
FACTSHEET

July 21, 2016

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
and Responsible for Labour

Supports for Immigrants and Refugees in British Columbia

The Province's goal is to make sure that all newcomers to B.C. are provided with the support they need to build a productive life in B.C.'s thriving economy. While primary responsibility for delivering settlement and resettlement services to immigrants and refugees rests with the federal government, the Province also provides services and supports to newcomers, including:

- \$4 million for services to assist newcomers who are not eligible for federal settlement services, including:
 - Information, orientation and community connections;
 - Formal and informal language training and practice; and,
 - Trauma counselling for refugee claimants.
- \$3.5 million for an employment and skills training program that helps skilled immigrants and refugees access employment in B.C. that aligns with their pre-arrival training and education.
- Since 2006, over \$9 million in Foreign Qualifications Recognition (FQR) initiatives to help trained international workers get their credentials recognized quickly in B.C.
- In response to the federal government's Syrian Refugee initiative, the B.C. government has provided:
 - A \$1 million Refugee Readiness Fund (RRF) to help connect private sponsors, service providers and potential to the information they need to plan for the arrival and support of Syrian refugees. This includes:
 - \$500,000 for five Refugee Response Teams (RRTs) to identify and prioritize short-term community needs of refugees; and,
 - \$500,000 for the Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISSofBC) to develop the Refugees Readiness Online Hub to help make information and connections more accessible throughout the province.
- A \$1 million investment through the Canada-BC Job Grant to help get refugees job training and match them with employers.
- In addition, all refugees in B.C. are eligible for the following services:
 - Health care through the Medical Services Plan (*premiums waived for one year*);
 - Enrollment in B.C.'s public schools;
 - Child Care Subsidy – up to \$850 a month;
 - BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit – up to \$55 per month per child under age 6;

- BC Basic Family Bonus – up to \$111 per child per month when combined with the National Child Benefit Supplement; and,
 - Student Aid.
- The [WelcomeBC.ca](http://www.welcomebc.ca) portal for new and prospective British Columbians. This key resource includes:
 - information on language training, personal identification, and help to find employment and a place to live.
 - videos on a range of topics including settling and working in B.C.
 - success stories of newcomers in B.C.
 - The **Newcomers' Guides** that answer many questions newcomers have and makes it easier and quicker for them to settle into life in B.C. Find out more at <https://www.welcomebc.ca/Start-Your-Life-in-B-C/Newcomers-Guides>

Federal supports:

- The federal Settlement Program offers free services that support immigrants settling into local communities across Canada: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/map/bc.asp>
- Under the federal Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) each government-assisted refugee is eligible for income support, resettlement services and additional allowances such as furniture, clothing, school start-up and maternity. To find out more about RAP, visit: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/resettle-assist.asp>
- Additional services and supports provided include financial information and planning, life skills training, interim federal health care and the Canada Child Tax Benefit.
- For more information on federal supports for immigrants and refugees visit the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/ENGLISH/information/offices/index.asp>

Contact: Heidi Zilkie
 Communications
 Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
 250-952-0876