRISIS AND TRAUMA</strong></td>
<td>Refugees have been through traumatic situations. Once they have taken care of their immediate settlement needs, crisis and trauma counselling may become a real necessity for some. Find out in advance about appropriate resources that are available in your community. Visit the Web site of the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture at <a href="http://www.ccvt.org">www.ccvt.org</a> to find out about torture and its treatment options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Contact your local settlement agency or ask your SAH for information on appropriate trauma treatment or counselling in your area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECREATION</strong></td>
<td>Check out facilities in your area, particularly those that can be used at a low cost or for free. Find out about possible subsidy programs for municipal recreation programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Find out about recreation facilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Help the newcomers learn how to use them, if necessary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Be sensitive to cultural issues such as attire and mixed-gender activities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Budgeting

Creating a Settlement Plan is a good place to begin to consider how your group will budget its money during the sponsorship period; this is especially true for Group of Five and Community Sponsorship Settlement Plans. The Settlement Plans for both Groups of Five and Community Sponsorships require you to fill out a budget chart in order to show CIC how the group plans to budget its money. The sponsorship cost table included in each application kit gives you an indication of the average social assistance rates in Canada that your group can use as a guide for support levels. Remember, however, that the local cost of living may be higher.

Be sure to include the initial one-time start-up costs in the total budget. In calculating your overall budget, factor in any in-kind donations your group has received using the chart provided in the Settlement Plan form as shown below. Using in-kind donations can dramatically reduce the amount of money your group has to raise. Within the limits of this table, sponsoring groups are advised to use the maximum amount, provided the donation covers the expected needs of the refugee(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Shelter</th>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Furniture</th>
<th>Start-up Costs (Household Needs)</th>
<th>School Start-up Costs</th>
<th>Food Staples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>325</td>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,100</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7,800</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>375</td>
<td></td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8,400</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9,600</td>
<td>2,125</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>425</td>
<td></td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9,600</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For additional member, add 900 375 500 25 150/per child between ages 4-21 75

Please remember that every newcomer needs some new items as well; not everything should be second-hand (e.g., new linens, socks, underwear, etc).

When creating a budget it can be helpful to start by using the template which is provided in the Settlement Plan for Groups of Five and Community Sponsors.
Below are examples of general costs that need to be considered when resettling a refugee. Some costs may be one-time or start-up expenses, such as basic food staples and furniture, while others are monthly expenses and need to be budgeted accordingly, such as shelter and transportation.

**Rent:**
- Is rent at a level the newcomers will be able to afford after sponsorship ends?
- Are utilities going to be included in the rental cost or do they need to be budgeted for separately?
- Budget for reasonable rental costs during the year, unless the newcomers have very close family members who will live permanently with relatives already in Canada.

**Food:**
- Take into account the newcomers’ needs to have some special or ethnic specific foods in their diet. Help newcomers to comparison shop and buy in bulk.

**Transportation:**
- Look into bus or metro passes.

**Clothes:**
- Show newcomers how to make use of second-hand and bargain stores.

**Supplies:**
- Take into account laundry and cleaning supplies, as well as toiletries.

**Discretion:**
- Pocket money, recreation, etc.

**Health:**
- Plan for costs not covered by medical insurance

**Education:**
- School trips, books, day care to allow parents to study English and to look for jobs.

**Furniture:**
- Use donations and second-hand stores. Furniture should be the newcomers to keep.

**Reserve:**
- Allow a minimum extra of 5% for unanticipated expenses.

**Communication:**
- Decide whether to fund long distance calls and, if so, to what extent. The newcomers will need to communicate with family and friends back home.
- Look into technology, such as Skype and calling cards that could help reduce costs.

**Fundraising**

When you decide to sponsor, you take on a significant financial obligation. If you need to raise funds, it may be useful to set up a committee to deal strictly with fundraising. You will want to ensure that finances are carefully and appropriately monitored. When planning fundraising activities, think about:
How much time will it take? Are there enough volunteers?
How much money will it raise?
Are there legal or insurance implications? (e.g., Do you need to block off a street for your activity?)
How will money be gathered and tracked?
Will tax receipts be given?
How will in-kind gifts be tracked?

Fundraising will vary depending on whether your organization is a registered charity, a non-profit organization, or an ad-hoc group. Consult the [Canada Revenue Agency](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cps/cps-028-eng.html) for up-to-date information on how to handle fundraising as a charity.

**Other Pre-arrival Preparations**

Prior to the arrival of the refugee(s) the group or committee should take some time to review their Settlement Plan and make any changes that may be needed. This would also be a good time to identify or, if previously discussed, confirm what needs to be completed by whom and when. In other words, flesh out the details of your Settlement Plan. Here is a general idea of how the plan could look:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Do We Need to achieve?</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>By When?</th>
<th>Resources Required?</th>
<th>Who Needs to Know?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Monthly budget developed    | 1. Research local cost of living  
2. Find out about community resources for budget planning support for the newcomers  
3. Design budget, etc.... | Mrs. B.  
Mr. C.  
Ms. M. | Aug. 31  
Sept. 15  
Sept. 15 | For each item, list all resources required: money, materials, etc. | Finance Committee |
| Apartment rented            | 1. Search local vacancies in $500 - $700 range  
2. Talk to prospective landlords, etc.... | Mrs. P.  
Ms. M.  
Etc. | Oct. 15 | Will need $1000-$1400 for first and last month’s rent. | Finance Committee  
Housing Committee |
| Furnishings and household items in place | 1. What furnishing are already available from in-kind donations and what is still needed | Etc. | | | |
**Gather forms**

As soon as the newcomers arrive, there a number of forms will need to be filled out in order to ensure they have access to everything they are entitled. The period of waiting and preparation is an ideal time to gather these forms so this work can be completed quickly. These include:

**APPLICATION FOR SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN)**

You can download the SIN application form from Service Canada at [https://catalogue.servicecanada.gc.ca/ LauncherES/LaunchES](https://catalogue.servicecanada.gc.ca/ LauncherES/LaunchES). Hard copies can be obtained at the nearest Service Canada office. To search for the nearest location to you, visit [www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cgi-bin/hr-search.cgi?app=hme&ln=eng](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cgi-bin/hr-search.cgi?app=hme&ln=eng) or call 1-800-206-7218.

**APPLICATION FOR PROVINCIAL MEDICAL PLAN**

Information and forms can be found on provincial Web sites. Use this formula to access your province’s government website: [www.gov.xx.ca](http://www.gov.xx.ca). Where the xx appears, substitute the two-letter abbreviation for the province, such AB for Alberta or BC for British Columbia. All provincial and territorial Ministries of Health are also listed on the Health Canada Web site at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/delivery-prestation/ptrole/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/delivery-prestation/ptrole/index-eng.php).

**APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL CHILD TAX BENEFIT**

The application for the Federal Child Tax Benefit can be downloaded from the Canada Revenue Agency Web site at [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/cctb/menu-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/cctb/menu-eng.html). Canada Child Tax Benefit can also be contacted at 1-800-387-1193. As well, check with your provincial government to find out whether any other provincial benefits apply.

**Find Housing**

Finally, as you approach the time of the newcomers’ arrival, finding appropriate housing becomes a priority. By this point you would already have done extensive research so that you can rent housing on short notice. You may find this challenging as you cannot rent until you really know the refugees are on their way, but want to ensure that they have a new home waiting for them. To do this, you need to have temporary accommodation lined up for the first few days, as well as a roster of appropriate housing options. However, do not actually rent anything until the newcomers arrive. There are several reasons for this:

- You do not know exactly when the newcomers will arrive; even if you have been provided with a timeline, these could change without notice;
- The family composition of the newcomers may have changed; and
- The newcomers should be given the opportunity to determine where they would like to live.
NEWCOMERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Paying the cost of transportation to their final destination in Canada.
- Repaying any immigration loans and other debts they take on.
- Participating in planning their immediate and long-term future.
- Keeping the sponsorship group informed of their plans and cooperating with sponsors.
- Showing initiative in adjusting to life in Canada.
- Contributing to their own finances upon securing employment.
- Being law-abiding.
- Becoming independent.

Develop Your Group’s Support Skills

Your group will work together for an extended period of time—possibly up to three years or more—from the time you start thinking about sponsorship to the time when the newcomers launch out on their own. You may want to give some attention to building your group’s support skills in order to increase your effectiveness. This could include everything from listening and communications skills, to building your understanding about participation, developing consensus, and effective decision-making as a group.

Develop Cultural Awareness

Many sponsoring groups will be assisting newcomers who come from a culture and background very different from their own. Such groups may want to plan some activities to develop their cultural awareness and skills. There are many activities that can help: reading, seeing films, role-playing, and outings.

It may also be important to raise your group’s awareness regarding gender issues. If you are sponsoring a woman under the Women at Risk (AWR) program, it is important to ensure that a female member of your group is the primary contact with the newcomer. This can help overcome gender barriers and may be critical when sensitive issues arise. At the same time, North American women’s roles may differ radically from the newcomer’s cultural norms and may challenge her and her family dynamics. It may be equally difficult for newcomer men to discuss their concerns with a mixed-gender group of sponsors. Everyday practices can be challenging and unnerving—from the way eye contact is made to expectations around how business and social activities are conducted between genders. The more aware you can become of these cultural differences, the better prepared you will be to approach newcomers with sensitivity and empathy.

Some groups receive newcomers from their cultural background. In these cases, the challenge is to help the newcomers understand the new culture from the perspective of someone who has already gone through the adjustment. This requires becoming more conscious of one’s own reactions in the new culture. A wide variety of cross-cultural activities can help develop this self-awareness.
Learn About Rights and Responsibilities
As a sponsor, you need to be aware of your rights and responsibilities. By agreeing to sponsor refugees, you take on certain financial, social, and emotional support obligations during the sponsorship period. You are responsible for ensuring that the newcomers understand Canadian laws and their rights and responsibilities in Canada. As well, you need to respect the newcomers’ right to privacy and confidentiality and their right to make their own religious and cultural choices. You may become involved in very private and sensitive issues. You have a responsibility to maintain the newcomers’ confidentiality.

Sensing ownership over decisions newcomers have made can be a common pitfall. However, even if you do not agree with them, newcomers have the right to make their own decisions about the issues that affect their lives. Your role is to advise and support. Ultimately, the newcomers must decide how they will respond to each responsibility.

Prepare the Community
You may want to consider holding a community forum or distributing information about a particular country in your local community to raise awareness. This kind of preparation can be both rewarding and invaluable. While there is always the possibility that newcomers may face discrimination, stigmatization and misunderstanding, making the community aware of the refugees’ arrival can help tremendously. Most people are interested in other people and customs, and you can take advantage of this natural curiosity to raise awareness.

Upon Arrival
“The week before the first family arrived was like a mixture of Exam Week and Christmas. When the plane landed on November 17 and [the family] walked off in Fredericton, they were met by a group of people who had already invested a great deal of feeling in them […], waiting to say ‘Welcome’. Heather remarked that she had never seen a family come off the plane and look so scared.”

Mixed emotions surrounding the actual arrival of sponsored refugees highlight how important the first meeting is and how lasting its impression. When you first receive the newcomers, be aware that newcomers might be experiencing a bewildering number of things all at once, including:

- When newcomers arrive they may be exhausted and/or scared—they may not even feel particularly happy to be in Canada. Keep in mind that they have not left their country by choice. Their feelings may be quite different than yours and very mixed.
- Meeting new people can be exhausting. Choose carefully the best people to greet the newcomers at the airport, and keep in mind that having too many greeters can be overwhelming. Although you may feel like celebrating immediately after arrival, the newcomers’ first need will likely be for rest.
- Make sure you always communicate to the newcomers what you are doing and why.
- Allow the newcomers as much privacy as possible.
Receiving Joint-Assistance Sponsored (JAS) Refugees

Joint-Assistance Sponsorships have been discussed in Chapter 3 of this handbook. The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) is delivered by settlement agencies contracted by CIC to assist government-assisted refugees, including joint-assisted, with their initial settlement needs. Contact your local **RAP service provider** and the CPO-W to coordinate a plan for the reception and orientation of the refugees you have sponsored under the JAS Program.

- The RAP provider may arrange temporary accommodation upon arrival, and in some cases can assist sponsors to locate permanent housing. If the RAP provider is in another town or city, discuss plans for the orientation sessions, financial counselling, and other RAP services.
- Learn about the services offered under the RAP program, and discuss the division of responsibilities between your group and the RAP provider staff. Consider any special needs that have been identified.
- Consider having a group member sit in on the orientation sessions delivered by the RAP provider. Request copies of materials distributed to the refugees so that your group can help reinforce the information.

**Orientation**

The first 24 hours and the first few days are a critical time in the newcomers’ lives. First impressions are formed and vivid memories of these days will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Therefore, while you want to ensure that you are addressing the necessary practical issues during this time, also focus on the newcomers’ emotional needs. The following sample checklist might be helpful to address immediate practical concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FIRST 24 HOURS</strong></th>
<th><strong>FIRST FEW DAYS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assist newcomers, if necessary to...</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assist newcomers to...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Know how to use things in their house or apartment - e.g. faucets, telephones, basic household equipment and objects that might be unknown or confusing to figure out, such as fire alarms</td>
<td>- Complete and submit the SIN, medical coverage (IFH application), and Child Tax Benefit forms you collected earlier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Understand both theirs and your rights and obligations regarding sponsorship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Take a tour of the immediate neighborhood and help them learn how to get around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Know how to contact someone at all times (this may entail learning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
how to use a pay phone). Provide several numbers and/or develop a warning system to communicate requiring help if English or French is poor.

- Shop for food and clothing.
- Receive any needed medical attention (set up an appointment for a physical examination soon after arrival). School-age children need to have their vaccinations updated before they are permitted to register for school.
- Open a bank account and begin the budgeting process. Explain the source(s) of funds and expectations around managing money.

Call their family at home. Explain whether or to what extent your group is willing to cover long distance calls.

Important emotional considerations include:

- Introduce the newcomers to all the members of the sponsoring group, and explain how your group has divided the responsibilities. Meeting group members early in the sponsorship is important even if a family member in Canada will take on most of the support requirements.
- Be sensitive to the emotional ups and downs newcomers will experience. Give them privacy and enough time to rest.
- Be sensitive to the overload newcomers might experience as they are introduced to many, many new things all at once. Be patient and prepared to explain anything as many times as necessary. Do not assume that the newcomers feel comfortable asking for information or help; be aware of signs of confusion.
- Be sensitive to culture shock and the frustrations of adjustment.
- Be aware of the newcomers’ needs to make their own decisions right from the very beginning. Never make a decision for the newcomer; make the decision with the newcomer, aiming, whenever possible, to be a mentor providing alternatives and resources.

**FIRST FEW WEEKS and MONTHS**

Assist Newcomers, if necessary, to...

- Look for permanent housing.
- Receive employment counseling and begin job search.
- Enroll children in school. Find child care.
- Understand rights and obligations regarding loans and loan repayment.
- Complete a language assessment and enroll in ESL/LINC classes.
- Become aware of rights and responsibilities, including family law and parenting obligations.
Whenever providing information and resources, remember:

- Newcomers have the right to make their own decisions.
- You are in the role of enabler, not provider.
- Do not foster dependency, rather empower by showing how you found information instead of just providing it.

### Budgeting

You have already developed detailed budget sheets to get prepared. Soon after their arrival, sit down with the newcomers to discuss their budget. They should have all budgetary information explained to them fully and be given autonomy over their own income and budget once the information has been given.

### Language Assessment

Unless the newcomers’ English is very good, language training will be one of the first things needed on the path to finding a job and for developing relationships, friendships, and meaning in their new lives in Canada. During your preparation time, you researched available language training resources. Now is the time to take the newcomers to the language assessment centre if there is one nearby. If not, explain the options to the newcomers. As you present options, keep in mind the newcomers’ skills and training as well as child care and transportation options. You may want to arrange a visit to an ESL class early on so the newcomers have some idea about what to expect. One of your on-going contributions will be speaking English with the newcomers, in an open, non-judgmental and non-threatening way, and, when appropriate, giving feedback on language usage that other people might not provide.

### Employment Counseling

Once the newcomers have begun their language studies, you can begin discussing employment and developing a job-search plan together. You may have discovered in your research on settlement agencies, that they can provide employment counselling, information on employment law, and even some skills development (e.g. computer skills) in the newcomers’ own language. By now you are aware of the range of resources available. If the newcomers choose to share their future career dreams with you, this can be very helpful in narrowing down which employment avenues will be most fruitful to explore. Share the resources and options with the newcomers.
While it is the newcomers who will have to go through the job search process, you can support this process through the following activities:

**ASSIST the newcomers with having their skills and credentials assessed.**

DISCUSS what a hiring process looks like in Canada, from beginning to end. Have several members of your group in different jobs contribute, as hiring processes vary from sector to sector.

DISCUSS: How long is it appropriate to wait before calling a potential employer back to check on the status of your application? What do you have to respond to in a job interview? Who is the right person to speak to when making cold calls? What is the expected protocol?

If the newcomers want to start up a business, explore what LOANS, ASSISTANCE, and GUIDANCE may be available. What are the legal issues to be aware of? (See Industry Canada’s Web site at www.strategis.ic.gc.ca.)

Inform of the ASSISTANCE LOAN offered by CIC to cover costs of required tools, licensing fees, clothing, etc.

ROLE PLAY a job interview.

SET UP A PANEL or DISCUSSION GROUP on Workplace Culture. You may even want to bring in some speakers to discuss the Canadian view of: working in teams, performance evaluation, attitudes regarding office relationships, ideas about formality/informality in the workplace, appropriate communication style in meetings, views about leadership, sexual harassment policies, hiring and pay equity policies, non-discrimination and inclusiveness policies, how planning is done, time and time management concepts, customs regarding personal space and touch, gesture and eye contact in the workplace, workplace rituals, etc.

**Immigration Loans Repayment**

Privately sponsored refugees are eligible for immigration loans from the Canadian government. A newcomer’s overall loan usually includes:

**THE TRANSPORTATION LOAN:** Enables applicants to pay for transport to their place of final destination in Canada

**THE ADMISSION LOAN:** Enables applicants to cover the costs of their medical exam

The repayment of these immigration loans is the responsibility of the newcomer. The size of the loan determines the interest-free period as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Loan</th>
<th>Interest-Free Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to $1,200</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over $1,200 but less than $2,400</td>
<td>24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over $2,400</td>
<td>36 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sponsoring group can help the newcomers work out a manageable plan for the repayment of the loan. Newcomers are expected to begin repaying their loans as soon as possible. In fact, the first written demand for repayment will be mailed shortly after the newcomers arrive.

Transportation and medical admissibility loans become payable 30 days after the newcomer enters Canada, and any other loan (i.e. Assistance Loan) becomes payable 30 days after the loan is made. Payments are required to be made in consecutive monthly installments and must be made in full within a certain time frame determined by the size of the loan.

Newcomers may request a deferral of payment in case of financial hardship. An officer of Collection Services may authorize such deferral, considering the person’s income, assets and liabilities. Deferral may include deferring the commencement of repayment, deferring payments, varying the monthly amount and extending the repayment period. This deferral is NOT automatic. Newcomers can request deferral by calling 1-800-667-7301 to contact a Loans Collection Officer. You can assist newcomers with a request for this deferral. Start by helping the newcomers write a letter with an explanation to the Immigration Loan Officer, or calling the number on the letter sent to the newcomers. If your sponsoring group has not included loan repayments in your sponsorship budget, requesting this deferral for the sponsorship period is particularly important.

The following table shows CIC’s suggested loan repayment periods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Loan</th>
<th>Repayment Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to $1,200</td>
<td>within 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over $1,200 but not exceeding $2,400</td>
<td>within 24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over $2,400 but not exceeding $3,600</td>
<td>within 36 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over $3,600 but not exceeding $4,800</td>
<td>within 48 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over $4,800</td>
<td>within 72 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newcomers should be aware that their ability to sponsor relatives under the Family Class will be affected if their loan is in arrears. A loan is considered in arrears if newcomers pay less than the minimum amount suggested, even if this lower amount has been approved by immigration.

Please remind the newcomers:

- Do not ignore requests for payments.
- Inform the Immigration Loan Officer of all address changes within ten days of relocation until the loan is repaid in full by writing to:
  The Chief Revenue Accounting
  Jean Edmonds Tower North
  300 Slater St, 4th Floor
  Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1

Call Collection Services at 1-800-667-7301 if there are any problems.
Confidentiality and Privacy

There are many reasons to maintain the privacy of the refugee newcomer families. Some are related to common sense, others to the law in Canada.

A basic guideline will be to envision how you would like to have your privacy and the confidentiality of your situation and that of your family ensured. Add to that the needs of refugee families who have been traumatized and are now in a society and a context that they do not know or may not understand. The trust that you are able to develop with refugee newcomers will depend to a great extent on how well they perceive that you guard their privacy and safety.

Some basic do's:
- Telephone first or make an appointment before going over to the refugees’ homes. This is common practice in Canada. It also allows refugee newcomers to know that their home is theirs.
- Wait for an invitation to enter their homes.
- Take down information on those wishing to contact the family and then relay that information to the refugees and help them make the connection if they wish to do so.
- Discussion within the sponsorship group around practical aspects of settlement is important but those matters that are very personal should be discussed on a need to know basis among those who are directly involved in providing support. Avoid gossip.
- Provide protection from media attention by acting as a mediator and determining the interest of the refugees in responding to media interest.
- In accessing support from settlement agencies and other community organizations, act as a liaison to connect the refugee newcomers directly with the support service.

Some don'ts:
- Do not publish, promote or distribute to anyone or any organization the names, address and telephone number of any member of the refugee families without their specific permission.
- Do not discuss their private and personal affairs with any individual or any member of an organization without their permission. This includes discussion with other members of the sponsorship group and with settlement organizations.
- Do not talk around the refugee newcomers with others when they are present unless the refugees are directly involved in the dialogue.
- Do not expect agencies and organizations to keep you completely informed on their work with the refugee newcomers. They are bound by privacy legislation.
Enabling Settlement

During the first year, newcomers learn a tremendous amount and generally move from a large degree of dependence to a large degree of independence. Through it all, your role is that of an enabler, supporting newcomers to equip themselves, make their own decisions, and find out as much as possible about their new environment. Above all else, you are providing warm friendship and support.

An important task will be to clarify expectations on all sides. While the Canadian government expects certain outcomes (finding employment, learning English, learning life skills to function in Canada), newcomers and sponsoring groups have aspirations that both include and go beyond this. They will want to learn about each others’ backgrounds and develop a sense of community. Sponsoring groups may hope to increase their skills through this learning experience; newcomers may hope to motivate their sponsors to become more involved in advocacy. Newcomers may hope to be supported while they study or re-qualify for certain trades or professions, and sponsors may hope that the newcomers find work when possible. If these hopes and aspirations can be expressed and agreed on, the potential for misunderstanding and disappointment can be reduced.

During the busy first months when there are so many details to take care of, the bigger picture may be forgotten from time to time. Following are some of the important things you will want to consider during periodic times of assessment.

Reviewing the Budget
You may want meet with the newcomer on a quarterly basis to review the budget and assess the expectations on both sides, taking into consideration the kind of employment he or she will seek or has obtained. Also remember immigration loan repayments. Support newcomers through referral to financial literacy and counseling services available at local volunteer groups, settlement agencies, or from someone in your group. Newcomers will also need to know about the Canada’s tax system, the law and how tax deductions are handled.
by employers. In budget planning, explain that salary earned will not be equal to take-home pay.

**Cultural Adjustment**

**Culture shock** is a period of disorientation experienced when encountering a new culture and a normal part of cultural adjustment. While it can be painful, it usually results in profound learning. Cultural adjustment is typified by the stages described in the chart. Keep in mind that the pace at which people progress through these stages is highly individual, and family members may therefore progress at quite different rates. This process may last three to five years. You can provide specific supports at each stage:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Characterized by</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honeymoon</td>
<td>An initial reaction of enthusiasm, fascination, admiration, and cordial, friendly, superficial relationships with hosts. Refugees have not come to Canada by choice, and may be less enthusiastic.</td>
<td>• Provide orientation and information&lt;br/&gt;• Focus on the practical aspects of becoming competent in the new situation (i.e. getting around, looking for a job, language training).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge and Crisis</td>
<td>Differences in language, concepts, values, and symbols lead to feelings of inadequacy, frustration, anxiety, and anger. During this time, studies show that most people find the most difficult situations to be:&lt;br/&gt;• Making friends your own age&lt;br/&gt;• Dealing with someone who is cross&lt;br/&gt;• Approaching others&lt;br/&gt;• Appearing in front of an audience&lt;br/&gt;• Getting to know people in-depth, intimately&lt;br/&gt;• Understanding jokes, humour, sarcasm&lt;br/&gt;• Dealing with people staring at you&lt;br/&gt;• Being with people that you do not know well&lt;br/&gt;• Complaining in public/dealing with unsatisfactory service</td>
<td>Give empathy, friendship and support; accept that anger and frustration are normal and legitimate.&lt;br/&gt;• Share information about culture shock.&lt;br/&gt;• Help newcomers to see their competencies.&lt;br/&gt;• Provide opportunities for the newcomers to talk about their culture.&lt;br/&gt;• Provide opportunities to learn together about cross-cultural communications.&lt;br/&gt;• Talk about the most difficult situations. Share how these things are dealt with in both your cultures.&lt;br/&gt;• Share jokes from your different cultures; talk about why they translate (or not).&lt;br/&gt;• Set up a fun time for role plays or role reversals. If the newcomers are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder or other psychological problems, help them to find appropriate help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recovery

The crisis is resolved as the person learns the language and culture of the host country. Life factors known to reduce stress and aid recovery include:

- Time
- Having a sense of purpose
- Being socially or politically involved
- Having (employment) opportunities
- Maturity
- Having strong social support
- Having structure in life
- Equal or greater status than before

You will notice that in a number of these areas, neither you nor the newcomer has any control. In fact, in some areas such as status, newcomers are likely to be worse off than before. However, there are things you can do to enhance a sense of purpose, belonging, and structure. During this time:

- Work with the newcomers to find employment and to map out an employment strategy that will lead to a fulfilling job.
- Help the newcomers to see the positive contribution they are making to your community.

As the newcomers’ English abilities increase, set aside more times for storytelling—this is both an opportunity for the newcomers to teach you about their situation, and a way for them to structure/make sense of events.

Adjustment

Newcomers begin to work in and enjoy the new culture, though there may be some instances of anxiety and strain.

Continue to provide friendship and support. Continue to expect to learn as you walk alongside the newcomer.

Understanding Family Issues

Whenever there is a big change in a family’s life, there is stress on the family system. Some circumstances are especially difficult for newcomers. For example, while some mothers stay home to take care of young children, their partners and other family members engage in activities outside the home which allow them to develop competencies, build friendships and get comfortable within the new environment. Watching this, the mother may soon find herself feeling isolated, friendless and depressed. Depression may make leaving the house very difficult particularly when transportation options are complicated during the winter weather. Gender-based cultural norms may differ in Canada from what the newcomers are used to and also add to the stress experienced within the family unit. Making friends outside of the home and particularly at gatherings with both males and females present may be challenging for some.

Inter-generational issues may also arise. In general, teenagers tend to experience more difficulty adjusting, at least initially, when compared to other family members. They often struggle to fit in the different sub-cultures of their peers, relate to adults according to new customs, and come to terms with new expectations and different set of values. Inter-general issues and role reversals also occur within newcomer families where young children learn the new language and generally adapt faster than their parents or older siblings. In many situations, parents rely on their children to interpret at important appointments, over the
phone, while filling out forms and while shopping. This is more responsibility than children can handle and, at best, inappropriate. Whenever possible, interpreters should be arranged, for example through settlement agencies, to avoid the additional burden on children.

It is also important to orient and inform newcomers about Canadian child protection laws and the definition and legal implications of domestic violence. What may be considered discipline in one context might be considered abuse in Canada. It is equally important to be aware of where to turn to for help. Find out whether there is a trauma counseling centre, a community centre, a social service agency, or a women's shelter in your community to which you can turn to for help in a crisis. As well provide emergency numbers.

What can you do?
- Recognize that you cannot fix the situation. The newcomers will be in a state of flux for a long time, and will face cultural and social challenges. Accept that the struggle is normal, with the aim of being supportive throughout the year.
- Talk about how family life differs in Canada from the newcomers’ country.
- Highlight the family’s strengths and areas of competency. Help them to see how much they are achieving in all their adjustments to their new situation.
- Be especially supportive of women experiencing isolation. Try to help them develop relationships outside the home and learn English. If necessary, provide extra English tutoring in the home.
- If a family situation is severe, find out about professional counseling which provide specialized cross-cultural counseling.

Non-Accompanying Family Members
If the newcomer family has family members abroad, their first focus is likely on contacting these family members. The family separation may delay the newcomers’ ability to focus on their own settlement and may require counseling and support. The Red Cross offers a tracing and reunion service that can be of assistance.

Post Traumatic Stress, Torture, and Healing
Refugees may have experienced traumatic situations of deprivation, violence, and torture. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that affects people who were exposed to rape, domestic violence, child abuse, war, accidents, natural disasters, political torture and other violent events. Symptoms of PTSD include depression, flashbacks, nightmares, experiences of overwhelming emotions of grief and fear, numbness, avoidance of intimacy, irritability, trouble concentrating and remembering, dizziness, nausea, panic attacks, and more.

As a trigger of PTSD, torture affects every part of the person and inflicts deep psychological, emotional, and spiritual wounds, in addition to the physical injuries. The Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) notes that even though “torture may be used to obtain information or signed confessions, this is not its primary purpose. Torture is directed towards instilling and reinforcing a sense of powerlessness and terror in victims and the societies in which they live. It is a process which generates a situation designed to destroy the physical and psychological capabilities of survivors to function as viable individuals.” As a supporter of someone who has survived torture, this
is important for you to know. Gaining a sense of control over one’s own life is critical to a survivor. Therefore, your support should never take over the newcomer’s life; it must always result in empowerment.

While all sufferers of PTSD may experience the aforementioned symptoms, victims of torture face additional repercussions. They may be unwilling to disclose information about their experiences, and may feel suspicious, frightened, or anxious to forget what has happened. These feelings may discourage them from seeking the help they need. In addition, everyday situations may throw them into a state of terror. Newcomers may be adversely affected by officials in uniform, signing forms, visiting doctors’ offices, being admitted to hospitals or even encountering staff of government agencies. Many treatment methods are used to aid recovery from PTSD and torture; whatever treatment is recommended, they all have in common an emphasis on restoring a sense of control and safety.

**For your group, there are several important things to be aware of and act on:**

- PTSD must be dealt with by trained professionals.
- Love and support are critical for healing to take place. Your group can have a very important role here.
- Each person’s healing proceeds at its own pace. You have no way of knowing how long it may take for an individual to heal, nor can you judge whether the individual has made enough progress. Your role is to support and encourage, not to judge.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries. Empathy is appropriate; taking on the emotions as if they were your own, is not. Only the individual can heal—it is not something you can do for someone. There is a delicate balance here, which you will need to examine often. If you are providing support for someone in therapy, it may be appropriate at some point to speak with the therapist to find out how to be most supportive and how to maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Healing is hard work. Do not be surprised if the individual seems exhausted, distant, or overwhelmed.
- If you are providing support, it is appropriate to find ways to celebrate together the individual’s progress, and acknowledge his or her strengths and successes.

**Support Newcomers to Get the Education They Need**

Once some progress has been made in learning English, the newcomers may want to begin planning for other aspects of their education and skills development. Your previous research on skills assessment and training courses will allow you to show them some of the many options available.

**Assist Newcomers with finding Employment**

Finding employment can very stressful. Many refugees are highly skilled and trained and may even have gained a high status in their own country. In Canada, they may find themselves suddenly back at the bottom of the ladder, facing years of re-training, additional education, or having to choose a completely different career because their qualifications are not recognized. At first, they may
need to settle for a menial and low-paying job. Because of their struggles to learn a new culture and language, they are aware they may sometimes come across (and be treated!) as childlike, even though they are confident and competent in their own environment. These things are very hard on self-esteem. Newcomers will need all the support, sensitivity, and encouragement you can provide during their job search.

**What if the Newcomers Want to Move?**

Your responsibilities under the sponsorship Undertaking are to help the newcomers settle in your community. Every permanent resident has the right to relocate however, and newcomers do sometimes choose to move to another part of Canada. Depending on the circumstances, you may be responsible for continued financial support if the sponsorship period is not completed and the newcomers are not self-supporting.

**Preparing for the Long Term**

From the beginning you and the newcomers need to prepare for the long-term. What will things look like when this sponsorship period is over? The following are some issues you may want to consider.

**Help Newcomers Work Towards Self-Sufficiency**

The core of self-sufficiency is that people are able to make their own plans and decisions in order to attain their own dreams. When a group sponsors refugees, this can be a delicate balance to maintain. Out of a desire to help, groups may *do for* rather than *do with* newcomers, reducing the newcomers’ learning opportunities—and eventually, their chances to survive independently in Canada. Independence does not imply that the refugee will sever ties with your group (though this possibility must also be allowed for). You may remain life-long friends, but your help should always be given with the goal of self-sufficiency.

**Help Newcomers Link into a Social Network**

An important way for newcomers to increase their chances for self-sufficiency is to link into a secure and supportive social network. This network may or may not include your group. While building a diverse network can take longer than a year, it can be achieved if approached intentionally. In preparing for the newcomers’ arrival, you have already greatly expanded your network of contacts through talking to people about employment options, language courses, settlement services, cultural awareness, and so on. As you pass on this knowledge by *learning through doing* to the newcomer, you also pass on much of this network. The newcomer will be busy developing his or her own set of relationships and contacts at the same time. *Remember that newcomers cannot be required to join your organization, or participate in future sponsorships.*

**Consider an Advocacy Role**

Advocacy is a voice for change. Most advocacy groups see themselves in the role as a voice for a cause, and view advocacy activities as going hand-in-hand with educating the public and being partners with the groups on whose behalf they advocate. This can be done in many ways: showing films, talking with school children, raising funds for a cause or bringing speakers to community events. As you work through the sponsorship process, you will become more aware of the need for advocacy on refugee issues. This may prompt you to join a formal refugee advocacy group, such as the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) or Amnesty International, or you may concentrate on education and awareness-raising within your community. Both are legitimate responses, and indeed, go hand in hand.
Evaluating Your Achievements

Monitoring and evaluating your group’s work will allow you to find out what worked best and what can be built upon for the future, particularly if your group thinks it may sponsor other refugees at some point. Most evaluations ask questions from two angles: what were the results? And, how were these results achieved (process)? Examples of the questions you might ask in these two areas are:

**Results:**
- What did we set out to achieve?
- Did we achieve it?
- Did we achieve other things also?
- How did these results affect everyone involved?

**Process:**
- What methods did we use to achieve our goals?
- Of these methods, which were most effective?
- What would we do differently next time to achieve better results?
- What would we do differently next time to achieve the same results more effectively or more efficiently?

It is important to ensure each participant has a chance to give their opinion. Situations look different to different people, so only by including the views of as many as possible can you get the full picture.

**What to do With the Results**
Now that you have a picture, you can ask the big picture questions: What does this all mean? What are the life lessons we learned? You may want to write up your results, and, if appropriate, some stories to illustrate them, so they can be shared amongst your group, with other sponsoring groups and, if applicable, with your SAH. This kind of record can be very useful if, at some time in the future, you decide to sponsor again. You will not only have reminders about some of the significant things you learned, but reading about your experience will take you right back to those earlier memories. Documenting and evaluating your experience will help you see how rich it has been and will equip you better for the future.

To wind up your evaluation and bring closure to the entire year, plan a celebration to honour your achievements. A dance, a special meal together, a street party, a multicultural potluck, or a games night can be fun and can easily include other partners and community members who supported the newcomers and your group. Mark the anniversary of the newcomers’ arrival. It is time to celebrate the past year! It is time to look forward to future possibilities.
What is a JAS?

A Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) refers to a joint undertaking by the sponsoring group and Citizenship and Immigration Canada to sponsor a refugee or a refugee family requiring special assistance and whose settlement depends on the additional support of a sponsor. Refugees sponsored under the JAS program are identified as having special needs that will likely result in a longer or more difficult period of integration.

'Special needs' can include:

- a large number of family members;
- trauma resulting from violence or torture;
- medical disabilities; and
- the effects of systemic discrimination.

Under the JAS program, SAHs and their Constituent Groups work together with the Government of Canada. The government provides financial assistance to the refugee while sponsoring groups provide community and emotional support and orientation, and ensure access to appropriate settlement services.

Sponsoring groups do not designate JAS cases and cannot refer cases to the program. Typically, JAS determination is done by a Canadian visa officer overseas during the eligibility interview, however a Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) service provider in Canada can also identify Government-Assisted Refugees in Canada as requiring joint assistance. If at the time of the eligibility interview overseas the visa officer determines that the applicant has special-needs and therefore requires longer-term financial support and other forms of support they may consider the applicant for referral to the JAS program. Under the JAS program, most refugees are provided support for 24 months after arrival. In exceptional circumstances, assistance could be available for up to 36 months.

Who Can Qualify for JAS?

In order to be designated as a JAS case, an applicant:

- must be a member of the Convention Refugee Abroad or Country of Asylum classes; and
- must be expected to need a longer and/or have a more difficult resettlement period due to the serious nature of the problems faced, including but not limited to one or a few of the following:
  - emotional problems resulting from the refugee experience, these could include:
1) incidents of trauma or torture;
2) the threat of physical violence or emotional duress;
3) the threat to physical safety or human rights violations in a country of asylum; or
4) a long-term stay in a refugee camp which makes adjustments to new surroundings, freedoms and responsibilities difficult;
    - physical or mental disability which could require treatment in Canada;
    - unusual family configuration such as families with large numbers of children, elderly parents, single-parent families with several young children or families consisting only of siblings, one or more of whom has assumed parental responsibilities; and
    - separated minors.

The problems should be of such a serious nature that the officer doubts applicants would be able to resettle themselves successfully in Canada through either the normal government assistance for refugees (GAR) or private sponsorship programs (PSR). They must, however, be able to demonstrate a potential to resettle over an extended period of time. In some instances, a JAS case could also meet the definition of a vulnerable case, which would mean the person is exempted from the requirement to demonstrate a potential to establish him- or herself.

**Finding a JAS Case**

Sponsorship is a requirement for the JAS Program. The visa officer sends the details of JAS cases to CIC’s Matching Centre. The Matching Centre assembles a profile of the case, and posts the profile on a secure web site accessible only by Sponsorship Agreement Holders, the CPO-W and local CIC offices. If the refugees have identified family members or relatives already in Canada, the appropriate local CIC will also be alerted of the need for a match in their community. If no match is found in a reasonable amount of time, the profile will be removed from the secure site.

Alternatively, groups can fill out and submit a Request for a Joint Assistance Refugee Profile (IMM 5504). If the Matching Centre is able to propose a match, it will provide the detailed profile to for sponsorship consideration. Once the group decides whether or not to sponsor a particular case, the SAH must advise the Matching Centre and verify that the case is still available. The group will then need to complete and submit the required forms with a copy of the detailed refugee profile to the CPO-W.

The application package, including the Document Checklist, Undertaking/Application, Sponsor Assessment, Settlement Plan, and, if applicable, Use of Representative form can be found under Application for Refugee Sponsorship: Joint Assistance Sponsorship on the CIC website.

Delays in obtaining medical or security results, or difficulties making travel arrangements can delay the arrival of the refugees but, on average, refugees sponsored under the JAS Program will arrive in Canada within 12 weeks of the date the sponsorship is approved by CIC.

The JAS partnership between CIC, the CPO-W and the sponsoring group also involves many other players, and the sponsoring groups must work closely with the local CIC office, the Resettlement Assistance Service Provider Organization (RAP SPO), settlement and other community agencies to ensure that the special needs of the newcomers are met. Groups must also be aware that while the selection process identified some special needs, many
other needs may arise over the sponsorship period. JAS sponsorship is, therefore, recommended for experienced sponsoring groups with sufficient human resources.

JAS refugees should be matched to communities where their needs would most likely be met. Information considered before matching includes, but is not limited to, specialized services available and/or special requirements of one or more family members; location of any family members in Canada; location of same or similar ethnic communities in Canada; size of family; employment; and language skills. JAS refugees will not be matched with communities that cannot provide the required settlement services (e.g., programs or services to address the needs of refugees who are victims of torture, persecution, etc.). Sponsoring groups are advised to demonstrate that they have sufficient expertise or experience to accommodate the refugees’ special needs and that their community offers settlement services that are well-suited to the particular needs of the refugee applicants.

The Application Process

1. Submitted completed application package including necessary supporting documents to the CPO-W
2. CPO-W reviews the application to ensure everything has been completed and signed properly
3. If the application forms have not been completed properly, CPO-W will return the application package to the sponsoring group.
4. If the application forms have been completed and signed properly, CPO-W processes the application and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the sponsoring group.
5. Upon approval, sponsoring group receives a letter including a CPO-W file number and information on receiving updates on the case.
6. The Matching Centre will notify sponsors of the Notice of Arrival Transmission (NAT) which contains information about the arrival of the refugee(s).

What is CIC’s Role?

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) agrees to provide the following assistance to JAS refugees for a period of up to 36 months (in exceptional circumstances) from the date the refugees arrive in Canada (the standard is a period of 24 months) or until they become continuously self-supporting, whichever comes first:

1. financial assistance equivalent to provincial social assistance rates to meet basic food, shelter and clothing needs;
2. start-up costs, including one-time payments for clothing, household effects, linens, staple foods and furniture;
3. access to emergency medical services and supplemental health benefits through the Interim Federal Health (IFH) program;
4. access to loans for the deposits for rent, utilities and telephone;
5. access to transportation and assistance loans; and
6. access to settlement support through funded community agencies

What is the Sponsoring Group’s Role?

Sponsorship under the JAS program means giving refugees a welcoming environment, helping them integrate, helping them in accessing services for their special needs and
Resettlement Assistance Program

The Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) provides income support and a range of immediate essential services to government-assisted refugees and humanitarian cases for which the federal government has undertaken a financial commitment. Financial entitlements under RAP are based on prevailing social services rates. RAP is the responsibility of the Refugee Branch at national headquarters, Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

CIC contracts community agencies as RAP Service Provider Organizations to provide: temporary accommodation for the refugees; airport reception, financial and basic orientation, assistance in applying for health cards and social insurance numbers, links to mandatory broader-based programs and services, as well as services to meet special needs; assistance in finding permanent accommodation; and counseling.

The newcomer refugees are referred to as RAP clients. Before newcomers arrive, it is also useful for your group to understand how RAP assistance is delivered, and the obligations of the clients. While this information will be explained to the newcomer during the initial
orientation sessions at the RAP SPO, this will be a very busy period, and it will be very helpful if your group already has a basic understanding of the program.

**RAP Cheques**

The initial cheque will be issued by the CIC RAP Counsellor to the client in person. This cheque includes non-repayable allowances for clothing, household effects, linens, staples and telephone installation and the Start-Up allowance plus one full month’s entitlement (for rent, food and incidentals, and transportation) in addition to an assistance loan (see below). Monthly cheques will be mailed directly to the RAP client’s residence in Canada during the last week of every month for the period of RAP eligibility or until recipients become self-sufficient, whichever comes first. These cover the remaining months of entitlement. Cheques are normally payable to the head of the household who is responsible for payments of monthly expenses including rent, groceries and utilities.

**Note:** RAP clients who are eligible for The Canadian Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) will have the amount automatically added to their monthly cheques during the waiting period. HOWEVER, once the family receives their first CCTB cheque which includes the lump-sum amount, the family must repay RAP the amount of the CCTB for the past three months. For more information on CCTB please see the CCTB Fact Sheet.

**Entitlements for shelter and food** follow maximum prevailing social assistance rates. Shelter rates include basic rent, heat, electricity and water. **Food and incidentals or basic needs** include money for basic food requirements and such items as personal care products, household supplies, etc. The standard monthly amount issued depends on the size of the family and the number and age of dependants. Calculations are always based on the age of the dependants on the date of arrival. Entitlements based on age will be reassessed at the end of the first 12-month period. Transportation allowances and other special allowances may be added to the monthly cheque.

An **Assistance Loan** is also given to assist newly arrived refugees in Canada with living expenses associated with the basic needs of life, basic household needs or labour market access. This loan is assessed and issued by a CIC officer in Canada after the arrival of the refugee. RAP makes use of assistance loans to cover deposits for last month’s rent and telephone. If two or more single individuals are sharing the same dwelling, they may want to share one telephone in order to share the deposit costs. As this is a loan, the refugees will have to pay this back in time.

**Clothing** – In some cities, money is issued in the start-up cheque to allow the newcomers to purchase their own clothing. A one-time basic clothing allowance is given and additional winter outerwear is provided or included in the Start-Up cheque. Between October 15th and April 15th, the winter allowance is issued at the airport in the form of clothing such as a winter jacket, winter boots, socks, hats and gloves. Depending on their age, children may receive snowsuits. Between April 16th and October 14th, CIC includes the winter clothing allowance in the Start-Up cheque.

**Basic Household Needs Allowance** – Suggested items include: beds, table and chairs, bed linens, basic window coverings and common household products such as kitchen utensils, pots, pans, brooms and mops. Depending upon the RAP centre, this entitlement may be provided as a pre-determined package supplied to the newcomer, a financial entitlement included in the Start-Up cheque, or a combination of both. For example, in Ontario, based on the family composition, newcomers are provided with new basic furniture such as beds and mattresses, dressers, kitchen table and chairs, sofa, coffee table and living room lamps.
**Staple Allowance** – This is a one-time allowance provided to offset the purchase of basic food and cleaning supplies to start up a household. It includes items such as flour, sugar, rice, spices and condiments, detergent, cleansers, etc.

**Telephone Installation** – a one-time allowance established in accordance with provincial social assistance rates to connect one telephone per family unit may be approved. Other telephone costs are the client’s responsibility and must be covered by the basic food and incidental rate.

**Children Under 6 Years** – Newcomers who arrive with children under the age of 6 years as of the date of arrival or who have a baby within their first year in Canada may be issued an additional allowance per month on top of their normal food and incidental rate. This money is intended to cover the cost of diapers, laundry, formula and other infant needs.

**Maternity Allowance** – On receipt of a physician’s letter confirming pregnancy, a one-time additional clothing allowance and per-month allowance to assist with special dietary needs may be approved. This allowance may be issued for a maximum of nine months within the sponsorship period or until the birth of a baby, whichever comes first.

**Newborn Allowance** – About one month prior to the expected due date, the client should be issued a cheque to purchase clothing, furniture, etc., for the baby. This allowance can be issued if the due date (provided in writing from a physician) is not more than 21 days after the last date of the sponsorship period.

**School Start-Up Allowance** – This allowance for children between 4–18 years of age is paid to help offset the costs of school supplies, activity fees, gym clothing, etc. It is normally issued on a one-time basis and should be included in the entitlement payment for the month of August or later during the school year. However, some families may require this amount twice if the entitlement period covers two school years.

**Special Diet Allowance** – This allowance is paid to individuals who provide a letter from a physician. An officer will review the request and increase the allowance as needed.

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**Resettlement Assistance Program Agreement**

As clients under the Resettlement Assistance Program, the newcomers will sign a RAP Agreement. The agreement is a binding contract that describes the roles and responsibilities of a recipient of RAP benefits. Recipients of RAP must keep in mind that the RAP program is a privilege that carries with it an obligation on the part of recipients to work towards self-sufficiency.

The agreement will be fully explained to the newcomer clients during the RAP orientation session upon arrival, which a representative of your sponsoring group is strongly encouraged to attend. Clients must fully understand their roles and responsibilities and the terms and conditions of the client agreement before they sign it and receive their first cheque. Clients will receive a copy of the signed agreement. Your group can reinforce the family’s understanding of their obligations under RAP.

If there is any change in the client’s situation during the sponsorship period, a new assessment of the needs and means is necessary. This includes a change in the status of the client or a family member, a change of address, the commencement of employment, travel outside of Canada, pregnancy and birth, health conditions that require a special diet or hospitalization, or the departure or death of a family member. Clients must notify the
CIC RAP counsellor of any changes as soon as possible by submitting a Resettlement Assistance Program Client Report Form by mail along with any required documentation. The CIC RAP counsellor will review the client’s situation at the end of the first 12 months to determine eligibility for the remaining 12 months and to recalculate entitlements as appropriate. You will receive the contact details for the CIC RAP counsellor during the orientation.

Income support may be refused, discontinued or reduced by a CIC RAP counsellor if clients do not report changes in their financial circumstances, or do not cooperate in the settlement process. The clients’ responsibilities include:

- making every effort to become self-sufficient as soon as possible; *
- ensuring income support is used to pay monthly expenses;
- reporting any changes of status to the CIC RAP counsellors (submit a Client Report Form);
- repaying all benefits which exceed the amount of the entitlement;
- completing and returning monitoring questionnaires upon receipt; and
- reporting to CIC RAP counsellors for in-person monitoring interviews whenever called upon to do so.

* While becoming self-sufficient as soon as possible is an important client responsibility, it is understood that the refugees who arrive under the Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program will require a much longer settlement period.

**JAS Application Forms**

SAHs and CGs are the only sponsoring groups permitted to submit a sponsorship for JAS case. Additionally, it is important to note that JAS cases require a specific application package which is available at: www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/ref-joint.asp.

The required forms include:

- Document Checklist — Joint Assistance Sponsorship [IMM 5495]
- Undertaking/Application for a Joint Assistance Sponsorship [IMM 1324]
- Sponsor Assessment [IMM 5492]
- Settlement Plan — Joint Assistance Sponsorship [IMM 5494]
- Use of a Representative [IMM 5476] (if applicable)

If you require assistance in completing any of the forms included in this application package, please contact the RSTP at 1-877-290-1701.
**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOR</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of Receipt</td>
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<tr>
<td>BVOR</td>
<td>Blended Visa Office-Referred</td>
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<tr>
<td>AWR</td>
<td>Women at Risk</td>
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<td>CAIPS</td>
<td>Computer-Assisted Immigration Processing System</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBSA</td>
<td>Canada Border Services Agency</td>
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<td>CCLB</td>
<td>Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks</td>
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<td>CCR</td>
<td>Canadian Council for Refugees</td>
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<td>CCTB</td>
<td>Canada Child Tax Benefit</td>
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<td>CCVT</td>
<td>Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture</td>
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<tr>
<td>CET</td>
<td>Centre for Education and Training</td>
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<td>CG</td>
<td>Constituent Group</td>
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<td>CIC</td>
<td>Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Canada Immigration Centre</td>
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<td>CLTA</td>
<td>Centre for Language Training and Assessment</td>
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<td>CPO-W</td>
<td>Case Processing Centre in Winnipeg</td>
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<td>CR</td>
<td>Convention Refugee</td>
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<td>Canadian Security Intelligence Service</td>
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<td>DOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMP</td>
<td>Designated Medical Practitioner</td>
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<td>Group of Five</td>
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<td>HDC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Designated Classes</td>
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<td>IFH</td>
<td>Interim Federal Health Program</td>
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<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>Immigration and Refugee Board</td>
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<td>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</td>
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<td>Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations</td>
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<td>Joint Assistance Sponsorship</td>
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<td>LINC</td>
<td>Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada</td>
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<td>MC</td>
<td>Matching Centre</td>
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<td>NAT</td>
<td>Notification of Arrival Transmission</td>
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<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>PR Card</td>
<td>Permanent Resident Card</td>
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<td>PSR</td>
<td>Private Sponsorship of Refugees</td>
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<td>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</td>
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<td>Resettlement Assistance Program</td>
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<td>RSD</td>
<td>Refugee Status Determination</td>
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<td>RSTP</td>
<td>Refugee Sponsorship Training Program</td>
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<td>Sponsorship Agreement Holder</td>
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<td>Service Provider Organization</td>
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<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>VOR</td>
<td>Visa Office-Referred</td>
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</table>
CIC Coding for Resettlement Categories

CONVENTION REFUGEE ABROAD CLASS

R1 Convention refugee abroad, government assistance required for up to 12 months
CR4 Convention refugee abroad, self-supporting, government assistance not required
CR5 Convention refugee abroad, special needs case selected under Joint Assistance Sponsorship
CRC Convention refugee abroad, with a community sponsorship
CRS Convention refugee abroad, sponsored by a SAH
CRG Convention refugee abroad, sponsored by a group of five

COUNTRY OF ASYLUM CLASS (Resettlement-Asylum)

RA4 Country of Asylum, self-supporting, government assistance not needed
RA5 Country of Asylum, special needs case selected under Joint Assistance Sponsorship
RAC Country of Asylum, with a community sponsorship
RAS Country of Asylum, sponsored by a SAH
RAG Country of Asylum, sponsored by a group of five

FORMS

IMM 0008 Generic Application form for Canada
IMM 0008DEP Additional Dependents/Declaration
IMM 0008 Schedule 2 Schedule 2 Refugees Outside Canada
IMM 1324 Undertaking/Application for a Joint Assistance Sponsorship
IMM 5355 Immigration Loans (Assistance Loan)
IMM 5373 Undertaking/Application to Sponsor
IMM 5373A Settlement Plan - Group of 5
IMM 5373B Financial Profile - Member of Group of 5
IMM 5413 Instructions Guide – Application for Refugee Sponsorship
IMM 5437 Document Checklist – Application for Refugee Sponsorship
IMM 5438 Request for a Refugee Profile
IMM 5440 Settlement Plan - SAHs or CGs
IMM 5476 Use of a Representative
IMM 5492 Sponsor Assessment Form
IMM 5493 Instruction Guide - Joint Assistance Sponsorship
IMM 5494 Settlement Plan - Joint Assistance Sponsorship
IMM 5495 Document Checklist – Joint Assistance Sponsorship
IMM 5496 Instructions Guide - Request for a Refugee Profile
IMM 5504 Request for a Joint Assistance Sponsorship Refugee Profile
IMM 5515 Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment — Community Sponsors
IMM 5669 Schedule A – Background/Declaration
IMM 6000 Application for Convention Refugees Abroad and Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad (incl. IMM0008, IMM0008DEP, Schedule A, Schedule 2, and IMM5476)
Admissibility
For Convention Refugees Abroad and members of the Country of Asylum and Source Country classes, admissibility includes the following statutory requirements: medical, security, and criminality.

Admission
Permission to come into Canada as an immigrant or as a visitor.

Admissibility Loan
Refugees selected for resettlement are required to pay their own cost of medical exams and travel. The admissibility loan is a loan issued by a visa officer overseas to eligible applicants to help them pay for their medical exams and other processing costs.

Applicant
Person making an Application for Permanent Residence or temporary residence, or a group which applies for sponsorship or a person who applies to sponsor his or her family member or de facto dependants.

Assistance Loan
This loan is assessed and issued by a visa officer in Canada after the arrival of the refugee. It is designed to help the refugee cover living expenses associated with the basic needs of life, basic household needs, deposits for telephone, last month’s rent, or labour market access.

Asylum Seeker
A person who makes an in-land application for refugee protection and whose claim has not been decided on.

Canada Child Tax Benefit
Delivered by the Canada Revenue Agency, the Canada Child Tax Benefit includes a base amount for all children under 18, and a National Child Benefit supplement for low income families.

Care
The provision of food, clothing, local transportation costs and other basic necessities of life to the refugees.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)
As a federal government body, CIC has the overall responsibility for immigration and refugee matters in Canada. CIC determines, for example, who can immigrate to Canada, who should be referred to the IRB to apply for refugee protection in
Canada, residency obligations, grants Canadian citizenship, and administers resettlement programs.

**Community Groups**
Any organization (for-profit/not-for-profit, incorporated/non-incorporated) located in the community where the refugees are expected to settle that has made an organizational commitment to sponsor. Community Sponsors are limited to submitting two sponsorship undertakings a year and must undergo financial and settlement plan assessments by their local Citizenship and Immigration Centre each time they wish to sponsor.

**Constituent Group (CG)**
A group authorized in writing by a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) to act on its behalf in sponsoring refugees. Refer to section 138 "group" of IRPR.

**Convention Refugee**
Based on the definition contained in the 1951 Geneva Convention and its 1967 Protocol, a Convention Refugee is any person who, by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, by reason of that fear, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country; or, not having a country of nationality, is outside the country of his or her former habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of that fear, unwilling to return to that country.

**Convention Refugee Abroad**
Any person who is a Convention refugee, is outside of Canada, and is seeking resettlement in Canada. He or she does not have a prospect of another durable solution within a reasonable period of time.

**Co-sponsor**
A sponsoring group may choose to formally partner with an individual (e.g., a family member of the sponsored refugee living in Canada) and/or another organization in carrying out settlement duties. This partner is termed a "co-sponsor".

**Country of Asylum Class**
The Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations defines a member of the Country of Asylum Class (RA) as a person
- who is outside his or her country of citizenship or habitual residence;
- who has been, and continues to be, seriously and personally affected by civil war or armed conflict or who has suffered massive violations of human rights;
- for whom there is no possibility of finding an adequate solution to his or her situation within a reasonable period of time; and
- who will be privately sponsored or who has adequate financial resources to support himself or herself and any dependants.

**Country of Citizenship**
Country of citizenship is the country with which the applicant has the legal bond of nationality. In most cases, this will be the country that has issued the applicant’s passport.
Criminal Inadmissibility
As with other permanent residents, refugees are inadmissible to Canada if they have been convicted of serious crimes, war crimes or crimes against humanity or have committed acts or omissions that would render them inadmissible to Canada. See A36 and A37.

De facto Dependant
A de facto dependant is a person who does not meet the definition of family member but who is nonetheless considered by the Principal Applicant (PA) to be an integral member of the family unit. Such a person would normally, but not exclusively, reside with the PA as a member of the same household and must be the dependants of a PA who has been determined to be a member of one of the three refugee classes. The de facto dependant must also meet the definition of refugee in his or her own right even when a dependency relationship is established. See IP3, Part 1 Section 6.11.

Dependant
A term used by the former Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations which has been replaced in the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations by the concept of a family member:
- the spouse or common-law partner of the principal applicant;
- a dependent child of the principal applicant, dependent child of their spouse, or dependent child of a common-law partner; or
- a dependent child of a dependent child.

Displaced Person
‘Displaced person’ refers to someone who has been removed or forced out of their home, property, land and/or area of habitual residence due to war, widespread violence or other conditions beyond their control. A displaced person may or may not have crossed a border into another country, though the term ‘refugee’ is most often used when border-crossing has taken place.

Durable Solution
Durable solutions are solutions that the UNHCR and international community considers for people who were forced to flee their homes and countries of origin due to being in refugee-like situations. The three durable solutions for refugees and persons in "refugee-like" situations are:
1. Voluntary Repatriation
2. Local Integration
3. Resettlement

Eligibility
In this publication, eligibility refers to the three conditions which a refugee applicant must meet to be eligible for resettlement:
• meet the definition of either Convention Refugee Abroad class, or Humanitarian-protected Persons Abroad class which includes Country of Asylum class or Source Country class
• have no other durable solutions
• demonstrate an ability to establish successfully in Canada

**Family Class Sponsorship**

Sponsorship under the Family Class provision in the Canadian immigration context, refers to an immigration stream whereby spouses/partners, dependent children, and certain eligible relatives can be sponsored to come to Canada as permanent residents. Family sponsorships have different eligibility criteria and application forms than refugee sponsorships.

**Family Member**

A family member, for resettlement purposes, is a person who can be included on the principal applicant’s application. Consistent with the use of appropriate discretion and flexibility in assessing refugees, the concept of family, for refugee resettlement purposes, should be considered to include those who currently may be included on the principal applicant’s application (i.e. spouse, common-law partner and dependent children of the spouses or common-law partner or the dependent children of the dependent children of the spouses or common-law partners - regardless of whether they are physically at the same location).

**Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs)**

Convention Refugees Abroad and members of the Source Country class who are resettled and supported by the Government of Canada through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). Under RAP, refugees are supported at approximately the equivalent of local provincial social assistance levels for up to twelve months after their arrival in Canada.

**Group of Five (G-5)**

A Group of Five is a sponsoring group under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. G-5 sponsorship groups are often one-time groups and are formed in response to special situations that arise.

**Humanitarian and Protected Persons Abroad**

A person in similar circumstances to a Convention Refugee who is a member of one of the following Humanitarian–protected persons abroad classes: Country of Asylum Class and Source Country Class. Refer to Section 146 of IRPR.
Interim Federal Health Program (IFH)
A health program established by CIC that provides temporary medical coverage for refugees until their qualification for provincial health care coverage. Privately sponsored refugees are eligible for basic coverage. Privately sponsored refugees who receive income support through the RAP program (e.g. JAS, some blended VOR) also receive supplemental coverage under the ‘Extended Health Care’ IFH plan.

Immigrant Loans Program
Established by CIC, this program provides admissibility, transportation, and assistance loans to refugees and their family members. Refer to section 289 of IRPR, and the inland and overseas processing chapters IP19 and OP17.

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB)
The IRB is an independent administrative tribunal that decides on in-land refugee claims in accordance with Canadian law.

Immigrant and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)
An Act respecting immigration to Canada and the granting of refugee protection to persons who are displaced, persecuted or in danger which came into effect in 2002.

Immigrant and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR)
Detailed instructions that have been placed in Regulations to accompany the IRPA.

Inland Processing Chapter 3 (IP3)
A chapter of the CIC Inland Processing Manual that explains the policy and procedures for the refugee resettlement program in Canada, including the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP) and Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP).

Inland and Overseas Processing Chapters 19 and 17 (IP19 and IP17)
Two chapters of the CIC Inland and Overseas Processing Manuals that describe the Immigrant Loans Program and its four loan components, including the objectives and eligibility criteria for each loan option, the procedures for processing and approving immigrant loans, guidelines for assessing loans for approval, and guidelines for counselling loan applicants.

Internal Flight Alternative (IFA)
Sometimes considered a fourth type of durable solution, IFA may exist for refugees and persons in refugee-like situations who have not fled their country of nationality. It involves the consideration of whether the individual could have found a safe haven in another location within the country of nationality or residence at the time of their flight. If so, they will not need Canada's protection. (See Section 1.5)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The International Organization for Migration has a primary mandate to make arrangements for the organized transfer of foreign nationals, including
refugees, displaced persons and other individuals in need of international migration services. It arranges transportation and medical examinations for refugees. The IOM also provides a Canadian Orientation Abroad program in some locations to refugees and foreign nationals before they arrive in Canada.

**J**

**Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) Program**
A joint undertaking by a SAH or one of its CGs and CIC to sponsor refugees requiring special assistance and whose admissibility depends upon this additional support to become established. Refer to Section 157 of IRPR, IP3 and OP5 for details.

**L**

**Landed Status**
Means lawful permission to establish permanent residence in Canada, a term used under legislation prior to IRPA.

**Landing**
see *Landed Status*

**Letter of Approval**
A letter signed by a person authorized to sign on behalf of the SAH, authorizing a CG or cosponsor to enter into an undertaking to sponsor refugees on its behalf.

**Local Integration**
Local Integration is one of the durable solutions considered by the UNHCR and Canadian visa officers. Refugees are considered to be locally integrated in the country of asylum when they have rights similar to those of citizens, can move around the country freely; they are allowed to earn a living; their children are allowed to attend school; there is no threat of refoulement, etc.

**M**

**Matching Centre**
A CIC office which is responsible for brokering between CICs located in Canada and Visa posts overseas regarding the destining and matching to sponsors of selected refugees who have been successfully processed and are ready to travel to Canada.

**NGO-Government Committee on the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (NGO-Government Committee)**
A committee of elected SAH representatives and appointed CIC representatives established in 1994 to provide an ongoing consultative mechanism for program partners in support of the PSRP. The committee is intended to be a facilitative mechanism and does not limit the avenues
through which representations may be made of issues of concern to any interested party.

N

Non-accompanying Family Member
A non-accompanying family member is defined as a dependent family member of a refugee who is separated from the family unit due to circumstances beyond his or her control and is unable to travel with the principal applicant. Refer to Section 141 of IRPR.

Notification of Arrival Transmission
A Notification of Arrival Transmission advises sponsors, the local CIC and Service provider organization (SPO) of the date of arrival and flight details of the refugee, and of pertinent details such as the names of sponsors, onward travel arrangements to final destinations, and special needs.

O

One-Year Window of Opportunity (OYW)
A regulatory mechanism that allows non-accompanying family members to submit an application and be eligible to be processed in the same class and category as the principal applicant (PA) for up to one year following the principal applicant’s arrival in Canada. For more details refer to Paragraph 141(1) (b) of IRPR, IP3 and OP5.

Overseas Processing Chapter 5 (OP5)
A chapter of the CIC Overseas Processing Manual that explains the policy and procedures for the refugee resettlement program abroad including the selection of Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs).

Overseas Processing Chapter 22 (OP22)
A chapter of the CIC Overseas Processing Manual that provides an understanding of the process for judicial reviews of decisions made under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act for which no specific right of appeal exists. This chapter deals specifically with overseas files that are subject to judicial review.

P

Permanent Resident
A person who has been granted landing under previous legislation or permanent residence under the IRPA, has not been granted Canadian citizenship, and has not ceased to be a permanent resident.

Port of Entry
Legal point of entry into Canada, staffed by CIC employees. Most Port Of Entries are at international airports, legal border crossing checkpoints with the United States and at lake and coastal seas ports.
**Principal Agreement**
An agreement negotiated between CIC and the SAH Community.

**Principal Applicant (PA)**
For a single applicant, it is that one person. For spouses, common law partners including those with children, it is the person with the strongest claim to persecution.

**Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR)**
The PSR program is one of Canada’s immigration streams. In the PSR program, refugee applicants are resettled to Canada as permanent residents through a Group of Five, Sponsorship Agreement Holder or Community Sponsor. The PSR program involves civic participation and is based on a strong volunteer base in various communities.

**Reception**
Reception is defined in the Sponsorship Agreement and Undertaking as meeting the refugee upon arrival in the community of resettlement or, when applicable, making arrangements for the refugee's transportation from the closest domestic airport to the community of resettlement.

**Referral Organization**
The IRPR defines a referral organization as:
- the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; or
- any organization with which the Minister has entered into a memorandum of understanding.

**Refugee**
A refugee is commonly defined as a person who has been forced to flee her/his country of origin or habitual residence due to personal persecution, war and/or violence. Refugees may or may not have experienced violence but they have a well-founded fear of persecution and risk to their lives.

**Refugee Convention, The 1951**
The United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is commonly referred to as the 'Refugee Convention' or the 'Geneva Convention'. It is an international convention that defines who qualifies as a refugee, defines the rights of those who have been granted asylum and outlines member states’ responsibilities. Canada is signatory to this Convention.

**Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP)**
A program that is funded by CIC and whose primary goal is to provide training and information-sharing on the private sponsorship of refugees to SAHs, Community Sponsors and Groups of Five.

**Resettlement**
Resettlement consists of moving to a third country where permanent settlement and integration is possible. It is one of the durable solutions and
intended for those refugees without local integration prospects in the country of asylum. Resettlement may also be used as an instrument of protection geared primarily to the special needs of refugees whose life, liberty, safety, health or fundamental human rights are at risk in the country where they sought refuge. It is used for refugees unable to benefit from the other two solutions.

**Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP)**
A contribution program established by CIC that provides basic income support and essential services for refugees who have been admitted to Canada as Government-Assisted Refugees.

**Self-supporting**
The point at which a refugee no longer requires the financial support (care and lodging) of a sponsor but may still need settlement assistance. Refers to Paragraph 5 (d) and Appendix 1 of the Sponsorship Agreement.

**Self-Supporting Refugees**
Refugees who meet resettlement criteria and have sufficient financial resources to support themselves and their accompanying dependants until they are likely to become self-supporting. This category of refugees is in addition to the other categories of refugees who receive assistance from the government or private sponsors.

**Service Provider Organization (SPO)**
An organization that is funded by CIC, either directly or through provincial programs, to deliver orientation and settlement services directly to newcomers, including sponsored refugees.

**Settlement Assistance**
The activities that facilitate the refugee’s adjustment to Canadian society such as providing orientation to the community, help with learning an official language, assistance with finding employment, and extending ongoing friendship, encouragement and general assistance. It also involves informing refugees of the rights and responsibilities of permanent residents in Canada.

**Settlement Plan**
A written plan that outlines a sponsoring group’s arrangements for the reception, care, lodging and settlement assistance of the sponsored refugee(s).

**Source Country Class**
A member of the Source Country Class is a refugee who:
- resides in his/her country of citizenship or habitual residence;
- has been and continues to be seriously and personally affected by civil war or armed conflict;
- has suffered serious deprivation of his/her right of freedom of expression, right of dissent or right to engage in trade union activity and who has been detained or imprisoned as a consequence;
fears persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion;
for whom there is no possibility of finding an adequate solution to his or her situation within a reasonable period of time;
resides in a country that has been designated as a source country (refer to Schedule 2 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations); and
will be privately sponsored or assisted by the government or who has adequate financial resources to support himself or herself and any dependants

Sponsor
In this publication, sponsor refers to a Sponsorship Agreement Holder, Constituent Group or Cosponsor which participates in the resettlement of refugees abroad through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. Refer to Section 138 "sponsor" of the IRPR.

Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs)
Incorporated organizations that have signed a formal sponsorship agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. SAHs tend to be local, regional or national religious organizations, ethno cultural groups or other humanitarian organizations. SAHs assume overall responsibility for the management of sponsorships under their agreement, and generally submit several refugee sponsorships a year.

Sponsorship Breakdown
An official declaration that an irreparable failure to meet the sponsorship arrangements (care, lodging and settlement assistance) has occurred. Sponsorship breakdown is a condition of deterioration in the sponsor-refugee relationship such that the sponsor is unable or unwilling to fulfill the terms of the sponsorship undertaking. Following failed attempts to reestablish the sponsorship, CIC will formally declare a breakdown in the sponsorship and depending on the circumstances, the sponsoring group may be found in default.

Sponsorship Default
Sponsorship default refers to a breach of the contractual obligations of the sponsorship undertaking itself, specifically, the failure to fulfill a financial or non-financial obligation associated with the undertaking. A bar to sponsorship that is declared against a sponsor determined to be liable for a sponsorship breakdown. Refer to Subsection 153(4) of IRPR.

Sponsorship Revocation
A withdrawal or cancellation of an approved undertaking by CIC before or after the issuance of a visa. Refer to Section 155 of IRPR.

Sponsorship Withdrawal
A cancellation by a sponsor of an undertaking before the issuance of a visa. It is the last option when all attempts to fulfill the conditions of the sponsorship have failed or when situations have changed.
Temporary Resident Permit

A temporary resident permit is a discretionary document that may be issued to inadmissible persons or persons reported or who may be reported for violation of the IRPA allowing them to enter or remain in Canada, where justified by exceptional circumstances.

Undertaking to sponsor

A written undertaking to the Minister, sometimes referred to as an ‘application to sponsor’, to make provision for reception, care, lodging and settlement assistance for a refugee and their named accompanying and non accompanying family members in the expected community of settlement for a period of 12 months (longer in exceptional circumstances if agreed to by the SAH) from the date of arrival of the refugee or until the refugee becomes self-supporting and no longer requires settlement assistance, whichever is less. Refer to Sections 138 "undertaking" and 141 and Subsections 154(2) and (3) of IRPR.

Urgent Need of Protection

Urgent need of protection means, in respect of a member of the Convention Refugee Abroad class, the Country of Asylum class or the Source Country class, that their life, liberty or physical safety is under immediate threat and, if not protected, the person is likely to be killed; subject to violence, torture, sexual assault or arbitrary imprisonment; or returned to their country of nationality or of their former habitual residence.

Urgent Protection Program (UPP)

A case in need of urgent protection is one where the life, liberty or physical well-being of a refugee is under immediate threat. These cases are assigned the highest processing priority to offer resettlement as a tool of protection. Resettlement in urgent protection cases is undertaken as a priority where there is no other way to guarantee the security of the person concerned. Resettlement in these cases is the best, and often the only protection response.

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

Commonly referred to as the UN Refugee Agency, the UNHCR is United Nations agency that has the mandate to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems across the world. As an international body, the UNHCR aims to ensure that asylum seekers’ and refugees’ rights are realized and protected.

Visa Office-Referred Sponsorship (VOR)

Visa office-referred sponsorship refers to situations where a refugee has been determined to be eligible and is referred by a visa office for sponsorship.
Either a sponsor requests the visa office-referred case or a visa office refers the case to the Matching Centre to find a sponsor.

**Vulnerable**
With respect to a Convention Refugee or a person in similar circumstances means that the person has a greater need of protection than other applicants abroad because of the person’s particular circumstances that give rise to a heightened risk to their physical safety. Vulnerable cases are eligible for expedited processing. Expedited cases are not urgent and it is acceptable to have refugees in these cases en route to Canada within one to four months.

**Voluntary Repatriation**
One of the durable solutions considered by the UNHCR. Voluntary repatriation consists of resettlement of a refugee to her/his country of nationality or habitual residence. Voluntary repatriation should occur only when the situation in the country of habitual or permanent residence has changed in a lasting and meaningful way and refugees can return in conditions of safety and dignity.

**Women At Risk Program (AWR)**
The Women-at-Risk Program (AWR) is designed to offer resettlement opportunities to women in perilous or permanently unstable situations; and in situations where urgent or expedited processing is necessary. In many cases, women eligible under the AWR and their dependent children experience more difficulties in resettling than other classes of refugees; will require a Joint Assistance Sponsorship; and will need a longer period to become integrated and established in Canada.