

Frequently Asked Questions



Child and Women's Health Diversity Program
2008

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Health care professionals need to respond in a timely manner to the needs of the families they work with. Sometimes professionals require information that might be related to immigration issues and healthcare. The purpose of the FAQ document is to support health care professionals with a quick reference guide and to direct them to appropriate resources and services. This may ensure effective service delivery while acting as a means to remove barriers.

This document contains an extensive section outlining and describing the Immigration and Refugee process. This section was not originally planned because the focus of the project is on health care questions that arise when supporting new immigrants and refugees. However, it became apparent that including this information would be beneficial for increasing Health Care Professionals' knowledge.

Having this knowledge is beneficial for many reasons. Some of the reasons include:

- It has been recognized that the immigration and refugee process can be stressful (Potocky-Tripodi, 2002, p.256). This experience can potentially impact people's health and may be the reason why they are seeking health care services.
- Different categories and classes of immigrants and refugees receive health care coverage and support from different sources (for example Alberta Health care or the Interim Federal Health Program- please read document for further details). This may affect the overall health service process, in terms of what services and medications are covered and how claims are made to receive financial support.

Also, a few definitions were added for the reader's convenience.

Note: As information and procedures change, it is possible for the information provided in this guide to become out of date. Please refer to the resources provided regularly to ensure you remain informed and up to date.

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For further information please contact Linda Kongnetiman (Child and Women's Health Diversity Program Coordinator) at:
(403) 955-7742 or Linda.kongnetiman@calgaryhealthregion.ca

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Important Information about Citizenship, Immigration and Refugees

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC): “has the overall responsibility for immigration and refugee matters. CIC determines claims for refugee protection made abroad at Canadian embassies and consulates. It is responsible for selecting immigrants, issuing visitors' Visas, and granting citizenship. It is also CIC that determines the eligibility of all refugee protection claims made in Canada and refers eligible claims to the IRB for a decision.”

(Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2006)

The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB): “is responsible for making well-reasoned decisions on immigration and refugee matters, efficiently, fairly and in accordance with the law. The IRB decides, among other responsibilities, who needs refugee protection among the thousands of claimants who come to Canada annually.”

(Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2006)

Immigration and Refugee Protection Act: “An Act respecting immigration to Canada and the granting of refugee protection to persons who are displaced, persecuted or in danger.”

(Department of Justice Canada, 2008)

Immigration: The concept of immigration concerns the movement of nationals of any given country to another country for the purpose of settlement. It applies to a person who has been granted the right to permanently live in Canada by immigration authorities. It usually applies to persons born outside Canada but may also apply to a small number of persons born inside Canada to parents who are foreign nationals. Similarly, some small number of persons who are Canadian by birth have been born outside Canada to Canadian parents. Once a person has been accorded immigrant status it becomes a life-long attribute as long as the person lives in Canada. Therefore, immigrants are often further classified by period of immigration in order to distinguish between recent immigrants and earlier immigrants.

***Note:** The rights of immigrants mentioned are immediate rights. The right to citizenship is not granted immediately.

(Statistics Canada, 2006)

Immigrant categories:

Skilled Workers and Professionals: “Skilled workers have education, work experience, knowledge of English or French, and other abilities that will help them to establish themselves successfully as permanent residents in Canada.”

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed persons: “The Business Immigration Program seeks to attract experienced business people to Canada who will support the development of a strong and prosperous Canadian economy.”

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

The Family Class: “Sponsored by a family member already living in Canada as a permanent resident or Canadian citizen. Sponsors are responsible for financially supporting their relatives whom they have sponsored. A person may sponsor a spouse, partner, dependent child or another relative. There are groups or relatives that are not eligible to be sponsored.”

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Provincial Nominees: “Persons who immigrate to Canada under the Provincial Nominee Program have the skills, education and work experience needed to make an immediate economic contribution to the province or territory that nominates them.”

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Refugee: “Refugees and people needing protection are those in or outside Canada who fear returning to their home country. [...] Canada offers refugee protection to people in Canada who fear persecution or who may be at risk of torture or cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, and are unwilling or unable to return to their home country.”

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Temporary Foreign Worker: Employers help determine if an employee is eligible. Employers may need to get a labour market opinion from Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC). A labour market opinion confirms that the employer can fill the job with a foreign worker. To work in Canada, one must meet the general requirements for entering the country and for staying here, in addition to those for getting a work permit. This means a temporary resident visa might be needed. Some temporary workers require a work permit and some do not.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Refugee Classification:

Convention Refugees: A Convention Refugee is a person who is outside of their home country or the country where they normally live, and who cannot return because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on:

- race;
- religion;
- political opinion;
- nationality; or
- membership in a particular social group, such as women or people of a particular sexual orientation.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Person in need of Protection: A person in need of protection is a person in Canada, who is afraid to return to their home country or the country where they normally live, because of:

- a risk of torture;
- a risk to their life; or
- a risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Refugee claimant: Is an individual who has made a claim for protection to Canada. The claim may be made inside or outside of Canada.

(Department of Justice, 2008)

Permanent Resident:

- Remain a citizen of their home country

Permanent residents and their dependants have the right:

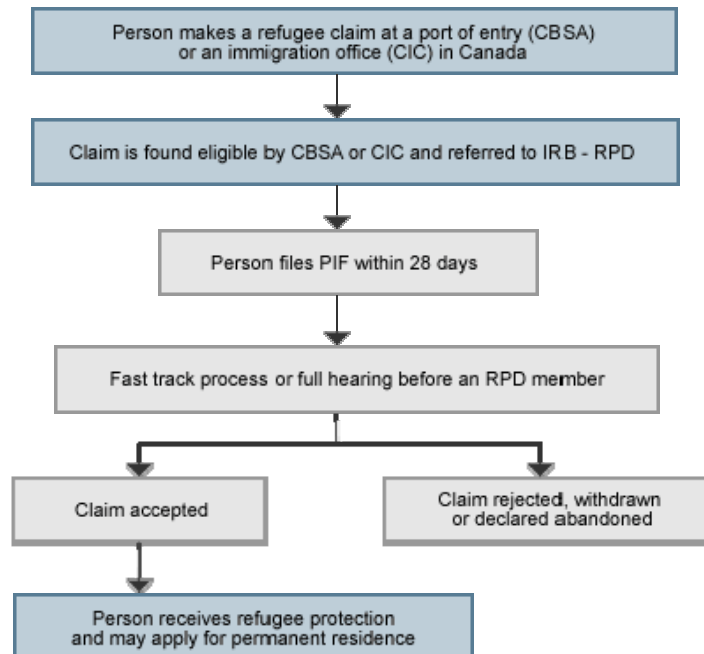
- To receive most social benefits that Canadian citizens receive, including health care coverage
- To live, work or study anywhere in Canada
- To apply for Canadian citizenship
- To protection under Canadian law and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- They must pay taxes, and respect all Canadian laws at the federal, provincial and municipal levels.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Non-permanent Residents: “They hold the visa or other document required under the regulations and will leave Canada by the end of the period authorized for their stay.”

(Department of Justice Canada, 2008)

The Refugee Process



("Process for Making a Claim for Refugee Protection", Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2007)

Important definitions for the above diagram:

Ports of entry: a border crossing, an airport or a seaport

CBSA: Canada Border Services Agency

CIC: Canada Immigration Centre

PIF: Personal Information Form, which must be completed within 28 days

RPD: Refugee Protection Division

The refugee claimant has the burden of proof. This means that the claimant must show that the claim is eligible for refugee protection

Once the PIF is received, the IRB then reviews each claim to determine the fairest and most efficient way to come to a decision about it. The IRB considers many factors, including the country the claim is made against and the nature of the claim itself. The IRB then assigns the claim to one of three possible ways to decide the claim:

1. A fast-track expedited process is used for claims from certain countries or for certain types of claims. A Refugee Protection Officer (RPO) interviews the claimant and makes a recommendation. A Refugee Protection Division member then makes a decision.
2. A fast-track hearing is held for claims that appear to be simple because they may be decided on the basis of one or two issues. A RPO does not attend these hearings
3. A full hearing is held for claims that involve more than two issues and may be complex. Full hearings follow the IRB tribunal process.

* The length of time to complete the process varies, however as the names of the three processes indicate the fast-track expedited process is much faster than a full hearing.

If the IRB determines that the claimant is entitled to refugee protection in Canada, the person may apply to CIC to become a permanent resident.

If the IRB determines that the claimant is not a Convention refugee or person in need of protection, he or she may ask the Federal Court of Canada for leave, or permission, for judicial review of the IRB decision. If permission is granted and the judicial review is allowed, the claim is returned to the RPD for re-hearing. Minister's counsel may also apply for leave, or permission, for a judicial review of any IRB decision. Unsuccessful claimants may have other options, such as requesting a pre-removal risk assessment from CIC.

(Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2007)

Immigrant Selection

Applicants are assessed on selection factors (established criteria used to evaluate applicants. The example below illustrates this) and a point system.

Skilled Worker Applicant

Selection factors	Points
Education	Maximum 25 points
Ability in English and/or French	Maximum 24 points
Experience	Maximum 21 points
Age	Maximum 10 points
Arranged employment in Canada	Maximum 10 points
Adaptability	Maximum 10 points
Total	Maximum 100 points
Pass mark	67 points

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Do you think you would pass? To find out, you can try the skilled worker self-assessment at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/assess/index.asp>

Family Class

The application process involves two steps:

1. A citizen or permanent resident of Canada applies to sponsor their family.
2. Their spouse, common-law or conjugal partner, or dependent children must then apply for permanent residence.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Investors, Entrepreneurs, and the Self-Employed

- the simplified application process and
- the regular application process.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Provincial Nominee

To come to Canada as a provincial nominee, applicant must first be nominated by a province or territory. Each province or territory has its own nomination procedures.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007)

Health Care Coverage

When can an immigrant qualify for government programs?

Canada has a public health insurance system, known as Medicare. All individuals and members of a family should apply for their provincial healthcare card *as soon as they arrive in Canada*.

All Canadian citizens and permanent residents are eligible for Medicare. In some provinces, temporary workers, students and others who are in Canada temporarily may also be eligible. In most provinces, people will receive coverage as soon as you apply for your health card. People claiming refugee status who are needy or living in a province with a three-month eligibility waiting period (British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick) can get emergency or essential health-care services through the Interim Federal Health Program.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2007) encourages people to purchase their own private health insurance. The private health insurance covers health services not covered by provincial health care. Individuals arriving in provinces where there is a three month waiting period for provincial health coverage are particularly encouraged to purchase private health insurance.

There is also the Interim Federal Health Program (IFH). This is outlined below.

(Citizenship and Immigration in Canada, 2005)

What coverage do refugee/ refugee claimants have?

- “Depending on the province of destination, the waiting period for provincial health-care coverage can be as much as 90 days after the refugee has arrived in the province. Once provincial coverage has started, refugees are still eligible for partial benefits under the Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program for up to 12 months from the time of their arrival in Canada.”
- Refugees (Permanent Residents) are eligible for Alberta Health Care, but must pay the premiums. They are also eligible for Interim Federal Health Program (IFH) for the 1-2 year term of their sponsorship.
- Refugee claimants (non-Permanent Residents) become eligible for Alberta Health Care when they are “found” to be a refugee. Until then, they qualify for the IFH Program.

(Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, 2006)

What is the Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program?

“The Interim Federal Health Program (IFH) is designed to provide temporary medical coverage for certain immigrants in need of assistance during their settlement period in Canada prior to their eligibility for provincial health-care coverage”

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2003)

Who is eligible for IFH program coverage?

Privately sponsored refugees who are accepted for resettlement in Canada are eligible for the IFH Program. Privately sponsored refugees are advised to contact their local Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) office to apply for IFH coverage.

Refugees who are able to pay for their own health-care services or who are covered by a private health-care plan are not eligible for IFH coverage.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2003)

How does an immigrant or refugee sign-up for IFH Program coverage?

At the first point of contact with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), or as soon as possible after, refugees will be assessed to determine their need for health care coverage. If eligible, they will be issued a photograph-bearing document for health coverage. For the most part, the documents will be valid for 12 months, although this period may vary.

(IFH program “Information Handbook for Health Care Providers”, p.1)

What does the IFH Program (Interim Federal Health Program) cover?

Until provincial health insurance is available, all resettled refugees may receive the following benefits from the IFH Program, as required:

- essential and emergency health services for:
 - the treatment and prevention of serious medical conditions; and
 - the treatment of emergency dental conditions;
- contraception, prenatal and obstetrical care;
- approved prescription medications, and
- the cost of an immigration medical examination by a designated medical practitioner (DMP) when the refugee is unable to pay.

For the first 12 months in Canada (or longer if Resettlement Assistance Program is extended), other types of benefits may be provided with the proper pre-authorization, for example:

- eye glasses;
- prostheses;

continued...

- wheelchairs;
- second and subsequent psychiatric consultations; and
- routine medical examinations.

(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2003)

For detailed information about the Interim Federal Health Program please refer to sections 6.23 and 10 of the “Inland Processing (IP)-3 manual, part 1 (General)”, which is accessible through <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/ip/ip03e-part1.pdf>

How does a refugee claimant requiring a wheelchair and not eligible for Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH), but covered by IFH Program receive coverage or approval?

An individual would go to their Health Care Professional. If the Health Care Professional feels a wheelchair is required, the appropriate forms are completed and submitted to the IFH Program for prior approval.

When does a refugee’s IFH coverage get transferred to the provincial health care programs?

Refugees’ coverage is transferred to Alberta Health Care after the 1-2 years of their sponsorship.

Which Immigrant categories are eligible for Alberta Health Care? Are there premiums?

Skilled workers, family class and refugees (permanent residents) are eligible for Alberta Health Care (AHC). The premiums are: \$88.00/month for a family and \$44.00/month for a single person.

Which health care program covers dental work?

The IFH Program only covers emergency dental services. Please see “The Information Handbook for Health Care Providers”. A link is provided in the “Resources” section.

Alberta Health Care (AHC) covers dental services for others. The Calgary Health Region offers reduced-fee dental care for children and adults, who are residents of the CHR, live on a poverty-line income and have no access to a group dental insurance plan. The poverty line varies depending on annual income and family size and is outlined in the program brochure. Please see “Calgary Health Region Community Dental Clinics” listed in the “Resources” section.

(Calgary Health Region Community Oral Health, 2007)

What happens if a couple comes to Canada under the skilled or refugee class, but has a child while in Canada? What programs provide the family coverage?

All are covered by Alberta Health Care. “Alberta Health Benefits for Children” (0-18 years) is available for low-income families. This covers dental, eye, medications, ambulance services, and diabetic supplies.

It should be noted, because the child’s parents are foreign nationals, not Canadian, the child will have to go through the immigration process to become a Canadian (as interpreted from the description of immigration on page 4 of this document).

How do we access another province or country’s health care program?

To clarify, we have interpreted this question as meaning: “how do health care professionals in Alberta access another province’s or country’s health insurance plan for a patient who is a resident outside of Alberta”.

Individuals are covered by the health insurance plan of their province or territory of residence. Usually people are covered by the province’s health insurance plan as soon as they apply. For people claiming refugee status residing in provinces where there is a 3-month waiting period (British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick). There are emergency or essential health-care services available through the Interim Federal Health Program.

(Citizenship and Immigration in Canada, 2005)

What happens if a family does not have status or no health care coverage?

Currently, Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS) provides health services for individuals/families without status or coverage in Calgary.

CUPS Community Health Centre
128 – 7 Ave SE
Calgary, Alberta
T2G 0H5
403-221-8780 (p)
403-221-8791 (f)

At this time the Alex Community Health Centre is not able to provide health services for individuals/families that do not have coverage.

*** Note:** *some refugees are sponsored by organizations such as church groups, and receive assistance/support from them. Health Care Professionals should be aware that a member of the sponsoring group might accompany a refugee to an appointment.*

Patients without documentation

How do you determine the age of refugee children who have no documentation to show their age?

- a. The physicians go by cue from the parents. They will then estimate the age of the child and provide them with a birth date of January 1st of the year they arrived in Calgary
- b. If the child has some health concerns they might request a bone scan through radiology. A bone scan test determines the relative maturity of a child's skeletal system and is compared to other children's, whose chronological age is known.

(Dr. Hull.com, Bone age test)



Support services

Where can refugees go to receive health services in Calgary?

The Calgary Refugee Health Program provides health services for refugees in their first year after arrival in Canada. The program is based in the Margaret Chisholm Resettlement Centre, and is a partnership between the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, independent physicians, the Calgary Health Region, Alberta Health and Wellness and Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

What is the target population for the Calgary Refugee Health Program?

- Federally-sponsored refugees
- Community-sponsored refugees
- Immigrants from refugee-like situations (e.g. family class immigrants from areas with refugee sponsorship)
- Refugee claimants

What services does the Calgary Refugee Health Program provide?

- Medical Clinic- open Monday to Friday, by appointment
- Specialist Clinics (Pediatrics, Dietician, Obstetrics and Psychiatry)
- Screening- for infectious diseases and other health concerns
- Vaccinations
- Health Promotion Programs (healthy eating, prenatal care, and parenting)
- Interpreters (on-site and over the phone)
- Authorizations for special medications and services
- Referrals to hospital and community programs and services

The program accepts refugees who self-refer as well as referrals from other health professionals

For contact information, please see the Resources section

What service provides support for families which include a child with a disability?

The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program provides family-centered services to assist families in helping their children achieve their potential.

What support does FSCD provide?

1. *Family Support Services* include: counseling, respite services, medical appointment supports, out-of-province medical appointment supports, clothing and footwear (disability related).

Continued...

2. *Child Focused Services* include: respite services, child care supports, aide supports, health-related supports, specialized services for children with severe disabilities, and out-of home living arrangements.

Who is potentially eligible to receive FSCD support?

- Children with a disability under the age of 18 years
- The child must be a Canadian Citizen or permanent resident of Canada and reside in Alberta
- Parents responsible for the child are the only caregivers eligible to apply.

For contact information, please see the Resources section



Resources

Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA)

- Directory of agencies for the province of Alberta
Website: www.aaisa.ca

Alberta Health and Wellness: About Alberta Health Care Insurance

Website: <http://www.health.gov.ab.ca/ahcip/AHCIP.html>

Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission

Website: <http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/>

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)

- Operates the Margaret Chisholm Resettlement Centre (MCRC), which includes the Calgary Refugee Health Program (information below) onsite
Phone: (403) 262-2006
Address: 3rd Floor, 120 - 17 Avenue SW T2S 2T2
Website: www.ccis-calgary.ab.ca

Calgary Health Region Community Dental Clinics

- Reduced-fee dental care for families in financial need
- To apply, the following information is required: a completed income assessment form (available online), completed form to confirm dental coverage is not received from elsewhere (online), and Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada
- The online brochure contains detailed information about the program
Phone: 22-TEETH (228-3384)
Address: City Hall Dental Clinic- 323 - 7th Avenue SE
Northeast Dental Clinic #200, 2580-32 Street NE
Airdrie 604 Main Street S
Website: www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/dental
Select: Reduced-fee dental care on the left menu

Calgary Immigrant Aid Society *please refer to Immigrant Services Calgary below*

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association (CIWA)

- Non-profit organization to address the needs and concerns of immigrant and refugee women, youth, children, and families in Calgary.
- Provides Settlement and Integration services
- Health services include: Immigrant Women's Cervical Cancer Screenings Project; Diabetes Prevention Project; Individual Counselling for Senior Immigrant Women (women of all ages, their families, and youth); Best Beginnings Partnership (CHR); Home Visitation Program Partnership with Healthy Families
Phone: (403) 263-4414
Address: **CIWA Head Office**
200, 138 - 4th Avenue SE
Calgary, AB T2G 4Z6
Website: <http://www.ciwa-online.com/>

Calgary Refugee Health Program

Phone: (403) 265-3410

Fax: (403) 265-3411

Address: Margaret Chisholm Resettlement Centre
23 McDougall Court NE, Calgary, AB T2E 8R3

Website: www.ccis-calgary.ab.ca

Canada Health Act

Website: http://hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/nr-cp/2002/2002_care-soinsbk4_e.html

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Website: http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/const/annex_e.html#

Centre for Newcomers

- The Centre for Newcomers is a place where newcomers to Canada find connections in Calgary.
- The Family Development Program, offered through Settlement Services, includes: Discussions on health and nutrition, schooling and education, discipline and family rules, adapting to Canadian culture while respecting your own traditions, raising successful kids and more!
- Some languages spoken include: Arabic (Middle East), Sudanese, Cantonese, Farsi, French, Hindi-Urdu-Bengali, Punjabi-Nepali, Spanish, and Vietnamese group sessions

Phone: Phone 403-569-3325

Address: Centre for Newcomers
#125 920 36 Street NE
Calgary, AB T2A 6L8

Website: www.centrefornewcomers.ca/

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)

The Department of Citizenship and Immigration:

- admits immigrants, foreign students, visitors and temporary workers who enhance Canada's social and economic growth;
- resettles, protects and provides a safe haven for refugees;
- helps newcomers adapt to Canadian society and become Canadian citizens; and
- manages access to Canada

Call-Centre: **1 888 242-2100** (in Canada only)

Agents are available: **Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, your local time, except for statutory holidays

Address: Case Processing Centre
6212-55th Avenue
Vegreville, AB
T9C 1W5

Website: <http://cic.gc.ca/>

Interim Federal Health Program (IFH)

For detailed information about the Interim Federal Health Program please refer to sections 6.23 and 10 of the “Inland Processing (IP)-3 manual, part 1 (General)”, which is accessible through

Website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/manuals/ip/ip03e-part1.pdf>

Administrator of the IFH Program

Website: www.fasadmin.com

Medications covered by the IFH Program

Website: <http://fasadmin.com/druglist.asp?language=english&SearchCriteria>

IFH program “Information Handbook for Health Care Providers”

The information in this document would be valuable for Health Care Providers

Website: http://www.fasadmin.com/images/pdf/ifh_information_handbook.pdf

Family Support for Children with Disabilities Program (FSCD)

- Family Support for Children with Disabilities Act
http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca/documents/Acts/F05P3.cfm?frm_isbn=0779728122
- In Calgary, FSCD services are provided by the Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority

FSCD intake line: (403) 297-6022 (Calgary and area)

Website: <http://www.calgaryandareacfsa.gov.ab.ca>

- Family Support for Children with Disabilities is listed on the left menu, under services

Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC) (formerly Calgary Immigrant Aid Society)

- Offers Settlement services, including applying for health benefits
- Coordinates a variety of workshops in several languages, including Health Services in Calgary and Health benefits
- ILVARC: a centralized assessment and referral centre designed to help immigrants and refugees achieve their linguistic, educational, vocational, and career goals. ILVARC is also authorized to determine clients’ eligibility for the federally sponsored Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. Services are provided by appointment only.

Website: <http://www.immigrantservicescalgary.ca/>

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB)

Website: http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/index_e.htm

Tribunal process

Website: http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/references/procedures/index_e.htm

Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (2001)

Website: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/l-2.5/index.html>

Key Immigrant Serving Organizations across Canada

This online listing compiled by Immigration and Citizenship Canada provides the names and contact information for Immigrant Serving Organizations that may be able to provide you with further information or provide support to your patients

Website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/welcome/wel-20e.asp#tphp>

Private Health Insurance for New Immigrants

This online listing provides contact information for a few Private Insurance Companies. The organization is based in Ontario, where there is a 3 month waiting period before individuals can receive provincial health care coverage. Therefore the 5 day deadline may not be applicable in Alberta.

Website: http://www.settlement.org/sys/library_detail.asp?doc_id=1003775

Welcome to Alberta: Information for Immigrants

- Publication available on the internet

Website: <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/pdf/cshop/welcometoalberta.pdf>

Glossary

Calgary Refugee Health Program: provides health services for refugees in their first year after arrival in Canada.

CBSA: Canada Border Services Agency

CIC: Canada Immigration Centre

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC): has the overall responsibility for immigration and refugee matters

ESL: English as a Second Language

Family Support for Children with Disabilities Program (FSCD): Family-centered services to assist families in helping their child with a disability to achieve their potential.

ILVARC: Immigrant Language and Vocational Assessment-Referral Centre

Immigration: The concept of immigration concerns the movement of nationals of any given country to another country for the purpose of settlement

The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB): “is responsible for making well-reasoned decisions on immigration and refugee matters, efficiently, fairly and in accordance with the law.

Immigration and Refugee Protection Act: “An Act respecting immigration to Canada and the granting of refugee protection to persons who are displaced, persecuted or in danger”.

Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program: is designed to provide temporary medical coverage for certain immigrants in need of assistance during their settlement period in Canada prior to their eligibility for provincial health-care coverage

LINC: Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

Medicare: Canada’s public health insurance system.

PIF: Personal Information Form, which must be completed within 28 days

Ports of entry: a border crossing, an airport or a seaport

RAP: Resettlement Assistance Program

Refugee: “Refugees and people needing protection are those in or outside Canada who fear returning to their home country. [...] Canada offers refugee protection

RPD: Refugee Protection Division

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Appendix

Eligibility for Specific Resettlement Services According to Immigrant Category- April 6, 2006 (Courtesy of Calgary Catholic Immigration Society)

Categories of Immigrant	Financial Assistance	Subsidized Housing	ESL Classes	Alberta Health Care	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)
Skilled Workers (Economic Class)	Are self-sponsored; can apply after personal financial resources are used up.	Can apply after personal finances are used up.	Can apply if they have: Permanent Resident Status. Not a Canadian citizen.	Are eligible, must pay Alberta Health Care premiums.	Can apply if they have: Severe disability that is permanent and substantially limits ability to earn a living.
Family class	Can apply after 3-10 years term of the family sponsorship is finished. Can apply if sponsorship breakdown occurs, but sponsor must repay funds to Alberta Social Services.	Can apply after 3-10 years term of the family sponsorship is finished.	Pre-tested at ILVARC. 16 years or older Not in regular high school. Have not already received 1200 hours of full or part-time LINC training. Should complete in first 3 years in Canada. Should complete training before applying for other non-LINC ESL programs.	Same as above	18 years or older. Permanent Resident Status Income and asset tested program. Are not eligible for AOS.

Continued...

Categories of Immigrant	Financial Assistance	Subsidized Housing	ESL Classes	Alberta Health Care	AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped)
Refugees (Permanent Residents)	Can apply after 1-2 year sponsorship is finished. Sponsors in first 1-2 years are Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), churches or Groups of Five People.	Can apply upon arrival in Canada, but should be aware of prioritizing of applications by Calgary Housing Company.	Same as above.	Same as above. Are also eligible for Interim Federal Health Program from CIC for the 1-2 year term of their sponsorship.	Same as above.
Refugee Claimants (non Permanent Residents)	Can apply when refugee claim has been determined to be eligible for a hearing with the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB). Are not eligible if found NOT to be a Convention Refugee.	Can apply when their refugee claim has been determined to be eligible for a hearing with the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB).	Become eligible when they are “found” to be a Convention Refugee.	Become eligible when they are “found” to be a refugee. Qualify for Interim Federal Health Program from CIC until they are found to be refugees.	Are not eligible for AISH. Can apply for Alberta Social Services after claim has been determined to be eligible for a hearing with the IRB.

Courtesy of Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

