

RSTP Bulletin

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

Providing Financial and Settlement Support to Sponsored Newcomers While Maintaining Physical Distance

The [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) (PHAC), along with the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) and other national and regional health agencies, have identified physical (social) distancing as one of the primary ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Some of the physical distancing protocols [recommended by the PHAC](#) include:

- Staying at home, unless you have to go to work, and avoiding all non-essential trips;
- Not gathering in groups or coming into contact with other groups;
- Limiting contact with persons that are at a higher risk, such as the elderly and those with respiratory or other illnesses; and,
- Maintaining a distance of at least two meters from others if you do leave your home.

Where possible, sponsors are strongly advised and encouraged to maintain physical distancing and observe the measures outlined above in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when providing financial and settlement support to newcomers sponsored under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) and the Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) programs that are still within their sponsorship period.

Question

How can sponsors provide financial support to sponsored newcomers while maintaining physical distance?

Answer

Sponsors are advised to provide financial support to sponsored newcomers via bank or e-transfers in order to minimize the need for in-person interactions and to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Bank transfers or e-transfers will also provide sponsors with an easily [documented](#) means of providing financial support to the newcomers and will enable sponsors to provide copies of bank statements and e-transfer receipts to demonstrate that financial support was provided to the newcomers if they are [requested to do so by IRCC](#).

If sponsors are currently providing financial support to the newcomers via other means (e.g. cheques), sponsors should inform the newcomers of the change in how they will be receiving financial support before switching to bank or e-transfers.

Question

How can sponsors provide settlement support to newcomers while maintaining physical distance?

Answer

Sponsors have found several ways to provide settlement support remotely whilst observing physical distancing guidelines, including:

- Phone calls and video calls with the sponsored newcomers via apps such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Viber, Skype, Google Hangouts and FaceTime;
- Group meetings with members of the sponsoring group, or with members of the sponsoring group and the sponsored newcomers, via Zoom and Skype; and,
- Using the [Google Translate app to communicate](#) via text and over the phone or video calls in lieu of an interpreter in the newcomers' native language.

Sponsors are strongly recommended to contact their [nearest settlement agency](#) to see what services and supports are still being provided to newcomers, as staff at some settlement agencies are still able to offer their services remotely using various online platforms.

Question

What can sponsors do if they are not able to provide financial and/or settlement support to newcomers in their sponsorship period as a result of COVID-19?

Answer

Sponsors who have any specific questions or concerns about their ability to provide financial and/or settlement support to newcomers sponsored under the PSR and BVOR programs as a result of COVID-19 should contact IRCC's Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT) directly via email at: IRCC.PSRCaseReview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca

IRCC are currently drafting a post-arrival Q&A document for sponsors and we will share the guidance and document with sponsors as soon as we receive it.

UPCOMING RSTP WEBINARS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our New and Revamped Monthly Webinar Series on the PSR Program has Started!

How to Prepare a Successful Application Package under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) Program

Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Time: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm EDT

Registration: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7206440407423947021>

How to Submit a Refugee Sponsorship Application to ROC-O Via Email and Updating Applications After Submission

Date: Friday, April 17, 2020

Time: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm EDT

Registration: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/498413424850941453>

Pre-Submission Orientation for CGs and Co-Sponsors of SAHs

Date: Tuesday April 21, 2020

Time: 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm EDT

Registration: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/96500143456969229>

Preparing for Arrival and Providing Post-Arrival Support: Handling Unrealistic Expectations and Practicing Ethical Consideration

Date: Monday, April 27, 2020

Time: 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm EDT

Registration: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8276808379994151437>

Preparing and Transitioning to Month 13

Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020

Time: 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm EDT

Registration: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2075707934872384525>

Don't Miss Webinars on Supports Available in Your Province During the Pandemic

Click [here](#) for the full schedule of webinars on the Federal and provincial programs that were initiated in response to COVID-19 and for information on how the settlement sector is adapting their services in each province.

RSTP Trainers Are Still Available to Provide Online Training and Information to Sponsors!

RSTP Trainers and staff are working remotely and are still able to assist refugee sponsors via email, over the phone and through virtual meetings. We are also able to host and deliver online training sessions and online workshops.

To find your nearest RSTP Trainer, and the contact details of other RSTP staff, please [click here](#).

Visit RSTP's New COVID-19 Update Hub

Check out our COVID-19 update hub [here](#) to get the latest information, updates and links to resources on COVID-19 for sponsors and sponsored refugees/newcomers.

Subscribe to Our Mailing List!

Subscribe to our mailing list by clicking [here](#) to receive the latest updates on how COVID-19 is affecting refugee sponsorship/resettlement to Canada, including in relation to application processing and arrivals, as well as to get the details of all of our upcoming online trainings, workshops and webinars as soon as we post them.

How to Submit an PSR Application to ROC-O Via Email

If you are submitting a new PSR sponsorship application to ROC-O, you are strongly advised to do so [via email](#) so the [application can be processed](#).

Please ensure that all new PSR applications are complete, and all the required forms and supporting documents are included with the application package, as currently there are no exemptions from the application requirements for new PSR applications being submitted to ROC-O.

A video explaining how to prepare and submit a refugee sponsorship application to ROC-O can be found [here](#).



Refugee
Sponsorship
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Program
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