

Privately Refugee Sponsorship

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Financial

1. In kind or monetary donation, which is acceptable?

Both - money helps for sponsorship costs such as food and transportation, and in-kind donations of housing can reduce overall fundraising.

2. What are the start-up costs for?

The start-up costs are for basic necessities like clothing, furniture, utilities connection, school supplies, food staples, basic household items, etc.

3. Are contributions tax deductible?

Some people might ask for a charitable receipt. Depending on the SAH you are working with financial donations may be tax deductible.

4. What is the travel loan?

A travel loan is provided to refugees by the Canadian government to cover the costs of travel. Refugees receive their first bill 6 months after arrival in Canada and must pay a monthly installment.

5. How do we distribute or pay out the money we raise for the refugees?

The funds are divided into a monthly income, similar to what Government Assisted Refugees receive and similar to income assistance monthly income support. This is deposited into the refugee's account which is opened after their arrival in Canada.

6. Are we raising or providing enough money for refugees to live on?

The sponsorship amounts are comparable to what income assistance recipients receive. In most cases, these monthly amounts are not realistic to live off. Refugees and income assistance recipients must be very creative and resourceful (and as sponsors you will need to assist with this orientation) on how to supplement their monthly income (e.g. food banks, soup kitchens, collective shopping and meal preparations, cultivating a garden, etc.). Encouraging employment (when ready) is going to be very helpful in terms of assisting the refugees.

7. Do we have to raise all the money before the refugee arrives?

This depends on the Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) and their particular criteria around funding. Please refer to your SAH for further information.

8. Can I be located in another province if I wish to provide the funding for the sponsorship group?

You can be located anywhere in Canada to provide funding for the sponsorship group. However, the group members providing the settlement support must be located in the community where the refugee will settle.

9. Who covers medical costs?

When refugees arrive in Canada they are automatically considered permanent residents. In Nova Scotia they immediately qualify for MSI. Some privately sponsored refugees can also receive the Interim Health Program (IFHP) which provides basic dental, vision and pharmacy coverage for the first year.

10. Can refugees qualify for social assistance?

They cannot receive social assistance for the first year, as the financial support must come from the sponsorship group. If they cannot find work at the end of the first year of sponsorship, then they can apply for income assistance.

Donations

1. Is ISANS accepting donations immediately?

Yes, please visit: www.isans.ca/about/making-a-donation

Refugees Process

1. Where do refugees come from, do they need to be in a refugee camp to be eligible for sponsorship?

Refugees do not always come from a refugee camp; refugees often have rural and/or urban livelihoods.

2. Can a group express their preference for a refugee?

A group can look at the list of people who are ready for sponsoring and decide whom they wish to sponsor.

Process of Refugee Sponsorship

1. Is there a list of all SAHs?

Yes, please visit: www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/sponsor/list-sponsors.asp

2. Is BVOR the fastest way to bring a refugee?

The Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) Program has historically been the fastest way to bring refugees to Canada. However, sponsoring of other refugees seems to be speeding up.

3. How is community defined? How big geographically?

For the purposes of private refugee sponsorship, a community is defined as the geographic location that your sponsorship group resides in and can reasonably travel to.

Employment

1. How successful are refugees with gaining employment, once they arrive to Canada?

The answer to this question depends on a number of factors: the language that the refugees speak; their former work experience; and available local job opportunities. In general, refugees have shown themselves to be hard workers who are looking to contribute to their new home and to participate in the new job market as soon as they can.