

Settlement Guide For Sponsorship Groups

January 2016

PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

Have you planned the following?

- Meeting the family when they arrive
- Housing
- Furniture
- Food
- Clothing (including: coat, shoes, boots and hat)
- Interpretation
- Transportation
- Personal items
- Provide pocket money / recreation
- Provide phone card
- School books, supplies

PRE-ARRIVAL - YOU NEED TO:

- The family will probably arrive at the Toronto airport first.
- When they arrive in Canada, they will get a **Confirmation of Permanent Residence** document.
- In Toronto airport the family may receive:
 - Winter coats, hats and boots
 - Social Insurance Number (SIN)
 - Interim Federal Healthcare (IFHP) documents (more information on this below)

POST-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

The family will need help with these after they arrive:

- Copy all documents – PR confirmation, etc.
- Do a basic health assessment (in case of necessary medical follow-ups and referrals)
- Explain 911 for medical emergencies and fire
- Give a tour of the home and neighbourhood
- Make an intake appointment at ISANS (T: 902-423-3607), BRING PR confirmation
- Complete forms / applications (MSI, SIN, GST, etc.)
- Register for EAL school
- Register children in school (if needed)
- Open a bank account and help with budgeting
- Provide bus tickets / bus pass (SEE BELOW) and explain the bus system
- Find a family doctor, dentist, optometrist
- Provide interpretation (to appointments)
- Explain travel loans
- Help with finding work

POST-ARRIVAL - YOU NEED TO:

- Register the family for their SIN and IFHP when they arrive in NS if they don't receive it in Toronto.
- Make a copy of confirmation Permanent Resident document; Visa or Passport.
- Check all documents for correct information and spelling. If there are any mistakes, you can fix them in the **Confirmation of Permanent Address Notification** here:
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/amend.asp>
- Send a **Confirmation of Permanent Address Notification** to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). This will give them the family's new permanent address in order for them to get their **Permanent Residence (PR) Card**. You need to do this within a few days of arrival in Nova Scotia. Be sure to include at least one letter or official document issued by CIC. You or your group can do this on-line at
https://services3.cic.gc.ca/ecas/?app=coanotify&lang=en&_ga=1.76659731.729898347.1435059184
- Give each family member an information card with their name, address and an emergency contact number on it.
- Arrange a **phone number** right away
- **Free donations of furniture and household items** – please see attached forms with instructions on receiving free donations of furniture and household items for newly arrived refugee families. Please contact your SAH (Sponsorship Agreement Holder) representative to assist with this process.

- **Bus Passes** – please email the names of the refugees, their address, and phone number, along with the date of their arrival in Nova Scotia to Annemarie Van Vuren at ISANS (avanvuren@isans.ca). She will forward the information with the city to receive free bus passes for the refugees first year in Halifax.
- Get **Apartment Insurance**

FORMS / APPLICATIONS TO COMPLETE

1. Medical Services Insurance (MSI) provides coverage for doctors and hospital services, available for Permanent Residents after they arrive in Canada. The applicant will need to bring their Permanent Resident card and a confirmation of residency. There is more information on MSI at the back of this package.

Contact MSI:

Toll-free: **1.800.563.8880** (in Nova Scotia)

Phone: 902.496.7008

Fax: 902.481.3160

Telephone hours: Monday through Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm

Mailing address:

PO Box 500, Halifax NS B3J 2S1

Location address:

230 Brownlow Avenue, Dartmouth NS, for same day service

2. Interim Federal Health (IFH) will be given by CIC. There is more information on IFH at the back of this package.

Call **1.888.242.2100** if the family did not get this document at the Toronto airport, or speak to your SAH.

3. Social Insurance Card (SIN) is an identification card that allows you to apply for GST Credit, Child Tax Benefit, etc. Your card should arrive in two weeks. Everyone has a different number and it is illegal to use a number that is not yours. If the card gets lost, report it to the police and Service Canada.

To apply, complete application at Service Canada: <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/cgi-bin/sc-srch.cgi?cmd=lst&pv=ns&ln=eng>

To apply in person, bring **original** immigration documents to Service Canada

4. GST Tax Credit is a program to help people with low incomes. If they qualify, the applicant will receive a cheque 4 times each year.

To apply, complete form RC151 on Revenue Canada website www.cra-arc.gc.ca, and mail to tax centre in your area.

The applicant must be: 19 or older; a permanent resident; have a SIN number, provide date of birth; date of marriage (if applicable) and spouses' SIN number (if applicable); report on any income earned for last 3 years; and have banking information ready. Must complete income tax each April.

For more information, go to <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/gsthst/menu-eng.html>

5. Canada Child Tax Benefit (if applicable) is a monthly payment to help support families with children under 18. How much the family gets depends on the income, number and ages of children. Usually the mother receives the payment.

To apply look for forms on Revenue Canada website: www.cra.gc.ca

Applicant must provide children and parents' landing documents, children's birth certificates (if available) and family income documents.

To continue receiving this benefit, both the husband and wife must file their income taxes each April. If the family receives a letter from Revenue Canada, follow up immediately as this may lead to suspension of payments.

For more information, go to <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/cctb/menu-eng.html>

6. A Useful resource is the Benefit Finder - <http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca/>

Click on Language, Start Now, Put details about Refugee Family/Principal Applicant, Select benefits

APARTMENT ORIENTATION - YOU NEED TO:

- Give a basic apartment orientation, including fridge, stove, oven and other appliances, thermostat and intercom.
- Show how to use the laundry.
- Show how to use the mailbox.
- Discuss the rules of the apartment building, such as quiet hours, visitors, parking
- Explain the fire alarm and emergency fire evacuation.
- Show how to use the phone for emergencies, phone cards and phone book.
- Explain garbage and recycling rules.
- Give an orientation to the neighbourhood, pharmacies, stores, post office, etc.

BANKING - YOU NEED TO:

- Make an appointment with the bank most convenient for the family.
- Arrange for interpretation (as needed).
- Explain the basic banking services and charges before the appointments.
- Make sure that the family signs up for the accounts that are the best for them.
- Show how to use a bank machine.
- Review financial support and make sure the family understands.

OTHER APPOINTMENTS - YOU NEED TO:

- Review personal information (name, address, phone number, emergency contact information) with the family.
- Book an appointment at ISANS for intake. The intake counsellor will make referrals to English assessment, ISANS orientation and employment counselling. Call 902.423.3607. Bring PR confirmation to this meeting.
- Make an appointment for language assessment. In Halifax, call Language Assessment Services of Nova Scotia at 902.431.8675. Outside of Halifax, call Margaret Ryan at 902.464 .2868.
- Meet YMCA school support worker for children's school registration

Healthcare Information For Privately Sponsored Refugees

Health Card / MSI / Medical Services Insurance

- Canadian Universal Health Care is FREE for all Canadians; in NS it is called MSI
- Permanent Residents (i.e. privately sponsored refugees) can apply immediately after arrival to Nova Scotia
- MSI covers basic healthcare (visit to doctor and / or hospital)
- A Health Card is needed at doctor appointments, pharmacy and emergency departments

IFHP Interim Federal Health Plan

- IFHP covers the cost of most medications and some equipment for the 1st year, as well as basic eye and dental appointments for all refugees

- Upon arrival of the privately sponsored refugees, the SAH representative contacts the local office of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to receive the IFHP certificate
- To qualify for coverage – refugees MUST USE REGISTERED PROVIDERS (this means the dentist, pharmacist, etc. must already be registered with IFHP.) Most service providers OUTSIDE HRM ARE NOT REGISTERED. We recommend contacting the local providers ahead of the refugee's arrival to request they register with IFHP
- For services, PRIOR-APPROVAL with IFHP is required
- It is important to bring IFHP document the first time the refugee is visiting a family doctor's office, or hospital, or going for an eye or dental appointment. Usually, they will make a copy of this document for their file so that they know that the refugee is covered under IFHP
- If you or the refugee pay for prescriptions yourselves, you will not be reimbursed
- Please try to set aside a small reserve of funds for the sponsorship for medications not covered by IFHP, should the refugee need them
- Refugee will need to pay for over the counter medications and drugs without prescription
- Prenatal vitamins are covered

Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program

Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program is a provincial drug insurance plan to help Nova Scotians with the cost of their prescription drugs. The program protects against drug costs for families who have no drug coverage or if the cost of the prescription drugs is too much to pay. The program is available to all Nova Scotians with a NS Health Card.

To be eligible for the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program, you must:

- Be a permanent resident of Nova Scotia with a NS Health Card
- Agree to family income verification through Canada Revenue Agency each year
- Agree to provide family size information each year

There is no cost to join the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program. If you do not need any prescriptions, you will not have to pay anything

All participants who are registered in the Nova Scotia Pharmacare Program will have to pay a part of the cost of certain prescription drugs and devices covered under the program. The program has yearly family copayment and deductible maximums that are set depending on a family's size and annual income.

Specific questions about individual situations can be answered by calling toll-free **1.800.544.6191**

| Task | Detail | Who |
|--|--|------------|
| Housing | Set-up room / housing for family | |
| Furniture & Household Items | Find, coordinate, store items from wish list | |
| Utilities, Power, Phone, Internet | Set up in apartment | |
| Food Shop | Buy important things for family | |
| Clothing Shop | Collect donations of and purchase winter clothes | |
| Airport Arrival | Provide transportation from airport to apartment | |
| Medical | Set up initial doctor & dentist appointments | |
| Budgeting | Accompany family to bank to open an account, how to live within monthly budget | |
| Documents | Help with completing forms (complete list on page 4 of this guide) | |
| Registration at ISANS & EAL Assessment | Make appointment and go with family | |
| Orientation topics | Explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency procedures (calling 911, fire, etc.) • Medical emergencies • Bus System • Apartment • Neighbourhood • Services – food banks, etc. • Recreation – parks, etc. • Libraries | |
| Social Events | Invite family to dinner, to community events | |
| Orientation topics | Explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying the travel loan • Paying taxes | |
| Job Search | Help with finding jobs | |