

MCC Ontario and the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program?

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program is a partnership program administered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the people of Canada to extend Canada's capacity to resettle refugees from abroad.

Mennonite Central Committee is a sponsorship agreement holder; it has signed an agreement with the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration which allows it to approve churches and groups to sponsor refugees under its agreement. MCC and the sponsoring group work closely together in initiating the refugee sponsorship process and in preparing to assist refugees, who arrive through this process, to settle in Canada.

Who are refugees?

Persons fleeing war, persecution and political upheaval. With no time to waste and with the threat of death hanging over them, they are uprooted and endure great hardships during flight. They become refugees when they cross borders; seeking safety in another country.

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), by the end of 2013, there are over 51.2 million people have been forcefully displaced, including 16.7 million refugees and 33.3 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs). The UNHCR has identified three durable solutions for refugees: ***voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement in a third country.***

Why sponsors refugees?

It is a call to respond to the plight of refugees who have suffered persecution, violence and human rights abuses; and with no other durable solution. MCC's work with refugees grows out of its belief that Jesus calls us to feed the hungry, give a cup of water to the thirsty, clothe the naked and welcome the stranger (Matthew 25:35).

What are the options for resettlement?

In most cases, refugees return home when peace and stability is restored. However, when the condition remains unstable or there is danger of persecution upon return, some of the refugees are able to stay in the country of asylum. Unfortunately, only a few countries are able to accept refugees permanently. Hence, resettlement in a third country such as Canada is the last option, and is available to only 1% of the world refugees.

What are the responsibilities of a sponsoring group?

The sponsoring group must:

- Complete a settlement plan outlining the settlement arrangements put in place for the sponsored refugees, such as finding suitable housing for them, and helping them to learn an official language, get a job, make friends, and learn about our Canadian culture and values, and about services in the community; and
- Make provision for reception, care, lodging and settlement assistance and support for the sponsored refugees for the duration of the sponsorship period which is 12 months from the date of arrival of the refugee or until the refugee becomes self-supporting and no longer requires settlement assistance, whichever is less.
- Private sponsors support the sponsored refugees by:
 - Providing the cost of food, rent, public transportation and household utilities and other day-to-day living expenses
 - Providing clothing, furniture and other household goods
 - Locating interpreters
 - Selecting a family physician and dentist
 - Assisting with applying for provincial health-care coverage and the Interim Federal Health Program
 - Enrolling children in school and adults in language training
 - Introducing newcomers to people with similar personal interests
 - Providing orientation with regard to banking services, transportation, etc.
 - Helping in the search for employment.
- Physically reside in the expected community of settlement.

We want to sponsor a refugee family. What is the process?

You can obtain information on how your church or community can be involved in the sponsorship program, by contacting Moses Moini at 905-646-3161 or mosesmoini@mcco.ca

Current Sponsorship Priorities

From 2015-2020 MCC is involved in a major resettlement campaign of Syrian and Iraqi refugees. We are also engaged in the sponsorship of refugees referred to Canada for resettlement by the UN-HCR through the Blended Sponsorship Program. More info about the Blended Sponsorship Program is available at mcccanada.ca/learn/more/blended-refugee-sponsorship-project.

We can't do it without you!

MCC is blessed with capacity and the support of Mennonites and Brethren in Christ churches in Canada. Thanks for your partnership in sharing God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ. Together, we give refugees hope!

*"For the Lord your God...loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing.
You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."* Deuteronomy 10:18-19