

# RSTP Bulletin

July 13, 2018

## INQUIRIES

### You Asked

Is it possible to sponsor unaccompanied under age refugees?

### Our Answer

There is currently a moratorium on sponsoring unaccompanied or separated minors (i.e. children under the age of 18).

There are two exceptions:

- 1) Unaccompanied/separated minors with an adult guardian (where the minor is a de facto dependent of the guardian); and,
- 2) Unaccompanied/separated minors with family members in Canada.

For the first exception, the minor and the guardian would both have to be sponsored for resettlement to Canada on separate application packages.

For the latter, once the application is received overseas, the Visa Office may contact the family members in Canada as part of the application process and conduct a Best Interests Determination (BID) for the unaccompanied minor using UNHCR's BID guidance, and the application will only be approved in circumstances where it is considered to be in the best interests of the minor.

Factors that will be taken into account in the BID include: whether the parents are alive (either in the country of origin, country of asylum or a third country); other family members such as siblings that may be alive; the relationship between the minor and the relative in Canada; and, the views of the child. The relative in Canada may also have to go through the process of obtaining legal guardianship of the unaccompanied/separated minor either before or after arrival.

More information can be found in Section 8.4 of UNHCR's Resettlement Handbook Country Chapter on Canada <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/resettlement/3c5e55594/unhcr-resettlement-handbook-country-chapter-canada.html>.



A Syrian refugee waits to meet the Canadian Prime Minister during Canada Day celebrations on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario - 2016. (Photo: Chris Wattie)

### UPDATE:

The **2018 National SAH Conference** presentations, materials and handouts are now available on the SAH only section of our website. **You can login to access them!**



UNHCR's Guidelines on BID can be found at the following link: <http://www.unhcr.org/4566b16b2.pdf>

More information on the process that IRCC will follow when processing separated or unaccompanied minors can be found at the following link:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/refugee-protection/resettlement/processing-procedures-separated-minors.html>

### Exciting News!!!

RSTP is happy to announce the launch of **BVOR NEWS**! Starting next week, you'll be receiving all BVOR related information, inquiries and profiles on **the bi-weekly BVOR NEWS**!



Syrian refugee Osama holds his baby daughter as they arrive at the welcome centre at Toronto's Pearson Airport on Friday December 18, 2015. (Photo: Chris Young/Canadian Press)

## You Asked

Could you clarify the exit visa situation for refugees in Thailand?

## Our Answer

**Below is the most recent information from the IRCC Mission Specific Update document with regard to exit procedures from Thailand:**

**“Exit permits:** Refugees in Bangladesh or those who are not registered with the UNHCR in Thailand, Malaysia, or Indonesia are unlikely to obtain exit permits. IOM and UNHCR must have at least one month lead time to complete exit permit formalities

for refugees who are registered and meet requirements. Some PSRs are not persons of concern to UNHCR and therefore the IRCC Office can obtain only limited, if any, assistance from UNHCR with the exit permit process

**Territory:** The territory of the Singapore IRCC Office is large and complex, comprising 11 countries. Only Cambodia and East Timor have signed the Refugee Convention and its Protocols. Thailand has an encampment policy for refugees from Myanmar. Coordinating area trips to remote camps along the Thai-Myanmar border is both logistically challenging and resource-intensive. There are mixed populations of urban refugees in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia originating from Africa and the Middle East as well as Asia. South-East Asian countries are often used by people smugglers and human traffickers to transit refugees from other parts of Asia, the Middle East, and Africa who are seeking passage elsewhere. This means that a lot of potential PSR applicants are transient, and sometimes they get picked up by immigration authorities and detained or deported.

**For urban cases in Thailand:** Mandatory detention prior to departure and the payment of a fine for overstaying in Thailand are also standard procedures imposed by local authorities.



Rahtoo Trawgaye points to where his native country of Myanmar (formerly Burma) is on the map. Trawgaye, who arrived in Canada as a refugee in 2008, now helps fellow Karen refugees assimilate into the Langley community as a settlement worker at Immigrant Services Society of BC. (Photo Troy Landreville /Langley Times)

**For cases from the Myanmar border refugee camps in Thailand:** To be eligible for resettlement, a person must be registered with the Royal Thai Government through the national procedure, called the Provincial Admission Board (PAB). Unregistered applicants will not be able to leave Thailand. Persons from the camps sponsored as PSRs must be able to present a UNHCR Household Information form bearing the name, date of birth, and photograph, as well as the category of “REG” (registered), for each family member. It is worth noting that without UNHCR registration for each family member, an applicant in a camp cannot do medical examinations (no registration = no camp pass to go to the IOM clinic) and cannot obtain exit permit(s). Cases not meeting this requirement will be closed. For this reason, sponsors should refrain from submitting sponsorships for unregistered refugees in the camps in Thailand.”



Let us celebrate and reflect on the compassion of Canadians, who continue to welcome those who flee their homes for various reasons!

# Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)



Syrian refugee Yasin Alhomsy (far right) celebrates Canada in Vancouver after being separated from his father Mamon Alhomsy (center) and siblings for nearly 15 years. (Photo: Bal Brach/CBC News)

The JAS program enable the resettlement of vulnerable refugees who require special assistance and whose admissibility to Canada depends on the additional support of a sponsor. Under a JAS, the government provides financial assistance to the refugee while sponsoring groups provide community and emotional support and orientation, and ensure access to appropriate services.

Refugees sponsored under the JAS program are identified as having special needs that will likely result in a longer or more difficult period of integration in Canada due to:

- Trauma from violence or torture
- Medical disabilities
- Effects of systemic discrimination, or
- Large family unit (i.e.: higher number of family members).

**There are currently 38 In-Canada JAS cases waiting to be sponsored!**

## Including

**Refugee Profile #: 1406-07-18**

**Additional Information: London, ON**

**Country of Origin: Eritrea**

**Family Size: Four**

35-year-old Eritrean single mother, with 3 children between the ages of 9 months and 10 years old. The mother has experience as a cook and cleaner.

**Medical needs:** As the mother is suffering from previous trauma as a survivor of violence, she would benefit from on-going emotional support, to help build self-esteem and confidence. Any additional counselling and psychological support will assist the family in becoming secure, confident, medically fit and positively responsive to all daily needs.

**Support needed:** Given the family's experience with violence and grief, the mother would benefit from a sponsor group who can help her access resources and support from others who have raised children in Canada. Support to learn English, which includes speaking, reading, writing and sign language would be beneficial to the mother. This family has no relatives or friends in Canada. Someone that they can trust, who is able to help them integrate into Canadian life and teach them about the culture, for instance how to carry out daily tasks, will greatly benefit this family.



For more information on the JAS program, contact our Refugee Resettlement Project Worker at [bvor@rstp.ca](mailto:bvor@rstp.ca) or click on: [http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Blended-VOR-FAQ\\_2017-1-1.pdf](http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Blended-VOR-FAQ_2017-1-1.pdf)



# Upcoming RSTP Webinars

## The PSR Program: How to Prepare and Submit a Successful Application Package

**Date:** Monday, July 16, 2018

**Time:** 1:00 pm EDT

**Description:** This RSTP webinar will cover:  
An overview of the application process;  
Recent updates and changes to processing;  
Who can be included on one application package;  
What supporting documents need to be included in the application package;  
Completing the forms for Groups of Five;  
Completing the forms for Community Sponsors;  
Proof of funds requirements; and, completing the refugees' forms.

**For registration, please click on:**  
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/825029936727496195>

## The PSR Program: Adding Dependents Post-Submission and Updating Applications

**Date:** Wednesday, July 18, 2018

**Time:** 1:00 pm EDT

**Description:** This RSTP webinar would cover topics such as: the importance of keeping IRCC up-to-date with any changes in circumstances; who to contact and when; and, how to add dependents post-submission.

**For registration, please click on:**  
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1628867494631802371>

## The PSR Program: Supporting Settlement and Integration

**Date:** Monday, July 23, 2018

**Time:** 1:00 pm EDT

**Description:** This RSTP webinar would cover topics such as: recap of sponsors' settlement and financial responsibilities under the PSR program; the importance of connecting newcomers with a settlement agency; managing expectations; power imbalance; and, ethical considerations.

**For registration, please click on:**  
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3362991945192711427>

## The PSR Program: Preparing for Month 13

**Date:** Wednesday, July 25, 2018

**Time:** 1:00 pm EDT

**Description:** This RSTP webinar would cover topics such as: when should sponsors start preparing for Month 13; what to consider when preparing newcomers for Month 13; services available for sponsored newcomers in Month 13; evaluating the sponsorship; and, the post-sponsorship relationship.

**For registration, please click on:**  
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4168341331585263107>

**Canada is another year older!  
Let's make it possible for refugees to celebrate another year!  
Give the gift of life by sponsoring a refugee!**



**WE WELCOME  
REFUGEES**



# Upcoming RSTP Workshops

## Sponsorship Undertaking and Settlement Plan - Groups of Five

**Date:** Wednesday July 18, 2018

**Time:** 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm EST

**Where:** CCS Office – Scarborough, 55 Town Centre Court, Suite 401, Toronto, ON M1P 4X4

**Description:** This session would cover:

- Key changes to requirements/process
- Financial Considerations
- Hands on completing the new Sponsorship Undertaking and Settlement Plan form

**Attendees will have the opportunity to practice completing their settlement plan and encouraged to bring their own laptops if possible.**

**For registration, please click: [here](#)**

## Groups of Five & Community Sponsors

**Date:** Saturday July 21, 2018

**Time:** 12:30 - 3:30 PM MDT

**Where:** Calgary Central Library, 616-MacLeod Trail SE Rm- # 2 Calgary Alberta

**Description:** Topics covered will be:

- The specific requirements for G5 & CS under the PSR program;
- Eligibility and admissibility requirements for refugees being sponsored;
- The sponsorship process;
- Which forms need to be completed;
- How to complete the forms; and
- A step-by-step guide for Sponsors on how to prepare and submit a complete and successful application package with a focus on the Settlement Plan and Financial Assessment Form.

**For registration, please click on [this link](#) or contact Anoush Newman at 403. 515-5868 or [mnewman@rstp.ca](mailto:mnewman@rstp.ca).**

## Navigating the New Settlement Plan for Group of Five (G5) Sponsors

**Date:** Thursday, July 19, 2018

**Time:** 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm EDT

**Where:** Catholic Crosscultural Services Mississauga, 3660 Hurontario Street, 7th floor, Mississauga, ON L5B 3C4

**Description:** In this workshop, attendees would learn:

- What a perfect settlement plan looks like;
- How to calculate costs and reflect the budget in the form; and
- About new elements in the settlement plan. Please bring your laptop to the session. We will demonstrate how to fill out the form and you can finish yours by the end of the session.

**For registration, please click [here](#) or contact RSTP Trainer, Inas Hamid at Tel: 905.273.4140 ext.239 or email: [ihamid@rstp.ca](mailto:ihamid@rstp.ca).**

For more information, please visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/training/>



RSTP Trainer [Bethlehem Daniel](#), presenting information about the BVOR Program at The Refugee Hub in Ottawa. (Photo: Twitter @RefugeeHub)

Refugee  
Sponsorship  
Training  
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Catholic Crosscultural Services



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