

Handbook for Refugee Sponsoring Groups

Tips and local resources

to support sponsors in Guelph-Wellington



This handbook is intended to act as a hands-on guide for groups who are sponsoring or are considering sponsoring refugees under Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. It is designed to provide sponsoring groups with detailed, step-by-step tips for the first days and weeks of the resettlement process, and enhance awareness of the range of supports, resources, and services available to them and their sponsored newcomer(s) in Guelph-Wellington.

The handbook is organized chronologically to align with the steps taken by sponsoring groups before arrival of the newcomer(s), on the first day after arrival, during the first week, and the first month. It starts with a series of checklists that can easily be printed and filled, followed by more detailed tips and references to local resources. The handbook concludes with a list of organizations and services available to support sponsoring groups and their sponsored newcomer(s) during and after the resettlement process.

While the need and momentum for the creation of this handbook result primarily from the current Syrian crisis and the enthusiastic response offered by Guelph-Wellington residents seeking to help, the information provided here is relevant more generally to all sponsoring groups, irrespective of the origins or contexts of the newcomer(s) they will help welcome to their new life.

If you have comments regarding the content of this handbook or would like to report any inaccuracies, please contact us at cesi@uoguelph.ca.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This handbook builds extensively on two documents produced to support sponsoring groups, the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program's Handbook for Sponsoring Groups (August 2014) and Lifeline Syria's Sponsorship Handbook (November 2015). These groups have kindly allowed us to use the information they gathered and adapt it to the Guelph-Wellington context.

The authors would also like to thank members of the Advisory Committee informing the creation of this handbook, as well as staff and volunteers from many local organizations who have provided valuable input and guidance throughout this process.

DISCLAIMER

This handbook is intended to offer information to sponsoring groups and others; it does not offer legal advice or counselling. Readers are also advised that the programs and services described in this handbook are subject to change. While the content of this document reflects the resources available at the time of publication, we encourage readers to contact the appropriate organizations for current information.

ATTRIBUTION

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Prior to Arrival

CHECKLIST

DONE?		ASSIGNED TO	COMMENTS
<input type="radio"/>	Discuss your group's expectations for the sponsoring process		
<input type="radio"/>	Arrange temporary housing		
<input type="radio"/>	Start process to find family doctor		
<input type="radio"/>	Provide basic furniture for the home (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Stock home with snacks, food and drinks		
<input type="radio"/>	Prepare orientation binder and have it translated in the newcomer(s)' native language		
<input type="radio"/>	Select small number of group member to meet the newcomer(s) at airport/hotel		
<input type="radio"/>	Arrange interpreter for first meeting (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Determine if newcomer(s) will receive (winter) clothing upon arrival or if the group should bring some		
<input type="radio"/>	Prepare welcome sign for the newcomer(s)		
<input type="radio"/>	Prepare snacks and water to bring to airport/hotel		



First day

CHECKLIST

DONE?	ASSIGNED TO	COMMENTS
At the Airport		
<input type="radio"/>	Greet newcomer(s) at airport/hotel	
<input type="radio"/>	Introduce group and discuss role of sponsors	
<input type="radio"/>	Collect confirmation of permanent residence forms and verify information	
First 24 Hours		
<input type="radio"/>	Present and go through orientation binder	
<input type="radio"/>	Discuss basic safety information in the new home	
<input type="radio"/>	Provide small amount of cash to newcomer(s)	
<input type="radio"/>	Provide a map of surrounding neighbourhood	
<input type="radio"/>	Set up newcomer(s) with a phone	
<input type="radio"/>	Bring newcomer(s) to family doctor, walk-in clinic or the Guelph Community Health Centre if immediate medical assistance is required	



First week

CHECKLIST

DONE?		ASSIGNED TO	COMMENTS
<input type="radio"/>	Take to newcomer(s) to closest settlement service provider		
<input type="radio"/>	Apply to Interim Federal Health Program		
<input type="radio"/>	Apply for Ontario Health Insurance Plan (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Apply for Ontario Photo Card		
<input type="radio"/>	Apply for Social Insurance Number card (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Go grocery shopping		
<input type="radio"/>	Go shop for clothes		
<input type="radio"/>	Explain public transportation		
<input type="radio"/>	Find place of worship (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Show laundromat (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Discuss finances and develop budget		
<input type="radio"/>	Create bank account		
<input type="radio"/>	Apply to Canada Child Tax Benefit (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Register for child care and school (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Set up appointments for vaccinations (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Set up appointment for language assessment		



First month

CHECKLIST

DONE?		ASSIGNED TO	COMMENTS
<input type="radio"/>	Find permanent accommodation		
<input type="radio"/>	Have newcomer(s)' language assessed		
<input type="radio"/>	Enrol in English language classes (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Consider opportunities for informal language practice		
<input type="radio"/>	Discuss educational and employment goals		
<input type="radio"/>	Explore employment services and register for training (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Learn to recognize and support newcomer(s) going through culture shock or integration challenges (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Provide supports and references related to mental health (if applicable)		
<input type="radio"/>	Plan visit to family doctor (if it hasn't taken place earlier)		
<input type="radio"/>	Find dental care provider		
<input type="radio"/>	Help newcomer(s) identify and participate in community activities and volunteer		
<input type="radio"/>	Visit the local library		
<input type="radio"/>	Find opportunities for adults and children to engage in sports and other activities		



Detailed tips and resources

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

It is important to start preparing well in advance of the arrival of the newcomer(s) you are sponsoring.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS AND MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

As your group works its way through the many forms and steps of the sponsorship process, it is crucial that you take some time to discuss each other's understanding of your role, expectations, hopes and fears. Your group will work together for an extended period of time, and will face many ups and downs as you await, welcome, and support newcomers to Guelph and Wellington. To make this a positive experience for all, it is important to identify and address the possible points of tension as early as possible so they do not become issues.

- As a group, spend some time talking about your goals and vision for the sponsorship process. Ask yourselves difficult questions, and make sure everyone is on the same page. Remember that tension and differences of opinions are not unhealthy, but can help you learn and evolve as a group. If you disagree on certain elements, discuss them extensively, and try to find solutions that are acceptable to all.
- Money, and the level of comfort that the group is planning to offer to the newcomer(s), can be a particularly sensitive topic. As a group, decide (for example):
 - *What kind of housing do you want to provide? Should each child have their own bedroom?*
 - *Will the furniture be new? Used?*
 - *Should the family live at a standard that they will be able to maintain after the sponsorship period? Or should they receive more funding during this first year in order to build a cushion for later?*
 - *What kinds of electronic devices are you willing to provide? Will all adults have cellphones, or is a landline sufficient?*
- Come up with hypothetical scenarios, and explore how different members of the group feel about these situations. For example:
 - *What will you do if the newcomer(s) decide that they want to go back home?*
 - *What if the newcomer(s) need more money to meet their needs?*
 - *What will you do if other sponsoring groups offer more funding to their sponsored newcomer(s), creating tension between newcomers?*

- Meet with others who have sponsored newcomers in the past, to learn from their experience and make sure you have a good sense of what to expect.
- Attend some training sessions or workshops to help you prepare:
 - *The **Refugee Sponsorship Training Program** offers face-to-face training, live webinars, and recorded sessions on various topics such as managing expectations and settlement responsibilities.*
- Consider drafting a letter summarizing your roles and responsibilities as sponsors as well as what you will be doing for/with the sponsored newcomer(s) – based on your group's decisions. Send it to the newcomer(s) prior to their arrival in Canada so they know what to expect and can prepare accordingly.

HOUSING

It is typically recommended to wait until the newcomer(s) arrive in Canada before securing permanent accommodation for them. It can be difficult to predict their exact arrival date, and delays in travel plans could cause you to waste an important part of your budget on renting an empty apartment. Moreover, it can be hard to know in advance what will matter most to the newcomer(s) when choosing housing (i.e. location, size, amenities), and they may appreciate being involved in that process.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

- There are many ways to secure temporary accommodation for the newcomer(s). First, your sponsoring group could start by working your networks. A group member, family or friend may have a basement apartment or extra room that can be used for a few weeks.
- The space secured does not need to be very big, as the newcomer(s) are only expected to stay there for a few days or weeks. However, keep in mind that it is important to keep the newcomer(s) together and not separate them, even in temporary housing, as they have and are going through a traumatic experience and will want to be together for comfort.
- When bringing the newcomer(s) to the temporary housing from the airport, you should clarify that this is not where they are expected to live in the long term.

- If you are not given adequate lead time to prepare before arrival or are unable to arrange for temporary housing for other reasons, contact Immigrant-Services Guelph-Wellington for assistance.
- The **Housing Help Centre** is a valuable resource that can help in securing housing in the County of Wellington. Visit their [website](#) or call 519-824-7822 for more information on their services.
- It can be helpful for the sponsoring group to start scouting for appropriate neighbourhoods and accommodations prior to arrival in order to get a good sense of availability and prices. Permanent housing should be arranged as soon as possible after arrival. Consider involving the newcomer(s) in this process, and make sure that you discuss their priorities and concerns (see *First month* for more on finding permanent accommodation).

FURNISHING THE HOME

- Furniture can be selected once temporary housing is secured and it's known whether it is furnished or not. Furniture can often be found at lower prices at affordable stores, such as [Value Village](#), the [Salvation Army Thrift Store](#) and [Guelph ReStore](#).
- Before arrival, the sponsoring group should decide what types of electronics they can provide. Phones and computers with Internet access can be used to connect with family abroad and provide great comfort. They also enable the newcomer(s) to directly access important information that will help them with settling in a new society. Since it may be difficult for newcomer(s) to buy their own phones during the sponsorship year due to limited income, you could consider asking for donations of phones or computers.

The Housing Help Centre is a valuable resource that can help in securing housing in the County of Wellington. Visit their website or call 519-824-7822 for more information on their services.

STARTER KIT

Prepare a welcome kit for the newcomer(s) that includes the staples important to their new home, especially items that could be of immediate use:

<input type="radio"/>	Toiletries (e.g., soap, shampoo/conditioner, toothbrush/toothpaste, disposable razors, nail clipper, lotion, tampons and pads, etc.)
<input type="radio"/>	Medicine (e.g., Advil, Tylenol, Gravol)
<input type="radio"/>	Band-Aids
<input type="radio"/>	Notebook and pens
<input type="radio"/>	Calendar or agenda
<input type="radio"/>	Fun activities for children (e.g., colouring books, crayons, picture books, stickers, small toys, etc.)

KITCHEN KIT

<input type="radio"/>	Staple foods (e.g., rice, bread, spices, produce, meat or Halal meat, if applicable, etc.)
<input type="radio"/>	Dishes
<input type="radio"/>	Cutlery
<input type="radio"/>	Pots and pans
<input type="radio"/>	Frozen, premade meals
<input type="radio"/>	Easy-to-make snacks

CLEANING KIT

<input type="radio"/>	Household cleaners
<input type="radio"/>	Detergent
<input type="radio"/>	Household cleaners
<input type="radio"/>	Broom/Mop
<input type="radio"/>	Rags and towels

ORIENTATION BINDER

- Prepare a binder of useful, well-organized information that will benefit the newcomer(s) throughout their first days and year. This binder is meant to be a reference document that the newcomer(s) can keep and review so they can remember the key information you provide them.
- Here is a **template of an orientation binder** which can be used to build your own binder. Make sure that you adapt and modify the information provided so that it is appropriate for the newcomer(s) you are sponsoring.
- Include names, photos, and contact information of everyone in the sponsoring group (including members who are available 24 hours during the first few days for emergencies), as well as emergency contact information (e.g., 911).
- Include basic instructions on how to use the appliances in the home (e.g., faucets, telephones, basic household equipment and objects that might be unknown or confusing to figure out, such as fire alarms).
- Ensure that the information provided is simply and clear with bullet points.
- Provide the information in both English and the newcomer(s) native language. If translation assistance is needed, contact **Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington**.
- Make sure the newcomer(s)' personal information is recorded for their new home (e.g., address, landline phone number).
- Include contact information for resources they may be accessing more often during the first few weeks (e.g., Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington, local schools, Settlement Services-Wellington County, local bus stops, grocery stores, pharmacies).

PLANNING THE FIRST MEETING

- Be prepared, because you may receive very little notice of the newcomer(s) arrival. Several itinerary changes may also occur in the days before the newcomer(s) arrival, and you may receive conflicting information at times. It may be helpful to have a roster of group members who are available at different times in case of last minute changes.
- Have enough space in cars to accommodate the newcomer(s) and their luggage. If there are children, make sure to have the required number of car seats and booster seats for the ride home.
- Booster seats must be used if the child is under the age of 8, weighs between 18 and 36 kg (40-80lbs), and is under 145 cm (4'5") tall.
- The [**Ontario Ministry of Transportation**](#) outlines further details for child car seats.
- Prepare a welcome sign with the newcomer(s)' name(s) in both English and their native language to hold up in the arrival area. This sign will help you and the newcomer(s) identify each other in the arrival hall.
- Depending on the season, it can be a good idea to prepare appropriate clothing for the newcomer(s) which you can bring to the airport, as they may be arriving unprepared for cold temperatures (coats, mitts, boots, hats, etc.). You may also want to bring along refreshments, such as water and snacks, especially if there are young children. It is a good idea to have a meal planned for the newcomer(s) at the location you take them to from the airport, as they will be likely be very tired and overwhelmed.

INTERPRETATION

- Consider whether you need to bring an interpreter with you to the airport. It may be overwhelming for the newcomer(s) to try and speak another language (even if they have some English skills) after a lengthy and stressful trip. To have someone speaking their own language present may ease some discomfort and facilitate introductions, the delivery of key information, and the addressing of any important questions or concerns the newcomer(s) may have upon arrival.
- Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington provides [**interpretation on a fee-for-service basis**](#) and can help in booking an interpreter.
- Although interpreters are very helpful in making sure that important information is understood correctly, it is not always necessary to have one present; a lot can be shared despite a language barrier.
- Look for and provide the newcomers with a bilingual visual dictionary and/or translation app (e.g., [**Google Translate**](#)) as these tools could prove to be very helpful.

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Arrival

The airport arrival is often a much anticipated moment for the sponsoring group, but there are important things to keep in mind and be aware of as you plan for this day.

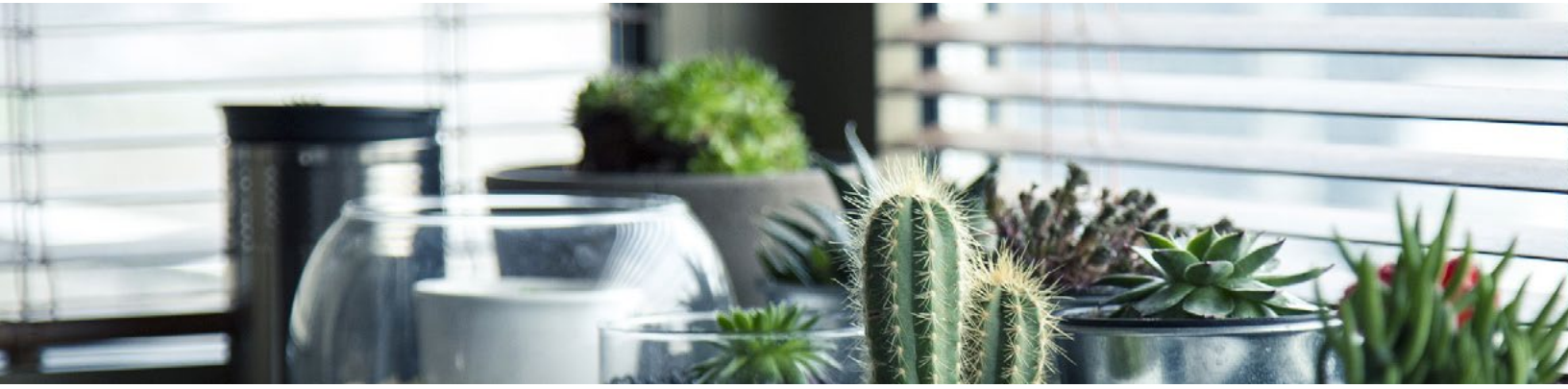
AT THE AIRPORT

- Newcomers may be experiencing a wide range of feelings and emotions—they may feel upset, scared, exhausted, overwhelmed, relieved, or excited, and these feelings are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Your feelings might not match theirs, so tact and sensitivity is crucial at this first meeting.
- Although it may seem appropriate to celebrate the newcomer(s)' arrival, if they are fatigued or upset, too much excitement may exacerbate how they are feeling. It is recommended to have a small number of group members meeting the newcomer(s) at the airport to minimize any potential feelings of distress and to give them time to rest.
- It might take the newcomer(s) some time to go through customs, so be patient while waiting. Wait at the passenger pick-up area until the refugees arrive with an IRIS (Immigration Reception and Information Services) representative. Staff at IRIS helps the refugees through the Canadian customs and immigration at the airport. They wear red sweaters and are easily recognizable.
- The newcomer(s) may not be aware of your role as a sponsoring group nor have a good understanding of what private sponsorship exactly is when they arrive as Canada is the only country in the world to have private sponsorship of refugees. During introductions, an overview would prove to be helpful; discuss your role in supporting them through their first year of settlement and emphasize you will be around to help them with whatever you can at any time. Considering the possible range of emotions the newcomer(s) may have at arrival, be sure to repeat what your role is at a later time as it might be difficult to take in all the information provided at this first meeting.
- As a sponsoring group, you will probably want to take pictures with the newcomer(s) at the airport. Remember that they are probably very tired after the long trip and are faced with many new impressions at once. If you decide to take pictures, ask the newcomer(s) if it is OK and only take a few pictures to make the process quick.
- Although you may feel inclined to provide as much support as you can at your first meeting, be prepared to provide the newcomer(s) as much privacy as they would like.
- Communication is very important. Be sure to explain what you are doing and why you are doing those things to help involve and inform the newcomer(s) in your actions.

DOCUMENTS

- Before leaving the airport or later the same day, check the Confirmation of Permanent Residence Forms to ensure that all names, genders, and dates of birth are correct. Contact Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington or Wellington County's Settlement Services if there are any concerns.
- Upon arrival in Canada, the newly arrived refugee becomes a Permanent Resident of Canada. During processing upon arrival, the newcomer will usually be asked to provide a mailing address in Canada to which the Permanent Residence card will be sent. This card will arrive in a few weeks. If the card has not arrived in the time frame explained at the airport, contact Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington or Wellington County's Settlement services to follow up with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).
- Newcomer(s) who are not able to provide an address at the airport will be given an IMM 5456 (Address Notification – Permanent Resident Card). The sponsoring group can also assist them in completing this form.
- To avoid a \$50 processing fee, the newcomer(s)' permanent address in Canada must be provided to IRCC within 180 days after entering Canada.

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First 24 hours

The first few days are critical times for the newcomer(s). First impressions are formed and vivid memories of these days will remain with them for the rest of their lives. It's important to address the necessary practical issues during this time, but also to be aware of and sensitive to the newcomers' emotional needs.

Remember that the newcomers are likely tired and overwhelmed from travelling. Try to keep information to a necessary minimum during the day of arrival; it may be helpful to repeat this information throughout the week. Make sure that both the sponsoring group and the newcomer(s) have some time to relax, talk, and start to know each other.

Here are some key items to go through on the first day:

ORIENTATION

- Lead the newcomer(s) through the orientation binder you prepared. Make sure they understand the information provided, and know who to contact if they have further questions. Provide a list of two to three main contacts for the first week as too many numbers and names to remember may be overwhelming. If possible, add numbers to the newcomer(s)' cell phone contact list with pictures.
- This may also be a good time to call their family at home, if possible, and discuss how the sponsoring group can cover long distance calls.

SAFETY ORIENTATION

- Show all exits for the unit
- Explain what to do in the case of hearing the fire alarm go off.
- If the newcomer(s) live(s) in a multi-unit building, locate the fire escapes and stairs.
- Explain how to contact the homeowner, landlord, or building manager
- Be sure to explain the difference between calling 911 in case of emergency and calling the local police office; provide the newcomer(s) with the local police office's number as well.
- It may also be helpful to develop a warning system to communicate requiring help if English or French is poor.

HOME ORIENTATION

- Describe how to use light switches and the thermostat.
- Explain how to sort and dispose of garbage.
- Describe how to use appliances, such as the toilet, shower, stove, and laundry.
- Explain that tap water is safe to drink.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Provide a small amount of cash for the newcomer(s).
- Provide a map of the surrounding neighbourhood that shows nearby grocery stores, pharmacies, public transit, etc.
- If the newcomer(s) need to purchase a phone, bring them to a store where they can purchase an inexpensive phone with a plan and phone card that suits their needs.
- Give the newcomer(s) space to ask questions at the end of the first day and set up a meeting for the following day. Ensure them that they can contact you if they have any questions or need help with anything.

IMMEDIATE MEDICAL NEEDS

The newcomer(s) may have medical needs that must be looked at soon after arrival. Here are some important steps to follow before and soon after the arrival of the newcomer(s):

- Provide information about the nearest **walk-in clinic and hospital** and explain the differences between the two and their respective services.
- An explanation of **Telehealth Ontario** may be helpful; describe what it is, and when and how they can make use of it. Telehealth Ontario provides service in English and French, in addition to translation support for other languages. It also has a direct TTY number for people with hearing and speech difficulties.
- Try to find a family doctor for the newcomer(s) before arrival, ideally located near their expected permanent housing. The **Guelph Community Health Centre** and the Guelph Family Health Team can provide ongoing primary care for newcomers. To register for these services, contact the Guelph CHC at 519-821-6638 ext. 404.
- The Waterloo Wellington LHIN provides Free Professional Interpretation Services for medical patients in person and over the phone. **Contact Immigrant Services Guelph Wellington to find out more.**
- **Health Care Connect** is a program that helps you to find a family doctor or nurse practitioner in Ontario. In Wellington County, Health Care Connect can match newcomers to practicing family physicians in Elora, Erin, Fergus, Mount Forest, Palmerston, Puslinch and Wellington.
- If a family physician isn't secured upon arrival and the newcomer(s) require immediate medical assistance, they can go to a walk-in clinic or the **Guelph Community Health Centre**. The Guelph CHC hosts Clinics for Newly Arrived Syrians for immediate health concerns; clinic appointments can be made at 519-821-6638 ext. 2
- Inform the newcomer(s) to bring their OHIP or IFH (Interim Federal Health program) documents each time they seek medical attention.

Health Care Connect is a program that helps you to find a family doctor or nurse practitioner in Ontario.



First Week

SETTLEMENT SERVICES

- You should take the newcomer(s) to the closest settlement service provider soon after arrival in order to register for their programs. These organizations will make sure that the newcomer(s) have filled all necessary documentation and will guide them through their many services, including language assessment, settlement counselling, and other supports.
- Settlement service providers can offer support to the sponsoring group, including answering any questions and helping fill out paperwork and applying for relevant government services and subsidies on behalf of the newcomer. They also are a good source of information about new services or initiatives in place in the community to support newcomers.
- In Guelph-Wellington, [Immigrant-Services Guelph-Wellington](#) and the [County of Wellington](#) are the two government-funded providers of settlement services.

HEALTH COVERAGE

INTERIM FEDERAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Resettled refugees are eligible to **full health-care coverage** through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP), which includes basic health-care services (i.e., standard physician and hospital care), supplemental services (e.g., some vision care and urgent dental care), and prescription drug coverage.

It is important to apply for IFHP as soon as possible in order for the newcomer(s) to receive medical coverage during the period prior to qualifying for provincial health care (OHIP).

- Applications for IFHP can be submitted **online** or by mail. You can find more information on the application process [here](#). If the application is accepted, the newcomer(s) will begin to receive IFH coverage immediately.
- If the newcomer(s) are sponsored through the Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) program, the application for IFH will be done during their Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) interview with CIC.
- Once approved, newcomer(s) will receive an IFHP Certificate from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. They should show this certificate to health care providers or doctors prior to receiving medical services.
- Be aware that the regulations for IFHP change quite often and the information found in this Handbook may not be up-to-date. If you have any questions or concerns about IFHP, please refer to the [Government of Canada's website](#) or contact Immigrant-Services Guelph-Wellington or the County of Wellington's Settlement Services.
- As of 2016, the IFHP has instituted **multiple changes** for newcomers.

EXPANDED HEALTH-CARE COVERAGE

Resettled refugees who receive governmental resettlement assistance under the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), including newcomer(s) sponsored under the Blended Visa-Office Referral program, may also be eligible for expanded health care coverage. This will be obtained as part of the regular application for the IFHP.

ONTARIO HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN (OHIP)

OHIP coverage pays for most basic medical and emergency services received in the province.

- The newcomer(s) may have received their OHIP card when they arrived at the airport. If not, they should apply for OHIP soon after arrival by filling the **registration form** and submitting it in person at a **Service Ontario location**. There are Service Ontario offices in Guelph, Fergus, Mount Forest and Elmira.
 - *When filling out the form, **it is very important to check off the box “Convention Refugee/Protected Person”, not “Permanent Resident” under section “C”.** This will ensure that the typically three-month waiting period for OHIP coverage is waived. As a result, coverage will begin immediately after the application is approved.*
- Make sure that the newcomer(s) have all necessary documents when applying at Service Ontario. You can find more information about required documents [here](#). Newcomer(s) will also be required to provide an address where the cards can be mailed.

ONTARIO PHOTO CARD

The Ontario Photo Card is a government-issued identification that permanent residents and citizens may use as official form of identification if they do not have a driver's license. By having an Ontario Photo Card, the newcomer(s) don't need to always carry their Permanent Resident card with them and can store it safely at home instead. Note, however, that a person cannot have an Ontario driver's license and an Ontario Photo Card at the same time.

- The newcomer(s) can apply for the Ontario Photo Card at any **Service Ontario location**. They should make sure to bring the required documentation: refer to the list of accepted identity documents [here](#).

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN)

- The newcomer(s) may have applied for and/or received their social insurance numbers at the airport. If not, they should apply for a SIN card shortly after arrival by going in person to a Service Canada location. The only Service Canada center in Guelph-Wellington is located at 259 Woodlawn Road West, suite C.
- When applying, the newcomer(s) will need to provide an official document proving their status in Canada – this document must be an original. Consult the list of accepted documents [here](#).
- If everything is in order, the newcomer(s) will receive their SIN during their visit to Service Canada.
- Be sure to explain the importance of the SIN card to the newcomer(s), including why they have it, and who may ask for it. For more information, consult these webpages from **Service Canada** or **The Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada**.

SHOPPING

FOOD

- Show the newcomer(s) where they can go grocery shopping while keeping their budget in mind. Bulk stores, local produce stores, and farmers' markets can be much cheaper than the big-chain grocery stores. Find a cheaper grocery store in their area (e.g., No Frills).
- Ask the newcomer(s) about their preferences when it comes to food, such as do they prefer halal or certain ethnic food items. Stocking food that they are used to can go a long way towards easing the stress around all of the new things they face in the settlement process. There might be food items that can only be found in certain stores, so research which grocery stores have large ethnic food sections or specialty items that are close to the newcomer(s)' residence.

There are some grocery stores in Guelph that may help:

- [*Thanh Phat Asian Supermarket*](#)
- [*India Spice House*](#)
- [*Quality Indian Foods & Spices*](#)
- [*Pranaam Supermarket*](#)
- [*Goodness Me! Natural Food Market*](#)
- [*Guelph Farmers' Market*](#)

- You can also slowly introduce them to Canadian food items either from the grocery store or by preparing a meal for/with them.
- Remember that, for different reasons, the newcomer(s) might be very unfamiliar with cooking and might need a lot of guidance with preparing meals. You can also teach them how to cook on a budget.
- Shopping might be very different for the newcomer(s) to their country of origin and so they may be used to bargaining on prices at the stores. Explain to the newcomer(s) the customs around non-bargaining in Canada.
- It's a good idea to accompany the newcomer(s) as they do their grocery shopping the first few times, but only with their agreement. You can help answer questions and clarify things as they come up during the experience, but be careful to ensure that you are not there to interfere or influence their decision making.

CLOTHING

- If the newcomer(s) arrive in the winter, provide weather appropriate clothing for them at arrival. If they require new clothes, accompany them to aid in selecting weather appropriate clothing while being sensitive and respecting their cultural needs and views.
- Winter (and perhaps even fall) will be colder than they have experienced, so advise them to the best of your ability. If, however, they arrive during the spring or summer, assist them with acquiring warm clothes for the colder seasons, including by exploring donations.
- Some sponsoring groups receive donations of clothing for the arrival families. However, it is important to be culturally sensitive as some newcomers may have different views of second-hand goods. While in some cultures it may be completely acceptable, in others, it can be seen as insulting. Irrespective of the newcomer(s)' cultural background, it is a good idea to explain why you are giving them used clothing and how it is seen in the Canadian culture. Explain the benefits of second-hand clothing in terms of budgeting and savings.
- Always be aware of and respectful of individual preferences.

- The **Salvation Army Community and Family Services** is providing free clothing to newcomers upon booking an appointment. They are located at **210 Victoria Rd S, Guelph**. You can contact them at 519-836-9824.
- Inform the newcomer(s) of other affordable stores close to their home, such as **Value Village**, **Salvation Army** stores, **ReStores**, and Dollar stores.

RECREATION AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

TRANSPORTATION

- Determine the bus routes that are closest to the newcomer(s) house and help them find out how they can take the bus to important destinations like school, the grocery store, the library, etc.
- Provide the newcomer(s) with maps of the public transportation system and of relevant bus schedules. Maps of the Guelph transit system can be obtained **online** or at City Hall, at the Guelph Transit office (170 Watson Road South) as well as at recreation and community centres. It's also important to provide a map of the city, which can also be found **online**.
- Aid the newcomer(s) in understanding how the public transportation system works by taking them around. Help them learn what tickets and passes are (as well as how to buy and use them), how transfers work, differences between the bus and train systems, and hours of operation.
- Introduce them to resources that can help them map out their routes to various destinations, such as **Google Maps**, or the **Guelph Google Transit** application.
- A new pilot program by the City of Guelph offers newly arrived refugees one year of free bus passes, free museum memberships, and free entry to public swimming and skating lessons. Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington and Wellington County Settlement Services can provide assistance in applying to this program, called the **Welcome to Guelph program**.

The Salvation Army Community and Family Services is providing free clothing to newcomers upon booking an appointment. They are located at 210 Victoria Rd S, Guelph. You can contact them at 519-836-9824.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

- Ask the newcomer(s) if they are interested in a specific religious place of worship (e.g., a church or a mosque) and offer to help them locate one nearby. Do not assume that the newcomer(s) adhere to a specific religion or are looking for a place of worship; always ask.
- This Handbook has a list of places of worship in the resources section for both Guelph and Wellington County.

LAUNDROMATS

Some homes may not have on-site access to washing and drying machines, so be sure to find a laundromat near the newcomer(s)' new home. Help them find the laundromat and demonstrate how to operate the machines, how the payment system works, and what products to use.

FINANCES

It is a good idea to have a discussion about finances during the first few days after arrival. The newcomer(s) may have various levels of financial literacy and may come from various financial backgrounds, so it is important to tailor this conversation to their needs, abilities and experiences.

BUDGETING

- While many sponsoring groups find it useful to do some pre-budget planning in advance of the arrival of the newcomer(s), you must be careful to avoid using a dictatorial approach regarding how the newcomer(s) spend their money. As much as possible, develop or adjust the budget with the input of the newcomer(s): while you will be providing the funds, they should make the final decisions on how to spend them. That said, it is very important for the sponsoring group to provide sound advice to the newcomer(s) and create a clear understanding about their financial situation.

- Make sure to explain clearly from whom and how the newcomer(s) will be receiving money, as well as how much their expenses are expected to be.
- Create a chart of the budget with income and expenses to help summarize it and present it in a visual way.
- There are many tools available online for free that assist with creating and tracking budgets. Most banks will have budgeting resources available and the **Financial Consumer Agency of Canada** is a great source of information, including budgeting tools.
- Explain how to pay bills and the importance of paying them on time. It is a good idea to help the newcomer(s) with this until it becomes a routine.
- Explain costs related to phones, such as long-distance calls, texting, using phone cards, and calling online (e.g., **Skype**). Describe the expenses associated with these services and discuss with the newcomer(s) to identify the best options for them.
- Note that the post-paid cell phone system that is common in Canada is not as commonplace in other countries and can therefore cause confusion and frustration for the newcomer(s).
- Assist the newcomer(s) with understanding how they can make the most out of their budget by showing them discount, second-hand, and bargain stores. Help them compare prices between different stores so that they can get an idea of where they can save money.
- You may want to meet with the newcomer(s) on a monthly or quarterly basis to review the budget with them and assess how it aligns with projections and expectations on both sides. Make sure to discuss and decide how discrepancies should be addressed (e.g., is there a possibility to provide extra funds beyond what was budgeted?).

TAXES

- Briefly explain how Canada's taxation system works and the concept of sales taxes (HST). Some newcomers may be confused to see that the price they pay in the store is different than what is stated on the price tag, sign, or flyer.

There are many tools available online for free that assist with creating and tracking budgets. Most banks will have budgeting resources available and the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada is a great source of information, including budgeting tools.

- Depending on the situation, you can choose to explain how to file taxes in advance and that salary earned is not equal to take-home pay, but you can also wait until they are more settled in Canada as it may be overwhelming to discuss so soon after arrival.
- Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington also holds income tax workshops every tax season, where volunteers and Settlement staff help newcomers fill out their income tax.

BANKING

Within the first few days, accompany the newcomer(s) to a nearby financial institution to set up a bank account and get a bank card and credit card.

- Many banks and credit unions have special programs that are designed for newcomers to Canada. These can include no account fees over a certain period, a number of free transfers, and well as unsecured credit cards in order for the newcomer(s) to build credit history.
- Confirm with the bank beforehand what documents are needed in order to set up an account.
- If applicable, make sure the newcomer(s) understand the various fees that could be associated to their banking transactions, such as ATM withdrawal fees, debit card usage fees, miscellaneous bank fees, etc.
- It's possible that the newcomer(s) may not have used cheques, direct deposit, or automatic withdrawals prior to coming to Canada. It is important to explain how these work and involve the newcomer(s) in any decisions that involve them, particularly with regard to automatic withdrawals.
- Explain the risks and benefits of having a credit card, including the importance of developing a credit history. Should the newcomer(s) choose to pay for a credit card, ensure that they understand the terms, especially regarding interest charges.

It's possible that the newcomer(s) may not have used cheques, direct deposit, or automatic withdrawals prior to coming to Canada. It is important to explain how these work and involve the newcomer(s) in any decisions that involve them, particularly with regard to automatic withdrawals.

CANADA CHILD TAX BENEFIT (CCTB) AND UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE BENEFIT (UCCB)

The Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) and the Universal Child Care Benefit are tax-free monthly payments for eligible families with children under the age of 18. It is recommended that newcomer families register for these programs as soon as possible since they the benefits can amount to a significant sum of money.

- The newcomer(s) can apply for these programs by filling out Form RC66, **Canada Child Benefits Application** and submitting it to the appropriate **tax center**. Other documents may need to be submitted at the same time, including an additional form for newcomers having not yet filed an income tax return.
- Note that in order to apply for these programs, the newcomer(s) must have a valid Social Insurance Number and a bank account.
- In order to continue to receive these benefits, the newcomer(s) must file their income tax and benefit returns every year, even if they have no income to report.

CHILD CARE AND SCHOOL

Newcomers with children will need support in understanding the Canadian school system and enrolling their children in school. The Canadian school system might be very different from where they lived previously or they might never have attended school at all.

- As a first step, sit down with the newcomer(s) and provide general information about the Canadian school system. Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 to 16, which may not be the case in all other countries. Other points of discussion can include homework expectations, field trips, school lunches, parent-teacher relationships (including meetings), vaccinations, school buses, etc.
- Explain what supports are available to newcomer children to ease their transition into the school system. Many elementary and secondary schools in Ontario have special language training for children who do not speak English or French as their first language or who speak a variation of English or French that is different to the language used in Ontario schools. Students can receive specialized help to develop their literacy skills. Some schools also offer teachers training in intercultural awareness.
- You can get help from Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington or the County of Wellington Settlement Services to explore schooling options with the newcomer family and to complete the registration forms. The organizations, however, will not recommend any school in particular; this decision has to be made by the newcomer(s) themselves with your support.

- Both the Upper Grand District School Board and Wellington Catholic District School Board have supports set up for newcomer families. [The Settlement Workers in Schools Program \(SWIS\)](#) offered by Immigrant Services Guelph Wellington also places settlement workers in elementary and secondary schools that have high numbers of newcomer students. Settlement workers provide one-on-one counselling and group sessions to newcomer parents and students to help them adjust to the school environment.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Full-day kindergarten is provided by all elementary schools across Ontario. It is available for four- and five-year-old children and is free. Before- and after-school programs are optional, but are offered for a fee; financial assistance is available for families who qualify.

Kindergarten is a good way to integrate newcomer children into the Canadian society, which might ease the transition into the school system. It also gives them an opportunity to be surrounded by English speaking adults and children. To learn more about full-day kindergarten in Ontario, visit [here](#).

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

- There are two English school boards and two French school boards covering Guelph-Wellington:
 - [Upper Grand District School Board \(UGDSB\)](#)
 - [Wellington Catholic District School Board \(WCDSB\)](#)
 - [Conseil scolaire Viamonde](#)
 - [Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir](#)
- There are also a number of unaffiliated or private schools, such as the [Meezan School of Guelph](#), which provides specialized courses in Islamic studies, or the [Guelph Montessori School](#).
- In choosing a school, the newcomer family may want to consider the preferred language of instruction, whether or not to opt for religious instruction or the proximity of a particular school to their house or workplace.
- Keep in mind that each school has “boundaries” that dictates where youths can register. Refer to [FindmySchool.ca](#) or the boundary maps provided on each of the school boards’ websites to help the newcomer(s) select the appropriate school.
- Once you and the newcomer(s) have located a local school, you can call them and ask what the required documents for registering are as well as the best time to go in to register. It is helpful to get the registration form ahead of time and fill part of it in. These forms and additional details can also be found here for the [UGDSB](#) and here

for the [WCDSB](#). These forms need to be brought to the school in order to finalize the registration process.

VACCINATIONS FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

Students who attend school in Ontario are required by law to be immunized against measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, and polio.

- Explain to the newcomer families about this law and how they can obtain the appropriate vaccinations. Exemptions (for medical, religious or philosophical reasons) may be obtained by contacting [WDG Public Health](#).
- All mandatory vaccinations are free of charge, and can be obtained through a family doctor or medical walk-in clinic. If the newcomer(s) do not have an Ontario Health Card or have difficulty booking an appointment, it can also be done at a [public health clinic](#); be sure to help the newcomer(s) with this process if they require assistance.
- If the newcomer(s) do not have immunization records with them, they will be required to receive the required vaccinations upon arriving, even if vaccinations are repeated.

CHILD CARE

If the newcomer family has children under school age, you may need to identify options for child care in the neighbourhood. At first, the parents will probably stay at home with the children until they have adjusted, but once they start searching for a job or attending language training, they will need to find affordable child care.

- Make sure to discuss the situation with the parents ahead of time. They may feel uncomfortable leaving their children with strangers, and could want to be closely involved in this process.
- Search for affordable child care so the family can keep using the same service after the sponsorship ends. Pay close attention to the accessibility of the service (distance from the home, transportation options).
- You can search for licensed childcare in the Guelph-Wellington area through the Ontario Ministry of Education [here](#).
- For parents who attend language training, child care may be available on site, such as at St. George’s Centre.
 - *Note that there may be restrictions as to the age of children accepted.*



First Month

PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION

Once the newcomer(s)' immediate needs have been addressed and they are becoming more familiar with their environment, you can start exploring options for more permanent accommodation.

- When arranging permanent housing, make sure to involve the newcomer(s) as much as possible. Discuss their needs, wishes, and financial capacity.
 - *Things to consider could include the location of the newcomer(s)' job, children's schools, accessibility by public transit, or proximity to the newcomer(s) ethnocultural community.*
- The County of Wellington runs the RentSmart program, which teaches participants their rights and responsibilities as a tenant in Ontario. Call 519-824-7822 for more information.
- A Housing Access Guide for newcomers can be found at the [Guelph Wellington Poverty Task Force's website](#).
- Select housing that the newcomer(s) will be able to afford by themselves once the sponsorship period is over. This may provide more comfort and security to the newcomer(s) in addition to relieving the sponsor group from having to provide assistance at the end of the sponsorship.
- When renting an apartment or house, the landlord may require a sponsoring group member to sign as a guarantor on the contract/lease and therefore to be liable for everything on behalf of the residents. The sponsoring group should make every effort to convince the landlord to accept the newcomer(s) as the main applicant and signer of the contract/lease.

- *This step is crucial as it allows the newcomer(s) to establish a history of rental, which could aid in their search of new housing if they move after the first year. To do so, it may be helpful to provide the landlord with a letter explaining the role of the sponsoring group in supporting the newcomer(s) during the first year (financially and otherwise).*

LANGUAGE TRAINING

One of the most important responsibilities for the newcomer(s) during the sponsorship period is to improve their English (or French) through classes and conversations.

- It is important that before the newcomer(s) start looking for a job, their knowledge of the English language should be strong.
- The sponsorship year is a great opportunity for the newcomer(s) to use language classes as well as social events to practice.

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

- Newcomers who require English instruction must be assessed through [Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington \(ISGW\)](#). It is important that the newcomer(s) be assessed as soon as possible, ideally within the first week or two after arriving. After this assessment, recommendations for appropriate English programs will be made. The assessment is free, however, you will have to make an appointment before the newcomer(s) can be assessed. The assessment is based on [Canadian Language Benchmarks](#) (CLBs), the national standards for describing, measuring, and recognizing second language proficiency of adult newcomers in Canada.

LANGUAGE TRAINING

If language training is recommended following the assessment, newcomer(s) should start English classes as soon as possible. Strengthening their proficiency of the English language will help improve their chances of obtaining employment, applying for school, and interacting with the community.

- **St. George's Centre** provides daytime and evening classes through two language programs: the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, and English as a Second Language for Adult Literacy Learners (ALL).
 - *LINC classes are free for Permanent Residents and Convention Refugees. These classes cover English levels from Literacy to CLB 8, targeting key skills such as listening, pronunciation, speaking, grammar, writing, and reading.*
 - *ESL for ALL are free for Canadian citizens, permanent residents, convention refugees, and refugee claimants. These classes target specific language learning skills, including pronunciation, Canadian idioms and expressions, writing skills, listening comprehension, and citizenship test preparation. Relay this information to the newcomer(s) so that they can decide what their language learning goals are, and what classes are appropriate given their current levels. Be as involved or distant as the newcomer(s) would like.*
 - *To book an appointment for registration, you and/or the newcomer(s) can call 519-766-9551.*
 - *All of St. George's Centre's classes are continuous, which means that the newcomer(s) are not required to register by a certain date. They also provide one-on-one tutors if deemed appropriate for the newcomer(s) case, which is also free (specifically for refugee claimants and refugees). Additionally, some classes are restricted to specific groups, such as classes for newcomer women or children. If newcomer(s) require facilities for child care during LINC class times, space is available for permanent residents and convention refugees.*
- In Wellington County and Dufferin, the school board is responsible for providing ESL training to newcomers. For assistance in these areas, contact Sheila Nicholas (Sheila.nicholas@ugdsb.on.ca or 519-766-9551).

- The **English Language Programs at the University of Guelph** offer newcomers an opportunity to develop high-level language skills, academic skills, and overall understanding of Canadian culture.

- *The **English Language Certificate Program** is an intensive 25-hour per week academic English program designed to prepare language learners for university. Completion of the advanced level (levels 9 and 10) meets the English language proficiency requirements for admission to undergraduate and graduate studies at the University of Guelph.*
- *For more information, contact Open Learning and Education Support at esl@uoguelph.ca or 519-767-5000.*

INFORMAL LANGUAGE TRAINING

Informal language training programs can be fun and easy ways to practice the skills the newcomer(s) learn from their formal English language training while meeting new people and making new friends.

- The **Guelph Public Library** offers a few programs, including a weekly ESL Conversation Circle and an English as a Second Language Book Club. In the Conversation Circle, newcomer(s) can practice their conversational skills with the library staff. In the Book Club, newcomer(s) can meet with others who are improving their English to discuss specific books and topics.
- Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington also offers informal language programs, including **1-on-1 conversation practice** with a volunteer and a weekly **Immigrant Women's Group**.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

If the newcomer(s) is interested in studying at a post-secondary institution, there are different resources that can be used in sourcing information. The University of Guelph and Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington may be able to provide supports here – you can also take a look at the “Education/Training Services” part of the resources section in this handbook.

- There are many different types of education, some that might not be familiar to the newcomer(s). It may be helpful to explore the different options and discuss the differences between programs, including the differences between university and college, continuing education, apprenticeships, and private career colleges.

Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington also offers informal language programs, including 1-on-1 conversation practice with a volunteer and a weekly Immigrant Women's Group.

- If the individual has a high school diploma or other past academic credentials from their home country, their credentials may need to be assessed before they can register at a post-secondary institution in Canada. At some academic institutions, evaluations can be done by staff at the admissions office; while others ask the students to seek external evaluation. Questions about evaluation should be directed to the specific academic institution of interest.
- The newcomer(s) must have a high level of English in order to attend most post-secondary institutions. The **University of Guelph** and **Conestoga College** have English language preparatory programs.
- If accepted at an educational institution, the newcomer(s) may be able to apply for financial assistance through the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) as well as bursaries and grants.

EMPLOYMENT AND JOB TRAINING

While most newcomers will be eager to start working shortly after they arrive in Canada, it is important to carefully assess the situation and discuss with them whether this is the right option at this point. The sponsorship year can be a great opportunity for newcomers to take advantage of English classes, to seek additional training or certifications, and to make sure they are well positioned to succeed on the Canadian labour market.

If their language skills and qualifications are appropriate for the type of employment they are seeking, then searching for a job will become an important task for them.

- Job searching can be a challenging and daunting experience. Be prepared to provide both practical and emotional support during this time.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

A number of organizations offer employment support to help newcomer(s) prepare for and join the labour market. Many of these organizations are funded by Employment Ontario, which is designed to help individuals with finding and maintaining jobs.

Lutherwood provides a variety of employment services geared toward immigrants, youths, individuals with disabilities, and experienced workers. Two of their programs may be particularly helpful for newcomer(s):

- Ontario Employment Services provide support with
 - *Interview practice and preparation*
 - *Creating résumés and cover letters*
 - *Finding job placements*
 - *Connecting with employers*
- The **Job Search Workshop for Immigrants (JSW)** program offers thorough and individualized support to newcomers. The JSW starts with an assessment to determine the sorts of experiences and skills the newcomer(s) have and the types of positions they're looking for, and then work together with the newcomer(s) to develop an action plan (e.g., next steps to move toward their desired position).

The **Guelph branch** is located in the downtown core, but Lutherwood also offers remote services in community centres, such as at the **Shelldale Centre**. Limited itinerant services can also be offered in the county.

Newcomer(s) can also access Lutherwood's services online, which can be particularly advantageous for newcomers living in remote areas or having difficulty finding childcare. It is recommended that the newcomer(s)' English levels be high due to the constant reading and writing that are characteristic of an online learning environment.

Wellington County also offers employment services, workshops and resources for newcomer(s), which can largely be found through the County's **Employment Resource Centre**. This Centre includes **Job Search Links**, a **Job Board**, **Tips for Employment**, **Workshops & Programs**, and **Community Resources**. Of particular interest may be the Community Resources, which lists both **Local Education and Training Opportunities** as well as **Employment Ontario Services Providers**. In Wellington County, there are two Employment Ontario Service Providers:

- **Agilec** offers job search and training supports, employment counselling, and second career programs.
- **2nd Chance** also offers job search and training supports, access to and support for the Second Career program, programming for those with disabilities, and programs for youths.

Finally, **Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington** also sometimes offer employment workshops for newcomers, including on job search, resume writing, interview preparation, networking, workplace culture, or workers' rights.

CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

Newcomer(s) should be aware of the significance of Canadian work experience when they begin searching for employment. It is important that they understand that their first job in Canada may be the first step towards a better job, even if it is not in their trade, skill, or profession. It is typical in Canada to work at one job to gain experience in order to be able to acquire a better job.

- If the newcomer(s) already have academic credentials or certifications, these may need to be evaluated to determine if they will be deemed equivalent to those offered in Canada; it is often the case with regulated professions. Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington and Lutherwood may be able to assist with these steps. Newcomers may then need to complete additional training or tests in order to work in their sector.
- The **Government of Ontario** and **Employment Ontario** both have information about preparing to work, searching for jobs, and building skills.

WORKPLACE CULTURE

- There are a number of topics regarding workplace culture that you can talk about with the newcomer(s) in order to provide insight into Canadian expectations regarding customs and behaviours. These include:
 - *Office behaviour*
 - *Appropriate communication styles in different settings*
 - *Time and punctuality*
 - *Body language*
 - *Non-discrimination and inclusiveness policies*
- You can also help the newcomer(s) understand the different ways to apply for positions, and decide which ones may work for them.
 - *Online job applications are very common in Canada. However, since the number of online applications received by employers is usually quite high, it is not rare for applicants not to receive any answers.*
 - *If the newcomer(s) prefer to apply in person (and if this is pertinent in the o is also possible, but the newcomer(s) should be prepared with resumes and cover letters.*

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is a period of disorientation experienced when encountering a new culture. While it can be painful, it is a normal part of cultural adjustment, and usually results in profound learning. Newcomers experiencing culture shock will typically go through a period of honeymoon and excitement about their new life, followed by a stage of negation, frustration, or pain with what they have left behind, before they gradually adjust to this new situation and become fully comfortable.

- The pace at which people progress through these stages is highly individual. All in all, the process can last three to five years.
- Be supportive. Listen to the newcomers' hopes or concerns. Talk about how life differs in Canada than in the newcomer(s)' country.
- Highlight the newcomer(s) strengths and achievements. Help them see how much they are achieving and adjusting to their new situation.
- Importantly, recognize that you cannot fix the situation. The newcomers will be in a state of flux for a long time, and will face cultural and social challenges. Try to accept that the struggle is normal, with the aim of being supportive throughout the year.

FAMILIAL CHALLENGES

Changes to family life and circumstances such as migration or cultural shock can impose great stress on the family system and sometimes result in internal conflicts. For example, family members may be more or less prone to engage in activities outside the home and become comfortable in their new environment. Canadian gender-based cultural norms may also differ from what the newcomers are used to, and create tensions as the family adapts. Inter-generational issues may also arise.

- Pay particular attention to newcomer(s), and especially women, experiencing isolation. Try to help them develop relationships outside the home and learn English. If necessary, provide extra English tutoring in the home.
- In general, teenagers tend to have more difficulty adjusting, at least initially, when compared to other family members. They often struggle to fit in the different sub-cultures of their peers, relate to adults according to new customs, and come to terms with new expectations and different sets of values.

- In cases where newcomers are not fluent in English, parents may rely on their children to interpret for them at important appointments, over the phone, while filling out forms, or while shopping. Whenever possible, other solutions should be found (e.g. interpreters could be arranged) to avoid putting this additional burden on children.
- It is important to orient and inform newcomers about Canadian child protection laws and the definition and legal implications of domestic violence. What may be considered discipline in one context might be considered abuse in Canada.
- Provide the newcomer(s) with emergency and distress phone numbers.
- There are a number of organizations and centres in the Guelph-Wellington area to which the newcomer(s) can turn for help in a crisis, including **Guelph-Wellington Women-In-Crisis**, the **Canadian Mental Health Association**, and **Victim Services Wellington**. See the **Emergency / Crisis Services** section in the appendix for additional resources.

MENTAL HEALTH AND POST TRAUMATIC STRESS

The newcomers may have experienced war, violence, or other forms of trauma. These experiences may make it more difficult to establish a life in Canada or to trust authority figures such as government officials. They can also lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD can develop at any time following a traumatic event, and can lead to depression, flashbacks, nightmares, overwhelming grief and fear, numbness, avoidance of intimacy, irritability, trouble concentrating and remembering, dizziness, nausea, panic attacks, and more.

- Please be aware that only medical professionals can diagnose PTSD. If you are concerned that the newcomer(s) may be suffering from mental trauma, you can help them identify and access counselling services and support programs.
- Each person's healing proceeds at its own pace. You have no way of knowing how long it may take for an individual to heal, nor can you judge whether the individual has made enough progress. Your role is to support and encourage.
- Gaining a sense of control over one's own life is critical to survivors of torture or other traumas. Therefore, your support should never take control from the newcomer, but should instead focus on empowerment.

- Private counselling may be expensive but there are other options, such as through the **Guelph Community Health Centre**, the **Canadian Mental Health Association**, the **Homewood Health Centre**, and **Insight Psychology** which all provide some counselling services. **Telehealth Ontario** also offers general supports 24/7 in various languages.

DENTAL CARE

The expanded Interim Federal Health Program only covers emergency and urgent dental health care issues. Emergency services include issues which involve alleviating pain, infections, haemorrhages, or oral trauma. Other services will require the newcomer(s) to sign up with a private dental clinic.

However, some dental services are available for free for children:

- **Healthy Smiles Ontario** is a free dental program for youths aged 17 and younger who demonstrate financial need. This program covers regular check-ups, cleanings, fillings, and emergency oral health issues.
- Youths 17 or younger who don't have dental coverage can also access the Public Health Preventive Dental Clinic, which provides teeth cleaning, fluoride applications, and teeth coating with sealants. More information can be found on **PublicHealth's website**.

COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

COMMUNITY

Participating in community activities is important to newcomers; it can help them meet new people, adjust to their new lives in Canada, and feel more included in their community. It is also an excellent way to practice their English conversation skills.

To find an association or group:

- Talk with the newcomer(s) about their interests. Would they prefer meeting people from their own ethnocultural community, or not? From the same neighbourhood? Do they care deeply about a certain issue or topic?
- Talk to people in your own networks to learn about existing groups and events.
- Find out if there is a Neighbourhood Group in their area (take a look at the Resources section of this handbook for the full list).

- Find out if there is an ethnocultural or religious association corresponding with the newcomer(s) background. Contact **Immigrant Services Guelph-Wellington**, the **Multicultural Festival**, or refer to the list of Places of Worship in the Resources section for ideas.
- Suggest that they volunteer in the local or cultural community (see “Volunteering” section below).

LIBRARIES

Public libraries can be sources of important services, learning tools, and free entertainment. For example, patrons can borrow books, music, and DVDs. They also have access to computers and the Internet, and can even find activities for children.

- To apply for a library card, bring valid identification and proof of address to any branch. The card is valid for one year but can be renewed by showing identification to library staff.
- The Guelph Public Library has services and programs geared toward **New Canadians**, including tools and programs for learning English, living in Guelph, and services in various languages.
- More information can be found [here](#) for Guelph and [here](#) for Wellington County.

RECREATION

Many recreation centres have ice rinks, tennis courts, basketball courts, and swimming pools. Many of these centres are low-cost or free to use, but there is often a fee to join organized programs, such as for swimming lessons or fitness classes. Some centres also have sports or programs specifically for individuals with disabilities.

- Both the **City of Guelph** and **Wellington County** hold many recreational events and activities, including skating, swimming, preschool and youth activities, pottery, camps, and senior community centres.
- The **Guelph YMCA** is currently offering a free 6-month membership for newcomers. If interested, the newcomer(s) can bring their immigration documentation to Member Services during their first year in Canada to redeem this offer. More information can be found on the **YMCA's website**.
- A lot of activities are available for families with young children. Refer to [this list](#) for a few examples.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is common in Canada, but working for free might seem strange to some newcomers. Since volunteering can lead to a number of social and economic benefits for newcomers (and long-time Canadians!), it can be helpful to present this type of opportunity to the newcomer(s) and discuss the benefits with them. For example:

- Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and make friends who share the same interests. It can help newcomers expand their networks within and beyond their ethnocultural community.
- Volunteering can be an opportunity to practice their English in real-life situations and with native speakers. This becomes particularly important if the newcomer(s) would otherwise not have many occasions to speak English with others.
- Depending on the type of work involved, volunteering can be a great way for newcomers to get Canadian work experience, acquire practical knowledge about the Canadian workplace, develop new skills, network, develop connections with potential references, and so on. It is therefore a useful activity to prepare their entry onto the job market.

If the newcomer(s) decide to volunteer, you can assist them in finding an organization or opportunity that suits their needs.

- When searching for an opportunity, keep in mind their schedule, skills, interests, and volunteering goals. You may also want to pay attention to opportunities for practicing English, the depth and breadth of interactions with other people, and the sorts of tasks the newcomers would be engaging in and how it can help build their skillsets for employment in their field.

A good starting point is the **People and Information Network (PIN)**. They have a wide variety of volunteer opportunities to choose from, including one-offs and long-term commitments in a number of fields requiring diverse types of skills.

- PIN also has opportunities for **Family Volunteering**, **Group Volunteering**, Couple Volunteering, and Youth Volunteering. Volunteering with friends or family may help them feel more comfortable.

Another organization the newcomer(s) could explore is the YMCA, which has a large volume of volunteers, making it easier for newcomer(s) to meet new people and continuously grow and learn new skills. Visit the **YMCA** for more information.

Resources

CITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

City Hall	1 Carden St Guelph, ON N1H 3A1 Phone: (519) 822-1260 www.guelph.ca
City Police	15 Wyndham St S Guelph, ON N1H 4C6 Phone (non-emergency): (519) 824-1212 www.guelphpolice.ca
Family & Children Services	275 Eramosa Road Guelph, ON N1H 6N3 Phone: (519) 824-2410 or 1-800-265-8300 www.fcsgw.org
Guelph-Wellington Immigration Portal	guelphwellingtonimmigration.ca/
Public Transit	170 Watson Rd S Guelph, ON N1L 1C1 Phone: (519) 822-1811 guelph.ca/living/getting-around/bus/
People and Information Network	55 Wyndham Street North Suite 4A Guelph, ON N1H 7T8 Phone: (519) 822-0912 pinnetwork.ca/
People and Information Network Community Information Program	pinnetwork.ca/community-programs/

EDUCATION / LANGUAGE TRAINING SERVICES

Conestoga College – Guelph Campus	460 Speedvale Ave W Guelph, ON N1H 7M7 Phone: (519) 824-9390 www.conestogac.on.ca
International Credential Assessment Services of Canada	100 Stone Road N, Unit 102 Guelph, ON N1G 5L3 Phone: (519) 763-7282 or 1-800-321-6021 www.icascanada.ca/contact.aspx
International Languages Program Wellington Catholic District School Board	St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School 287 Imperial Road South Guelph, ON N1K 1Z4 Phone: (519) 821-9160 wellingtoncdsb.ca
St. George's Centre for Adult English as a Second Language	21 King St Guelph, ON N1E 4P5 Phone: (519) 766-9551 ugdsb.ca/continuing-education/esl/classes-at-st-georges-centre-for-esl/
University of Guelph	50 Stone Road E Guelph, ON N1G 2W1 Phone: (519) 824-4120 www.uoguelph.ca
University of Guelph – English Language Programs	Open Learning and Education Support Johnston Hall 160 Guelph, ON N1G 2W1 Phone: (519) 824-4120 ext. 53956 www.eslguelph.ca

Upper Grand District School Board	500 Victoria Road North Guelph, ON N1E 6K2 Phone: (519) 822-4420 www.ugdsb.ca French Immersion: ugdsb.ca/programs/french-as-a-second-language-fsl-at-ugdsb/french-immersion/
Upper Grand District School Board Continuing Education	1428 Gordon Street Guelph, ON N1L 1C8 Phone: (519) 836-7280 ugdsb.ca/continuing-education/
Wellington Catholic District School Board	75 Woolwich Street Guelph, ON N1H 6N6 www.wellingtoncdsb.ca

EMERGENCY / CRISIS SERVICES

Distress Centre	Phone: (519) 821-3760 or 1-888-821-3760 torchlightservices.ca/
Emergency Shelter	Phone: (519) 767-6594 torchlightservices.ca/
Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis	38 Elizabeth Street Guelph, ON N1E 2X2 Phone: (519) 836-5710 or 1-800-265-7233 www.gwwomenincrisis.org/
Here 24 Seven Crisis Services	Phone: 1-844-437-3247
Sexual Assault Centre	Phone: (519) 823-5806 or 1-800-265-7233 www.gwwomenincrisis.org/get-help/sac/
Victim Services Wellington	15 Wyndham St S Guelph, ON N1H 4C6 Phone: (519) 824-1212 ext. 7304 www.vswguelph.on.ca
Youth Support Line	Phone: (519) 821-5469 torchlightservices.ca/

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

2 nd Chance Employment Counselling	177 Norfolk St. Guelph, ON N1H 4K2 Phone: (519) 824-2440 Suite 213 – 435 Stone Rd. W. (Stone Road Mall) Guelph, ON N1G 2X6 Phone: (519) 823-2818 104 – 160 St. David S. Fergus, ON N1M 2L3 Phone: (519) 843-5513 www.2ndchance.ca
Agilec	2 – 370 St. Andrew St. W. Fergus, ON N1M 1N9 Phone: (519) 787-0051 392 Main St. N. Mount Forest, ON N0G 2L2 Phone: (519) 323-3647 www.agilec.ca
Anishnabeg Outreach	11A Suffolk Street East Guelph, ON N1H 2H7 Phone: (519) 763-5292 aocan.org/
Bridging Employment Supports	147 Wyndham St. N. Guelph, ON N1H 4E9 Phone: (519) 749-3700 ext. 4084 cmhaww.ca/programs-services/employment-services/
Career Centre (Conestoga College)	299 Doon Valley Drive Kitchener, ON N2G 4M4 Phone: (519) 824-9390 ext. 6156 www.conestogac.on.ca/caa/careercentre/
Employment Ontario: Employment & Training Network	Phone: 1-800-387-5656 ontario.ca/page/employment-ontario
Global Experience Ontario	Phone: 1-866-670-4094 E-mail: geo@ontario.ca tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/geo.html

Business Centre Guelph-Wellington	8 Macdonell St., Suite 100 Guelph, ON, N1H 2Z3 Phone: (519) 826-4701 www.guelphbusiness.com
Lutherwood	89 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4E9 Phone: (519) 822-4141 www.lutherwood.ca
Ontario Works Employment and Financial Assistance	129 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4E9 Phone: (519) 823-7887 wellington.ca/en/social-services/ss-ontarioworks.aspx

FOOD BANKS

Arthur Food Bank	(519) 848-3272
Centre Wellington Food Bank	(519) 787-1401
Clifford Food Bank	(519) 327-8588
Drayton Food Bank	(519) 504-2346 www.draytonreformed.org/#/food-bank/4528580300
Guelph Food Bank	100 Crimea St Guelph, ON N1H 2Y6 Phone: (519) 767-1380 guelphfoodbank.ca
Harriston Food Bank	(519) 510-3663
Mount Forest Community Pantry	(519) 323-9218

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Canada Revenue Agency	Information for newcomers to Canada: www.cra-arc.gc.ca/newcomers
Driver's Examination Centre	106-225 Woodlawn Rd W Guelph, ON N1H 8J1 Phone: 1-888-570-6110 www.mto.gov.on.ca
Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada	Local office (by appointment only): 29 Duke St E Kitchener, ON N2H 1A2 Phone: 1-888-242-2100 canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees.html Welcome to Canada, handbook for newcomers: canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/welcome.pdf Living in Canada tool (questionnaires which offers needs assessment and links to services based on individual answers): www.cic.gc.ca/lctvac/english/index
Member of Parliament	111 Farquhar Street - Suite 103 Guelph, ON N1H 3N4 Phone: (519) 837-8276 mplongfield.ca/
Member of Provincial Parliament	173 Woolwich St Guelph, ON N1H 3V4 Phone: (519) 836-4190 mikeschreinermp.ca/
Ontario 211	Provincial database of local data and 24/7 multilingual telephone service Phone: 211 www.211ontario.ca
Passport Office	40 Weber St Kitchener, ON N2H 6R2 Phone: (519) 212-2285 servicecanada.gc.ca/tbhc-fsco/sc-dsp.jsp?rc=3010&lang=eng

Service Canada	259 Wooldawn Road West, Suite C Guelph, ON N1H 8J1 Phone: 1-800-622-6232
Service Ontario	1 Stone Rd W Guelph, ON N1G 4Y2 Phone: 1-888-376-5197 485 Silvercreek Pkwy N, Unit 16 Guelph, ON N1H 7K5 Phone: (519) 836-1636 or 1-800-387-3445

HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE

Canadian Mental Health Association	80 Waterloo Ave Guelph, ON N1H 0A1 Phone: (519) 821-8089 cmhaww.ca/
Community Care Access Centre Waterloo/Wellington	450 Speedvale Ave W Guelph, ON N1H 7Y6 Phone: (519) 923-2550 www.wwhealthline.ca/index.aspx
Family Midwifery Care	672 Woolwich St, Unit #1 Guelph, ON N1H 3Z1 Phone: (519) 763-8568 familymidwiferycare.ca/
Guelph Community Health Centre	176 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 8N9 Phone: (519) 821-6638 (clinic) (519) 821-5363 (information) guelphchc.ca/
Shelldale Location	20 Shelldale Crst Guelph, N1H 1C8 Phone: (519) 824-8498
Guelph General Hospital	115 Delhi Street Guelph, ON N1E 4J4 Phone: (519) 822-5350 www.gghorg.ca/
Guelph Midwives	3-176 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 8N9 Phone: (519) 823-9785 guelphmidwives.com/

Health Care Connect	Phone: (800) 445-1822 ontario.ca/page/find-family-doctor-or-nurse-practitioner
Health Ontario	Map of health care options in your community: www.ontario.ca/locations/health/
Homewood Health Centre	150 Delhi St Guelph, ON N1E 6K9 Phone: (519) 824-1010 homewoodhealth.com/health-centre
St. Joseph's Health Care	100 Westmount Rd Guelph, ON N1H 5H8 Phone: (519) 824-6000 sjhcg.ca/
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health	160 Chancellor's Way Guelph, ON N1G 0E1 Phone: (519) 822-7215 or 1-800-265-7293 www.wdgpulichealth.ca/

HOUSING

Out of Poverty Society	"The Bench", 150 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4G1 Phone: (519) 822-2887
Wellington County Housing Services	138 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4E8 Phone: (519) 824-7822 wellington.ca/en/social-services/ss-housing-services.aspx
Welcome In Drop-In Centre	23 Gordon St Guelph, ON N1H 4G9 Phone: (519) 837-0080 www.ibvm.ca/works/justice/welcome-drop-in
County of Wellington Housing Help Centre	138 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4E8 Phone: (519) 824-7822 x4130 wellington.ca/en/social-services/housinghelpcentre.aspx

LEGAL SERVICES

Family Law Information Clinic	Family Court House 74 Woolwich St Guelph, ON N1H 3T9
Lawyer Referral Service	Phone: 1-800-268-8326
Legal Aid Ontario	Phone: 1-800-668-8258 www.legalaid.on.ca/
Legal Clinic of Guelph & Wellington County	176 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 6Z9 Phone: (519) 821-2100 or 1-800-628-9205 gwlegalclinic.ca/

NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUPS

Brant Avenue	35 Algonquin Dr Guelph, ON N1E 3P2 Phone: (519) 821-9243 E-mail: brant.ave.ng@gmail.com
Downtown	E-mail: guelphdna@gmail.com
Exhibition Park	70 Division St Guelph, ON N1H 4R5 www.epng.ca/
Grange Hill East	Ken Danby School 525 Grange Road Guelph, ON N1E 7C4 Phone: (519) 836-9427 www.gheng.ca/
Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition	Phone: (519) 803-3374 guelphneighbourhoods.org/
Hanlon Creek	E-mail: hanlon_creek_neighbourhood@yahoo.ca
The Junction	E-mail: thejunctionng@gmail.com junctionng.wordpress.com/
Two Rivers Neighbourhood Group	E-mail: info@tworiversng.ca www.tworiversng.com/

PLACES OF WORSHIP

ELORA

Bethel Mennonite Church	6772 8th Line at Side road 11 519-846-0180
Centre Pentecostal Church	Box 279, 7674 Colborne St 519-846-0272
Grand River Community Church	7438 Wellington County Road 18 519-846-6683
Jehovah's Witnesses	7719 Colbourne Street 519-787-1985
Knox Presbyterian Church	51 Church Street 519-846-0680
St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church	36 Henderson Street & Smith Street 519-846-5911
St. Mary Immaculate	267 Geddes Street 519-846-5093

FERGUS

Bahai Community	P.O. Box 114 519-843-2890
Bethel Baptist Church	675 Victoria Terrace 519-843-2890
Elora Fergus Unitarian Universalist Church	150 Albert Street W 1-800-565-2353
Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church	290 Belsyde Avenue E 519-843-5030
Grace Christian Fellowship	35 Farley Road 519-787-1978
Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church	Belsyde Street E 519-843-1118
Melville United Church	300 St. Andrew Street W 519-843-1781

New Apostolic Church	792 St. Andrew Street W 1-866-622-7828
Spirit Life Christian Centre	135 St. David Street S 519-843-7562
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church	325 St. George Street 519-843-3565
St. James the Apostle Anglican Church	171 Queen Street E 519-843-2141
St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church	760 St. David Street N 519-843-2006

GUELPH

Arkell Road Bible Chapel	39 Arkell 519-836-4593
Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate	28 Norfolk St 519-824-3951
Beth Isaiah Synagogue	47 Surrey St W 519-822-8487
Bethany Baptist Church	83 Essex St 519-837-2519
Calvary Baptist Church	454 Arkell Rd 519-824-1161
Community of Christ	390 Speedvale Ave E 519-822-4150
Crestwicke Baptist Church	300 St. Andrew Street W 519-843-1781
Dublin St. United church	68 Suffolk St W 519-821-0610
Encounter World Religion Centre	390 Speedvale Ave E 519-822-0099
First Baptist Church	255 Woolwich St 519-824-8230
First Christian Reformed Church	287 Water St 519-822-7720

Forward Church Willow	495 Willow Rd 226-755-2340
Gospel Hall	4 Yorkshire St S 519-836-7162
Guelph Bible Chapel	491 Waterloo Ave 519-822-7290
Guelph Christian Life Church	3 Watson Rd S 519-212-7665
Guelph Seventh-Day Adventist Church	114 St Lane 519-836-1432
Guelph Sikh Society	70 Stevenson Street 519-822-1112
Harcourt Memorial United Church	87 Dean Ave 519-824-4177
Holy Protection Mother of God Ukranian Catholic Church	115 Cork St W 519-837-1642
Holy Rosary Rectory	175 Emma St 519-822-4701
Jehovas Witnesses	11 Torch Ln 519-763-6407
Jehova's Witnesses	639 Eramosa Rd
Knox Presbyterian Church	20 Quebec St 519-821-0141
Kortright Presbyterian Church	55 Devere Dr 519-836-9400
Lakeside Church	7654 Conservation Rd 519-836-8141
Lakeside Downtown & HOPE House	75 Norfolk St 519-822-6165
Masjid Aisha	44 Marlborough Rd 226-486-1143
New Apostolic Church	245 Delhi St 1-866-622-7828

New Life Christian Reformed Church of Guelph	400 Victoria Rd N 519-823-5851
Parkview Church	89 Speedvale Ave E 519-822-7602
Parkwood Gardens Community Church of the United Bretheren in Christ	5501 Whitelaw Rd 519-836-0180
Priory Park Baptist Church	8 Torch Ln 519-836-7950
River of Life International Fellowship Church	40 Margaret St 519-827-1565
Riverside Community Reformed Church	79 Speedvale Ave E 519-836-1730
Royal City Baptist Church	100 Ridgewood Ave 519-823-5099
Royal City Evangelical Missionary Church	50 Quebec St 519-763-3614
Sacred Heart Church	98 Alice St 519-822-8944
Saint Joseph's Church	409 Paisley Rd 519-822-4614
Salvation Army Guelph Citadel	1320 Gordon St 519-836-9360
Spiritwind Christian Centre	100 Crimea St 519-836-1863
St James The Apostle Anglican Church	86 Glasgow St N 519-822-1061
St Matthias Anglican Church	171 Kortright Rd W 519-767-2212
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church	161 Norfolk St 519-822-4772

St. George Greek Orthodox Church	50 Dovercliffe Rd 519-824-8010
St. George's Anglican Church	99 Woolwich St 519-822-1366
St. John's Parish	45 Victoria Rd N 519-824-7311
St. Paul's Lutheran Church	210 Silvercreek Pkwy N 519-821-7710
St. Philopater Church	40 Wilbert St 519-780-2200
Sugarbush Christian Church	Main Floor, 86 Glasgow St N 519-826-5767
Three Willows United Church	577 Willow Rd 519-522-7690
Trinity United Church	400 Stevenson St N
Unitarian Congregation of Guelph	122 Harris St 519-836-3443
Westminster-ST Paul's Church	206 Victoria Rd N 519-824-5221
Westwood United Church	577 Willow Rd
Word of Life Regional Church	355 Elmira Rd N 519-821-1022

RURAL CHURCHES

Bethany United Church	Corner of Sideroad 10 and 4th Line East, SE of Inverhaugh 519-846-0122
St. John's United Church	28 Queen Street, Belwood 519-843-1227

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT & SUPPORT INITIATIVES

Government of Canada #WelcomeRefugees Initiative	www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/index.asp
Government of Ontario Syrian refugees: how you can help	www.ontario.ca/page/syrian-refugees-how-you-can-help
Muslim Society of Guelph Refugee Lifeline	www.msosfg.org/refugee-life-line.html
Refugee Sponsorship Training Program	Information, e-training, videos & webinars for sponsoring groups: www.rstp.ca/en/training/
Upper Grand Learning Foundation 'Free to Achieve Fund'	www.uppergrandlearningfoundation.com/funds/free-to-achieve.aspx
Waterloo Wellington Welcomes Refugees	www.wwlhin.on.ca/forhsps/refugeeplan.aspx

RESOURCES FOR REFUGEES

Duolingo	Free language learning app: www.duolingo.com/
Settlement Information (provided in 30 languages)	Settlement.org: settlement.org/translated-information/
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's YouTube Channel (videos available in multiple languages)	www.youtube.com/channel/UC50bi5fNoYQk11IWhfi3I4w Video - Your First Two Weeks in Canada: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/video/your-first-two-weeks-canada.html Videos - Stories of Refugees: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9D5CCC7CCBCFA4C4

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE & BENEFITS

Ministry of Community & Social Services Ontario Disability Support Program	1 Stone Rd Guelph, ON N1G 4Y2 Phone: (519) 822-7500 or 1-800-567-2953
Ontario Works	129 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4E9 Phone: (519) 837-2670 ext. 339 or 1-800-265-7294
Wellington County, Childcare Subsidy	21 Douglas St Guelph, ON N1H 2S7 Phone: (519) 837-3620 ext. 3090 or 1-800-265-7294 ext. 3090 wellington.ca/en/social-services/cey-feesubsidy.aspx
Wellington County, Rent Bank & Energy Emergency Fund	129 Wyndham St N Guelph, ON N1H 4E9 Phone: (519) 837-5492 ext. 3710 wellington.ca/en/social-services/emergencyenergyprogramme.aspx

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Immigrant Services-Guelph Wellington	104 Dawson Road Unit 102 Guelph, ON N1H 1A6 Phone: (519) 836-2222 http://www.is-gw.ca/
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