

# Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program Sponsor Engagement Meetings:

## PSR Application Submission

Craig Pointon, Assistant Director  
Denis Bérubé, Supervisor  
David Smith, Supervisor  
Caroline Lestage, Supervisor  
Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa (ROC-O)

Resettlement Operations Division  
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
Canada

March – April 2021



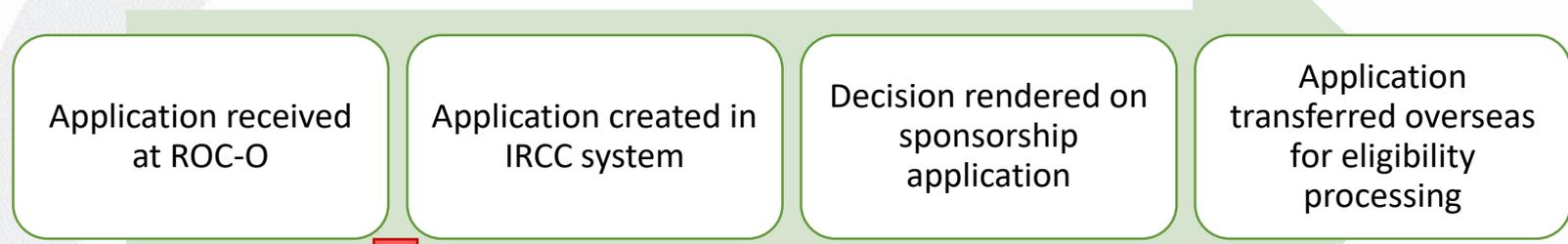
## Since 2020 Roadshow

- Implementing changes throughout the pandemic to ensure processing can continue but also to improve ROC-O's quality of service and processing overall
- Two priorities identified at 2020 roadshow:
  - Improve client service and communication
    - Average response times reduced from 30 days to 3 days
    - Update letters to sponsors throughout pandemic
  - Reduce processing times at ROC-O
    - File creation processing time for emailed applications reduced from 11 months to 60 days
    - Clearer guidance to sponsors – lowered the number of incomplete and pre-returned applications
    - Sponsors also contributed by submitting more applications by email in 2020

**Slido question:**

Has the shift to email submissions worked for you?

## Normal Processing – Mailed and Emailed applications



During a **stay-at-home order**, ROC-O staff are unable to open mail in the office and mailed applications are not created in IRCC system.

**Slido question:**

Will you continue to submit your applications  
by email in future?

## Other Pandemic Changes

- Response timelines for information requests and Procedural Fairness Letters extended from 30 days to 90 days
- ROC-O has begun pilot projects to assist missions overseas to help reduce their processing times
- ROC-O has taken on a larger role in OYW processing, including document collection, with the goal of streamlining the program and reducing the overall processing times.

## **Slido question:**

What has been the main challenge with submitting applications during the past year?

# Returned/Refused Applications

## Common Reasons for Return

- Missing documents
- Documents unsigned
- Sponsors not responding to pre-return emails

## Common Reasons for Refusal

- Unsatisfactory financial documentation
- Missing criminal record checks
- Settlement Plan lacks sufficient detail
- Sponsors have many active sponsorships

**Slido question:**

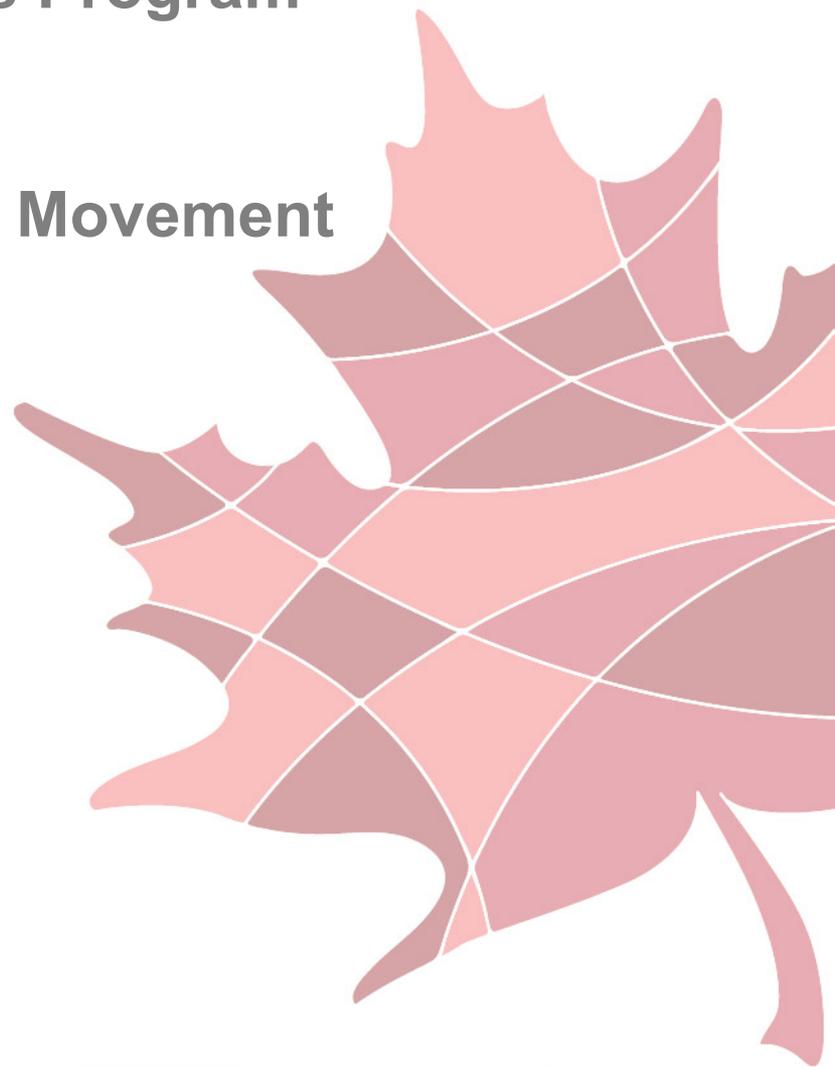
What are some positive impacts to processing that you have seen over the past year?

# Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program Sponsor Engagement Meetings:

## Overseas Processing & Refugee Movement

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# Overview

- Update on overseas processing
- Travel Restrictions
- Factors Impacting Ability to Travel
- Travel Preparations
- Mandatory Hotel Stay and Testing

**Slido question for sponsors:**

Have you had any arrivals since March 2020?

# Update on Overseas Processing

- Processing has resumed at all migration offices, but it may not look the same as it did before the pandemic.
- Missions are adapting their processes so they can continue resettling refugees. For example, IRCC is expanding video conferencing for interviews in more locations.
- Urgent Protection Cases and refugees whose travel was cancelled prior to travel restrictions remain priority
- Focusing on cases with completed/expiring Immigration Medical Exams
- International Organization for Migration (IOM) books travel-ready cases that meet travel exemption criteria
- Working with the IOM on providing Canadian Orientation Abroad (COA) training over the phone

## **Slido questions for sponsors:**

- 1) Have you heard from ROC-O or the mission lately with regards to your file?
- 2) Were there any gaps or concerns regarding the information you received?

# Travel Restrictions

- Border measures still in place: restrictions and conditions on travel and quarantine requirements upon arrival.
- Canada continues to facilitate the resettlement of refugees who are eligible to travel, including:
  - Refugees whose travel documents were issued on/before March 18, 2020
  - Refugees issued a National Interest Exemption Letter – generally Urgent Protection Program cases
  - Refugees who have immediate family members in Canada (e.g. One-Year Window applicants).

# Factors Impacting Ability to Travel

- Availability of flights – flights to Canada are limited and restricted to four cities (Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver).
- Domestic flights are also very limited, impacting onward travel from the port of entry to final destination.
- Conditions/requirements in the country of residence/asylum (e.g. lockdowns, airport closures, ability to get a COVID-19 test required for travel to Canada)
- Ability of foreign governments to issue exit permits
- The sponsor and refugee's mutual interest to proceed with resettlement/movement at this time

**Slido question for sponsors:**

What concerns, if any, do you have with regards to arrivals?

## Travel Preparations: IOM Assistance

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides the following health services:

- Pre-departure health checks, including screening for COVID-19 on the day of departure;
- Non-medical masks and hand sanitizer;
- COVID-related counselling and information;
- COVID-19 testing (mandatory prior to boarding);
- Pre-departure isolation/quarantine if needed.

# Travel Preparations: Pre-boarding Testing

As of January 7, 2021

- All air passengers 5+ years are required to test negative for COVID-19 before travelling to Canada
- Test must be taken within 72 hours prior to departure
- Testing is generally arranged by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Negative test result does not exempt from quarantining requirements upon arrival in Canada

## Travel Preparations: Quarantine plans

- Sponsors are required to provide a copy of a quarantine plan to IRCC before travel can be booked. All travelers must present this plan upon arrival.
- Accommodation must be in line with public health guidelines.
- IRCC sends further information in the Notification of Arrival Transmission (NAT), notifies Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and provincial health officials.
- Communication with privately sponsored refugees prior to arrival is essential.
- Mandatory upon arrival:
  - Testing and 3-day hotel stay upon arrival in Canada
  - 14 day quarantine at final destination
  - Daily reporting through ArriveCAN app

# Quarantine Requirements: Mandatory Hotel Stay & Testing

As of February 22, 2021:

- All air travelers must take a test upon arrival (before exiting the airport) and quarantine at hotel for 3 days, awaiting test results.
- Hotel rooms have WiFi and phones
- No cost to sponsored refugees and sponsors
- Hotel booking and transportation to hotel arranged by resettlement service provider organizations
- Assistance at arrival provided by port of entry service provider organization
- Provide information on compliance with quarantine to Public Health Agency: ArriveCAN app or 1-833-641-0343 (toll-free) within 48 hours of arrival and every day until the end of quarantine.

## Quarantine Requirements continued...

### Negative test result:

- Sponsored refugees continue to their final destination by air or picked up from hotel by sponsors.
- Quarantine for remainder of the 14-day quarantine period at accommodation arranged by sponsor.

### Positive test result:

- Sponsored refugees are transferred to a Public Health Agency-managed designated quarantine facility (a different hotel) to complete the isolation period.

Second test required towards end of quarantine period (self-administered, provided by public health)

## **Slido questions for Sponsors**

### **If you have had any recent arrivals:**

1) How easy/difficult has ensuring that quarantine requirements are followed been for you?

2) What might help ensure a smooth(er) quarantine period?

# Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program Sponsor Engagement Meetings:

## Post-arrival Supports

Resettlement Operations Division  
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## Outline

- Post-arrival supports during the pandemic
- Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT)
- Program Assurance activities and case review process
- Available resources and contact information

# Post-arrival Supports, Program Requirements and COVID-19

- Financial Support:
  - Start-up
  - Monthly support for basic needs, shelter and transportation
- Non-Financial Support, such as:
  - Housing
  - Orientation to community and life in Canada
  - Health care needs
  - Education and language classes
  - Important documents received
  - Connecting to Settlement service provider
- Meeting Residency Requirements
- ***While program requirements remain unchanged, IRCC has and will continue to show flexibility in assessing how supports are provided during the pandemic.***

**Slido question for sponsors:**

**If you have had an arrival since March 2020....**

What have been your top 3 challenges providing support to those who have arrived during the pandemic?

**Slido question for sponsors:**

**If you have not had an arrival since March 2020....**

What do you feel are your top 3 *anticipated* challenges with providing support to those who will arrive during the pandemic?

# Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT)

- Mandate: *Ensuring that sponsors are fulfilling their sponsorship obligations by providing the proper supports (financial and settlement) to refugees in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) and Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) programs.*
- If you have questions about post-arrival supports, contact RSTP, or any case specific questions can be directed to the Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT) at [IRCC.PSRCCaseReview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.PSRCCaseReview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca).
- We are here to help!

# Program Assurance activities and the case review process

- Why program assurance? To ensure that refugees are being adequately supported.
- You may be contacted if there is a potential concern with one of your cases.
- Please respect timelines – these are carefully determined weighing newcomers needs with sponsor capacity to submit a response.
- Resources available, such as the Minimum Financial Support Calculator, to assist you in determining the level of support you will be required to provide to your case when it arrives and if you are asked to demonstrate to IRCC the financial support provided to your case.

# Case review process – best practices and reminders

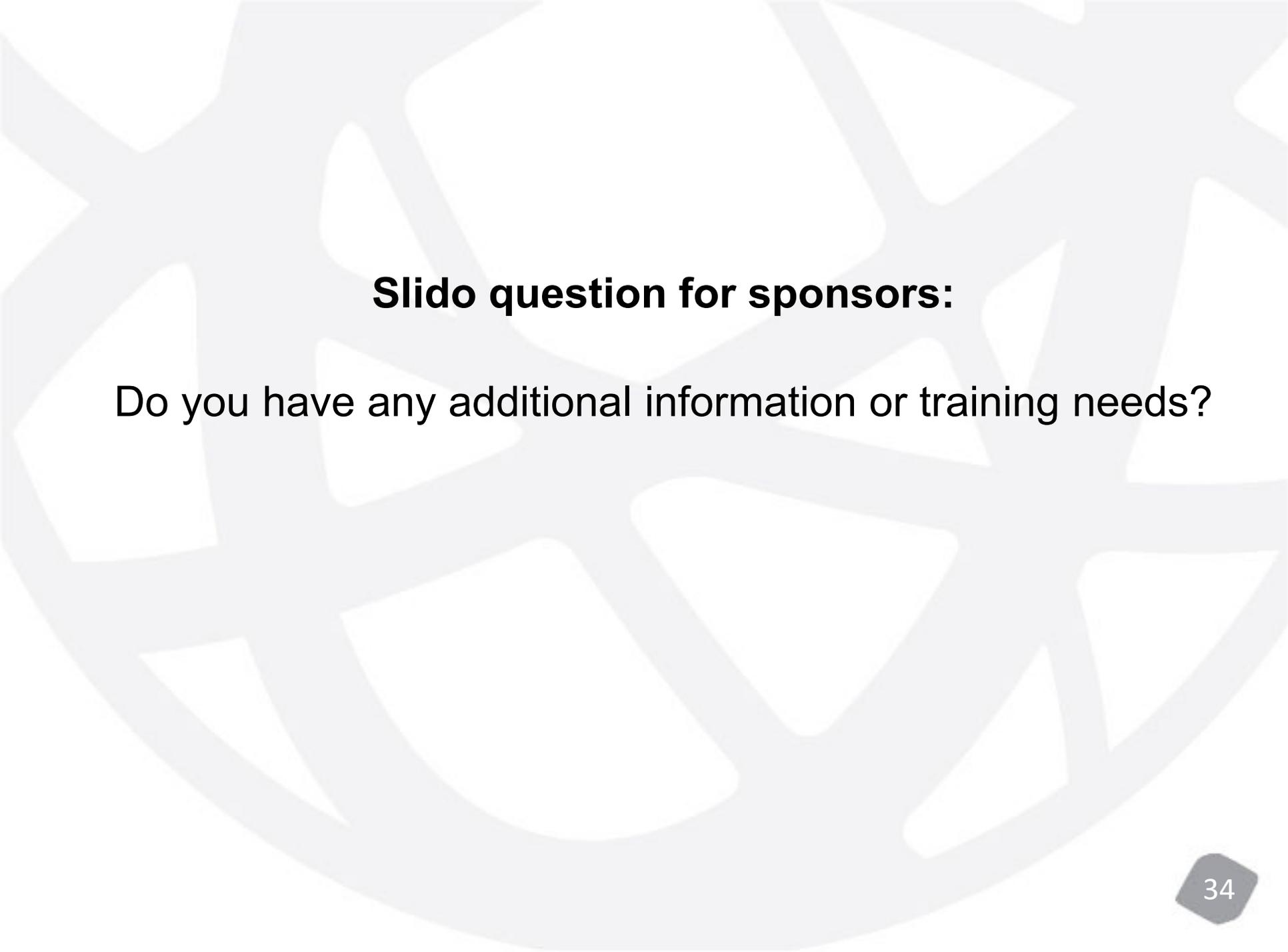
- Keep track of support provided; an officer reviewing a case is not familiar with your organization and your case, and may be receiving different information from the newcomer.
  - Written statements and narratives are considered but if there is contradictory information, this is not sufficient proof.
  - Deductions to financial support – track and be able to explain.
  - Understand program requirements – minimum financial support must be provided and letting the newcomers manage funds helps support self-sufficiency.
- ❖ **If concerns are identified, our primary goal is to work with the sponsor to resolve any issues.**

## Change of destination

- Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations require that sponsors are in the community of settlement in order to assist the refugee with their settlement and integration.
- There are options provided to you in order to satisfy this requirement.
- Appointment of Representatives form can be completed.
- Remember to always advise IRCC if the refugees move, or if you, as the sponsor moves.

# Available Resources and tools

- RSTP website
  - Best practices for monitoring and oversight
  - Guidance for Private Sponsors Regarding COVID-19
- Minimum Financial Support Calculator tool
- Reference documents:
  - Key Contacts
  - PSR Assurance Activities
  - Residency requirements
  - Frequently Asked Questions on Post-arrival Financial Support
- Case Review Processing Timeline
- RSTP webinars



**Slido question for sponsors:**

Do you have any additional information or training needs?

# Contact Information

- Resettlement Operations Centre in Ottawa (ROC-O)
  - Receives and assesses all PSR sponsorship applications.
  - Responds to inquiries on PSR cases.
  - Processes withdrawals, adding dependents and one year window cases.
  - [IRCC.INROCO-CORORI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.INROCO-CORORI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca)
- Private Sponsorship of Refugees Team
  - Deals with SAH Sponsorship Agreement management, inquiries and actions.
  - Assesses applications for organizations applying to become SAHs.
  - Manages global cap and allocations.
  - [IRCC.INPSR-PPPRRI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.INPSR-PPPRRI.IRCC@cic.gc.ca)
- Resettlement Services Assurance Team (RSAT):
  - Conducts PSR/BVOR program assurance activities on cases post-arrival.
  - Provides guidance to sponsorship groups on post-arrival program requirements, and issues.
  - [IRCC.PSRCasereview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca](mailto:IRCC.PSRCasereview-RevuedecasPSR.IRCC@cic.gc.ca)