

Groups of Five

What is the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program?

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSR) 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. In Private Sponsorship, Sponsorship Agreement Holders and their Constituent Groups, Community Sponsors and Groups of Five can sponsor refugees.



What is a Group of Five?

In the PSR program, a Group of Five (G5) is any group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents that comes together for the purpose of sponsoring refugees.



What is the Group Responsible For and For How Long?

As a sponsoring group, you must:

- Provide basic financial support and settlement assistance including but not limited to:
- Housing, including finding permanent housing; interpreters; settlement services; transportation; health care; education; schooling; and dealing with crisis or trauma.
- Complete a detailed settlement plan outlining settlement arrangements put in place and the individuals who will be involved
- At the time of submitting the sponsorship undertaking, the group will have to provide information on their financial resources as well as their ability and commitment to support the sponsored refugee(s) for the sponsorship period, which is usually 12 months.

Who Can Be a Member of a Group of Five?

To be eligible to sponsor, each member of the Group of Five must:

- be 18 years of age or older
- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident
- live in the community where the refugee will live
- and make a commitment to support the refugee financially and with settlement support for the duration of the sponsorship period, usually for one year.

For more information please consult the Sponsor Assessment Form available at:

www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/kits/forms/IMM5492E.PDF

Can I be a Member of More Than One Group of Five?

This depends on your financial capacity and your availability. CIC will deduct any prior commitments from the sponsorship undertaking and assess whether you have the necessary funds and time to support the additional undertaking based on your previous and present commitments.

Who Can Be Sponsored Under the PSR Program?

Refugees who would qualify under the **Convention Refugees Abroad** or Members of the **Country of Asylum Class** may be sponsored. They must also be **recognized by a foreign state or the UNHCR as a refugee** and submit supporting documents such as the UNHCR's *Refugee Certificate – Mandate Letter of Protection* or a foreign state recognition document.

Refugees already in Canada are *not* eligible to for refugee sponsorship.

What is the Sponsorship Process?

After the application has been received at the Centralized Processing Office in Winnipeg, it will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy. If it is accepted, it is forwarded to the visa office abroad for further processing. A visa officer will interview the applicant, and, if accepted, the refugee(s) will undergo medical, criminality and security checks.

Generally the processing times of PSR cases vary; this depends on whether the person is a sponsor-referred or visa office-referred refugee, which country the person is coming from and the complexity of his or her immigration application. As well it should be noted that many visa posts have long processing times due to a large number of unprocessed cases.

For more information on the processing times of individual visa posts, visit: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/times/perm/ref-private.asp>

Please note: Visa Office-Referred (VOR) refugees tend to arrive more quickly because they have already been interviewed by a visa officer and are usually travel-ready. Sponsoring groups can usually expect to receive a VOR case within 3-6 months of submitting their undertaking to sponsor.

How Do I Find a Refugee to Sponsor?

A group may submit an undertaking to sponsor a particular refugee(s) from abroad (sponsor-referred refugee). It is also possible for a Group of Five to sponsor a refugee that had been identified by a visa officer abroad (Visa Office-Referred (VOR) refugee). If your group is interested in being matched with a visa office-referred refugee, you can submit a request for a refugee profile to CIC.

The form is available online at: www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/ref-profile.asp



UNHCR photo by Phili Behan

More Information....

The Sponsoring Group Handbook provides further information on the PSR program and sponsoring as a Group of Five. The handbook is available online at www.rstp.ca.

The Refugee Sponsorship Application package can be found on the Citizenship and Immigration Canada website at: www.cic.gc.ca.