

This Code of Ethics is meant to serve the sponsors, sponsoring groups, and refugees. It includes responsibilities of sponsors, as well as rights and responsibilities of sponsors, as well as rights and responsibilities of refugees.

Responsibilities of Sponsors

In a sponsorship, we treat refugees as we would wish to be treated ourselves. We must ensure that the sponsorship of refugees is carried out in an ethical and responsible fashion. We need to do the right thing in the right way.

We need to take care to:

- Respond to refugees in need irrespective of circumstance or creed
- Learn about the history, culture and values of the people being sponsored
- Respect their religious beliefs
- Inform newcomers of their rights and responsibilities in Canada
- Respect their rights, privacy and person (issues of confidentiality & respectful boundaries apply)
- Recognize refugees are survivors - capable of making their own decisions
- Be aware of the unequal distribution of power and take care not to abuse the position of trust
- Be especially sensitive to gender and child-care concerns

We need to remember:

- Refugees are in Canada because they were forced to leave their homes, often abruptly, and usually unwillingly. They are suffering from shock when they arrive, and they will undergo many stages of grieving as they adjust to life in their new land. Helping them will not be easy.
- Refugees are first and foremost people. They are not all the same. Starting anew in a strange country with strange customs, each one will adjust in their own individual way to life in Canada.
- Refugees need to take control of their own lives by making their own decisions - i.e. choosing their own possessions. We need to think about how we will collect furniture, clothing, food and money. We must balance the refugee family's need for dignity and the group's ability to provide donations of things or money.

Rights of Newcomers

Charter Rights

Refugees accepted for private sponsorship enter Canada as Permanent Residents. Charter Rights apply immediately. Newcomers have most of the social, economic and cultural rights of citizens. They are eligible to apply for citizenship after four years of residency in Canada.

Right of Mobility

Right of mobility is the right to live anywhere, but not the right to be supported anywhere. If the newcomers decide to move from the expected community of resettlement, the sponsors may continue to support them, but are not obligated to.

The expected community of resettlement is determined at the time of the application. Usually it is the sponsor's community or close to it. This is stipulated in the Immigration Act 7.2. (2)(e)(i).

Right to Health Protection

The Interim Federal Health (IFH) program covers sponsored newcomers for the refugee newcomer's first year in Canada. IFH can cover dental basics, approved prescriptions and eye glasses.

Right to a Certain Standard of Living

Sponsored refugees do not have the right to income assistance during their first year in Canada. This is the responsibility of the sponsor. If a sponsored newcomer draws upon income assistance during the period of sponsorship, the sponsor must repay the full amount of benefits to the appropriate social assistance authority.

Right to Education

Sponsored newcomers are entitled to Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). If the LINC program is not available in the community, the sponsor must ensure that the sponsored person has access to basic language training.

Children of sponsored refugees have the right to public education.

Right to Child Tax Benefits

Sponsored refugees who are parents of children are eligible for Child Tax Benefits.

We, your sponsor, are your first contacts in Canada, but we may not be able to help you with all your needs. Please tell us if you have any special medical or other needs so that we can help get the services you need. You have a right to settlement and social services.

Responsibilities of Newcomers

English Language Training and Employment

English is the main language in our community. Learning English is very important to becoming independent. All family members should take advantage of the chance to attend language training.

Finding Work

We will explain the job search process and will help you search in our community. But there is no guarantee of a job. Employers will decide whether to hire you based on your skills and willingness to perform a job.

Canadian employers consider Canadian work experience very important. Therefore, it is important to begin working, even if it is not in your trade, skill or profession. Understand that your first job in Canada may be the first step towards a better job. It is very typical in Canada to work one job to gain the experience to get a better job.

Legal & Domestic Responsibilities

You are expected to abide by the laws of Canada. In particular, you may find Canadian family values and laws (discipline of children and spousal rights) differ from what you are used to. Rights of women and children are protected under Canada's Criminal Code.

Financial Obligations

We will explain to you and your family how much money is available for your sponsorship and what must be paid from this money. It is your responsibility to manage your money carefully to ensure that you can meet your food, housing, clothing and transportation needs. We have raised the money required to support your basic needs during your first year in Canada. You are responsible for repaying your governmental immigration loans cover your transportation to Canada and the overseas processing costs. Please tell us when your first notice for this payment arrives in the mail. We can help you arrange a realistic payment schedule.

Achieving Independence

We hope to give you a start in Canada, and are willing to give you informed advice; however, you and your family must make your own decisions about your future. As sponsors we are here for you, but you are expected to use your own initiative to make the best of your life in Canada. Your sponsorship will end after one year, or when you and your family have become financially self-supporting, whichever comes first.