



# BVOR NEWS

Refugee  
Sponsorship  
Training  
Program

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## Fleeing Home due to Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity

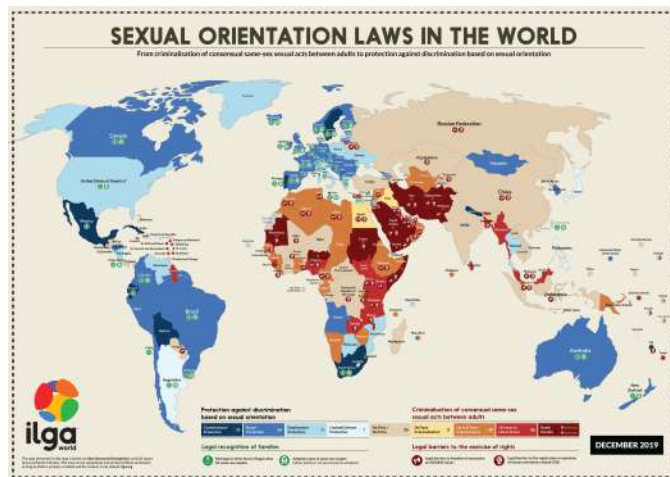


In many countries, members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirited (LGBTQ2) community face discrimination, persecution and violence due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This often leaves many LGBTQ2 people vulnerable, with no choice but to flee their home countries for one that is safer. While some leave, those who cannot flee because of economic or social barriers stay. They suffer in silence and attempt to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity in an attempt to avoid danger, further compounding their vulnerability. Even those who escape are still not safe, as many refugee host countries discriminate against LGBTQ2 people.

In 73 countries, LGBTQ2 persons are considered as criminals due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, and in some countries, they could be subject to the death penalty (e.g., Iran, Mauritania, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and parts of Nigeria and Somalia). As such, sponsoring LGBTQ2 refugees to Canada is of the utmost importance.

## The Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Program

The BVOR Program helps resettle refugees identified by United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as the most vulnerable in need of resettlement. It is called blended because it is a cost sharing arrangement. Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) provides up to six months of income support for the newcomers, while private sponsors provide another six months of financial support, start-up costs and up to one year of social and emotional support.



Click on the [map](#) to view where criminalization, protection and Recognition laws are enacted around the world.

## How can you help LGBTQ2 Refugees?

You can sponsor refugees fleeing persecution on the grounds of their sexual orientation or gender identity and bring them to safety through various Canadian resettlement programs, (i.e., the Private Refugee Sponsorship Program, the Blended Visa Office Referred Program, and the Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership).

## More information on Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership

On June 1, 2019 the Government of Canada introduced the Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership (RRAP) which will support more Canadians in privately sponsoring LGBTQ2 refugees. Through this partnership, the Government of Canada will provide start-up costs and three months of income support directly to LGBTQ2 refugees. The monthly income support for the remaining nine months of the sponsorship is provided by the sponsoring group. The Rainbow Refugee Society, in collaboration with Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH), is responsible for submitting all applications under this partnership.

To read the June 1, 2019 IRCC 's News Release announcing the new initiative, [click here](#).

## Do you want to learn more about helping LGBTQ2 refugees? Join us for a Webinar!

Join RSTP, UNHCR and Rainbow Refugee on Wednesday August 12, 2020 from 2:00pm to 3:30pm EST for a webinar on sponsorship of LGBTQ2 refugees.

We will discuss the ways in which you can get involved in sponsoring these refugees through the BVOR program and the Rainbow Refugee Assistance Partnership.

To register for the webinar, [click here](#).

## Questions about the BVOR program

The BVOR program staff is available to answer your questions regarding the BVOR program, cases that are in process as well any questions related to COVID-19 and BVOR sponsorships.

Tel: 416.290.1700 ext.2403

Toll-free: 1.877.290.1701

E-mail: [BVOR@rstp.ca](mailto:BVOR@rstp.ca)

RSTP also continues to provide a full range of virtual services to Canada's refugee sponsorship community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please check our website, [www.rstp.ca](http://www.rstp.ca), for dates and times of upcoming online workshops and courses.

RSTP trainers across Canada are available for virtual consultation from 9 to 5 each day, by appointment. Among the services they provide by telephone, email and virtual platforms are:

- Support with refugee sponsorship applications
- Guidance for sponsors with post-arrival issues.

Please refer to our website's contact list for the name, phone number and e-mail address of the RSTP trainer in your region.

## BLENDED VISA OFFICE-REFERRED (BVOR) PROGRAM

For more information, visit [www.rstp.ca](http://www.rstp.ca) or email [bvor@rstp.ca](mailto:bvor@rstp.ca)

Refugee  
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and Citizenship Canada

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