

RSTP Bulletin

The latest news and updates on the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program

INQUIRIES

You Asked

Can the principal applicant take a friend or a relative to the refugee interview for emotional support?

Our Answer

The principal applicant will be interviewed by a Canadian migration officer. Interviews are not like the in-Canada refugee hearings or trials, where a lawyer or a third party can accompany the applicant. The overseas interviews for the PSR applicants follow different procedures.



Nature of Overseas Interviews

The Government of Canada will decide whether a refugee can be sponsored and resettled in Canada based on:

- Documents sent by the sponsoring group showing that they can adequately support the refugee(s),
- Supporting documents sent by the refugee about the claim for refugee protection,
- Other information available to the officer (such as details of the conditions of the country the refugee is fleeing, and in the country where the refugee has taken temporary asylum), **and/or**
- An interview with the applicant.

An interview is not a mandatory requirement. It is one way in which the Canadian migration officer abroad establishes whether the applicant is eligible and admissible for resettlement to Canada under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program. However, interviews are required in most cases.

In some cases interviews are not required, such as:

- Cases where urgent protection need has been identified;
- In situations where travel from the refugees' location is not possible due to security considerations;
- In cases where the migration officer is able to make a decision by paper screening based on country condition or group acceptance.

Waiving interviews, does not mean the waiver of medical, [criminality and security checks](#). Everyone who is accepted for resettlement to Canada must have undergone and passed the [admissibility screening](#).

Preparing Refugees for Interviews

Since the decision of the visa officer depends significantly on the outcome of the interview, sponsors can play a large role in preparing the refugee applicants for the interview.

Sponsors should ensure applicants attend the interview with the requested documentation listed on the convocation letter:

- An updated and completed Schedule A for each dependant over the age of 18; and
- Completed forms for each new family member (children, spouse) not listed on the original application.

Also, sponsors should advise applicants to submit only genuine documentation with their applications. If fraudulent documents were submitted or if the applicant is not truthful at the interview, it may result in the refusal of their application. Spouse and dependent children in the same country of asylum as the Principal Applicant (PA) should attend the interview.

The Canadian migration office will inform the refugee applicants of the date, time and place of their interview. It's important that refugees attend the interviews on the set date and on time. Sponsors should advise the refugee or refugee family they are sponsoring to attend the interview. Some IRCC Offices will refuse cases where the applicant does not attend interviews without notifying the IRCC Office. Sponsors should also make sure to provide IRCC with updated contact information for the refugee applicants.

Before the Interview

It is crucial for the principal applicant to **review copies of all application forms and supporting documents** that were submitted to the migration office with respect to their case.

Sponsors should advise the refugee applicant to review the application form and any supporting documents that were sent to the IRCC migration office. The refugee applicant should:

- Make sure that information in the application forms is **correct** and **up-to-date**. Should notify the visa office and sponsors of any mistakes prior to the interview;
- Make sure to have provided **all available** supporting documents that are **relevant to the case**;
- Make sure to inform the migration office (and sponsors) prior to the interview of any changes (marriages, births or deaths) that are not reflected in the application forms;
- Make sure **ALL** your family members are mentioned including those whose whereabouts are not known or who are considered deceased. If family members (both accompanying and non-accompanying) are not included in the forms, the refugee applicant should inform the migration office and sponsors immediately.

The Refugee Story

The most common reason for rejection is inconsistency that occurs when facts given at the interview are different from the information provided in the application forms. Thus it's important for sponsors to advise the Principal Applicant to carefully **read the personal story** that was submitted to the migration office as part of the application. The Principal Applicant should make sure that all **events** that happened to him/her and his/her family are **true** and **properly dated**. If the Principal Applicant **notices any mistakes** in their personal story or believes that some of the relevant events, incidents or dates are missing, they should inform the migration office (and their sponsor) prior to the interview.

During the Interview

As mentioned above, the Canadian migration office will inform the refugee applicants of the date, time and place of their interview. It's important that the Principal Applicant, their spouse and dependent children in the same country of asylum as the Principal Applicant attend the interview.

Sponsors should prepare the Principal Applicant to answer questions about the **nature and causes of the refugee claim and current situation in the home country and country of asylum**.



**Information on
Interview Preparation
can be found on our
website in:**

[\(in Arabic\) العربية](#)

[\(in Dari\) دری](#)

[\(in Somali\) soomaali](#)

[\(in Amharic\) አማርኛ](#)

[\(in Tigrinya\) ትግርኛ](#)

[\(in English\)](#)

[\(in French\) en Français](#)

Please feel free to **print & share** with those you are sponsoring!



Refugees sponsored under the **Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)** program have special or enhanced 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 units (such as a single parent with several children).

Under the JAS program, the government and private sponsors support refugees for up to 24 months, depending on the need of the resettled refugee. In a few cases, the private sponsor may support refugees for up to 36 months. These refugees get income support from the Government of Canada. They are matched with a private sponsorship group to help them adjust to life in Canada through settlement help and emotional support.

Some refugees are identified overseas for the JAS program due to special needs. Others are converted into JAS cases after they arrive in Canada if it becomes clear that they need more support.

JAS refugee profiles can only be picked up by SAHs and their constituent groups.

Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)

Many In-Canada JAS Refugee Profiles are waiting to be sponsored!

Including

In-Canada JAS Refugee PROFILE #: 1498-08-18

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Calgary, AB

IRCC Local Office: Calgary, AB

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Iraq

FAMILY SIZE: 1

Family composition: A 38 year old woman who is an Iraqi national. She arrived in Calgary, AB last year.

Special needs: She is illiterate, has no formal education and is a survivor of violence and torture. Despite the resources provided her, she requires extra support due to acute past trauma, lack of formal education, and low urban living skills. She has no family in Canada and struggles with loneliness, consequently her mental health is very poor and she is highly medicated. Her settlement to Calgary has been hindered due to her concern for her family. They remain in Iraq, and their location and wellbeing is unknown.

Support needed: The assistance of a sponsor would help her learn to navigate the healthcare system and public transit system, and help her adapt to life in Canada. Also, the assistance of a sponsor could provide her with opportunities to informally practice her English and attend her medical appointments.

In-Canada JAS Refugee PROFILE #: 1483-08-18
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Winnipeg, MB
IRCC Local Office: Winnipeg, MB
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Iraq
FAMILY SIZE: 5

Family composition: A 39 year old Iraqi man, a survivor of Daesh, who lives with his four young children aged from six to 14 years old. He does not know the whereabouts of the rest of his family, his wife and two children.

Special needs: He has no formal education and is likely to face additional barriers in accessing the workforce due to his lack of formal education and language skills. As a victim of violence and trauma, he has been referred to local organizations providing counselling and family support in Winnipeg.

Support needed: He would benefit from time to take care of his young children and from extended financial assistance. A sponsor could help him to overcome challenges such as transportation, medical appointments, communication and cultural adaptation, and help him understand how to search for work so that he can become more independent.

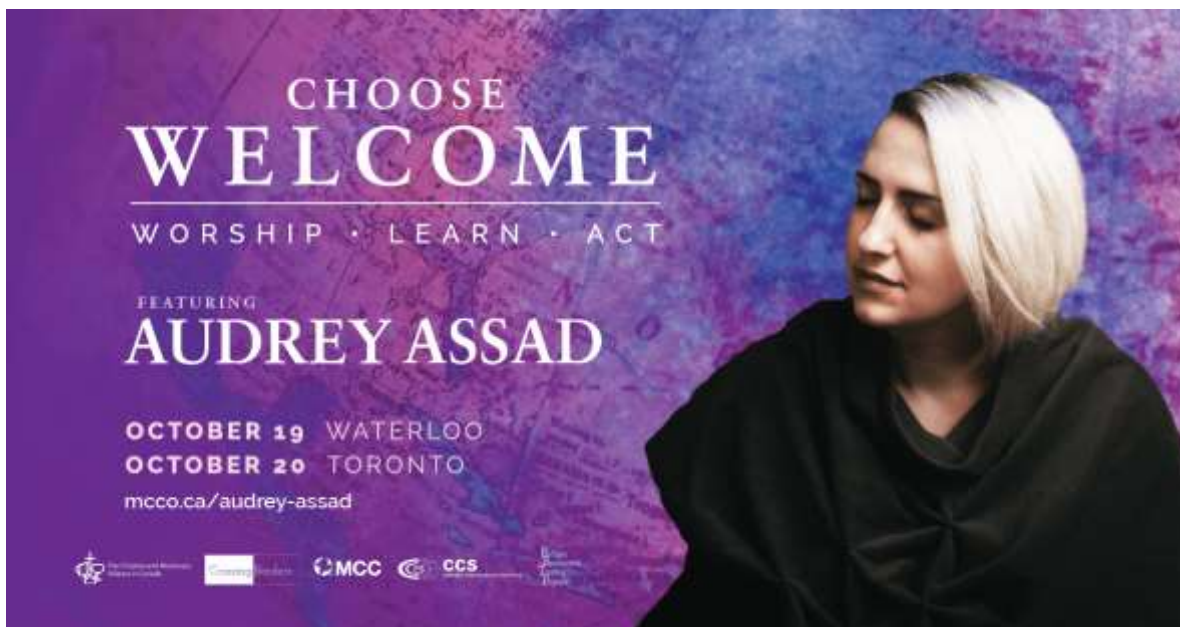
In-Canada JAS Refugee PROFILE #: 1496-08-18
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: London
IRCC Local Office: London, ON
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Iraq
FAMILY SIZE: 2

Family composition: A single mother, accompanied by her 10 month old son.

Special needs: She is a survivor of Da'esh and is considered a woman at risk. She was in a vulnerable situation in her country of asylum, requiring medical attention and help with depression.

Support needed: As a survivor of violence with no contacts in Canada, she needs support to overcome current language barriers, trauma and challenges in raising a child. She also needs support to connect her and her son to services based on their needs.

For more information about the JAS program or to get more on these JAS Refugee Profiles, contact our Refugee Resettlement Project Worker at paznavehzadeh@rstp.ca or visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/special-initiatives/joint-assistance-sponsorships/>



**Upcoming
BVDR Promotion
Events
Hosted By MCC**

Waterloo:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/729503777386820/>

Toronto:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1115031318646850/>

Upcoming RSTP Workshops & Webinars

Workshops

Group of 5 Sponsorship Session

Date: Thursday, October 11, 2018

Time: 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm MDT

Where: 8212-118 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB, T5B 0S3

Description: Topics covered in this information session, include:

- Recent changes and updates to PSR program;
- Eligibility and admissibility requirements;
- Sponsorship process;
- Specific requirements of G5;
- How to identify acceptable proof of refugee status; and
- Which forms need to be completed.

Please register by: Contacting Tolonbek at (780)391-3326 or tolonbek.karpekov@cssalberta

All about Forms: Preparing Application Forms to Sponsor Refugees as a Group of Five

Date: Wednesday, October 17, 2018

Time: 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm MDT

Where: Catholic Social Services (CSS) - Meeting Room 228, 8212-118 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5B 0S3

Description: In this session, would include: Step-by-step guidance on how to fill out the new (May 2018) Group of Five forms.

Please register by clicking here:
<https://oct17forms.eventbrite.com> or contacting: Melissa Scott, RSTP trainer for Northern Alberta, at telephone: 780-391-3228 or email: mscott@rstp.ca

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.rstp.ca/en/training/>

Webinars

The PSR Program: Who Can Sponsor and Who Can be Sponsored

Date: Wednesday October 10, 2018

Time: 1:00 PM -2:30 PM EDT

Please register by clicking:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3884297897436466177>

How to Prepare and Submit a Successful Application Package

Date: Tuesday October 16, 2018

Time: 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM EDT

Please register by clicking:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7196888937413994497>

Adding Dependents Post-Submission and Updating Applications

Date: Oct 19, 2018

Time: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

Please register by clicking:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1249530487215513857>



From RSTP's Workshop with IRCC in Edmonton, Alberta (September 12, 2018)

