



# BVOR NEWS

Refugee  
Sponsorship  
Training  
Program

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## IRCC update on the Immigration Loans Program

In March 2020, IRCC suspended collection activities for their Immigration Loans Program (ILP) for a period of six months until September 2020. This included [Transportation Loans](#).

Transportation Loans are issued to refugees sponsored to Canada under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees, Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR), Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) and Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) programs. They are meant to cover the cost of refugees' travel to Canada. This past October, IRCC resumed sending immigration loans statements of account to loan recipients.

Sponsored refugees, including BVOR refugees, should contact [IRCC's collection services](#) at 1-800-667-7301 if they have questions about their loan, want to suspend pre-authorized payments or want to make other payment plans for this period.

IRCC notes that there will be no penalties for late payments during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the account balance must still be paid in full before the end of the loan term.

Please click [here](#) and [here](#) for more information, such as:

- how the loan is issued;
- what it covers;
- the repayment schedule and term;
- when sponsored refugees are expected to start
- repaying their loan; and, how repayments can be made.

## 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.

### Question

When are BVOR refugees expected to repay the Transportation Loan?

### Answer

All sponsored refugees, including BVOR refugees, are expected to begin repaying their Transportation Loan one year and one month after their arrival in Canada. They can start paying off their loan before this date if they wish. For example, if the refugees arrived in Canada on June 01, 2020, the first payment would be due on July 01, 2021.

Higher-needs refugees resettled under the GAR and JAS programs may be eligible for a waiver of the Transportation Loan.

### Question

Is interest charged by IRCC on the Transportation Loan?

### Answer

No, interest is no longer charged by IRCC on Transportation Loans.

## IRCC news on COVID-19 pre-departure tests for sponsored refugees

### Question

What are the new COVID-19 testing requirements for air travellers that came into effect on January 07, 2021 and how do they apply to BVOR refugees?

### Answer

As of January 7, all persons travelling to Canada by air who are over the age of five, including BVOR refugees, must provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result to the airline before boarding their flight. The test must be taken within 72 hours of the scheduled departure time. Airlines will not allow travellers to board the plane without proof of a negative test.

RSTP has contacted IRCC for guidance on measures and procedures that could help BVOR refugees comply with this requirement.

These include:

- Could IOM help refugees with pre-departure testing?
- Will the cost of the test be covered by IFHP?
- How soon will travel be rebooked if the test result is positive?

For more details on the COVID-19 test requirement, please click [here](#) and [here](#).

## 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  
Sponsorship  
Training  
Program



**CCS**  
Catholic Crosscultural Services



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

## RSTP services to sponsors continue virtually:

RSTP 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 email address of the RSTP trainer in your region: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/contact-us/>

### Subscribe to RSTP's Email List

Subscribe to the RSTP email list by [clicking here](#) to receive the latest updates on how COVID-19 is affecting refugee sponsorship/resettlement to Canada, as well as to get the details of all of our upcoming Online trainings, workshops and webinars as soon as they are posted.

