



Renting to Newcomers

Addressing frequently asking questions, dispelling myths, and providing resources regarding renting to newcomers

Funded by / Financé par:



Fraser Valley
Refugee
Readiness Team



BRITISH COLUMBIA | WelcomeBC

Contents

03

Introduction

04

Pathways to
Arrival

05

Barriers to
Housing

06

Dispelling
Myths

07

Local
Organizations

08

FV RRT

09

Resources





Thank you



Thank you to all the private landlords that have connected with your local community services and organizations – your compassion, your flexibility, and your commitment to thinking outside of the box make all the difference to refugees and newcomers in your community



Newcomers often are connected with local community services or organizations. Settlement workers are able to work with both the tenant and landlord to facilitate good communication and help navigate any issues.



Reasons why newcomers make excellent tenants:

- Often looking for a long-term rental, as they are seeking stability
- Highly resilient and eager to start a new life, meaning that they are motivated to be reliable tenants
- Newcomers receive orientation through local community resources, including educating them on their rights and responsibilities as tenants
- The local community benefits greatly from a diverse population

Pathways to Arrival

There are many ways that newcomers arrive in Canada - below are listed some of the common pathways to arrival.

Government-Assisted Refugees

Have applied for refugee status before they arrived in Canada, have been heavily vetted, and are accepted to receive some government support as they arrive

Privately Sponsored Refugees

Applied for refugee status before arriving in Canada, have been heavily vetted, and accepted to receive support from a sponsor – often a community or religious group willing to support them in integration

Refugee Claimants

Arrive at the border seeking asylum due to persecution, war, gender/sexual orientation discrimination, or hunger. They apply for refugee status once they have arrived in Canada and go through thorough background checks

Temporary Residents

Are accepted to the country temporarily on a series of conditions, which vary whether they are students, workers, or, in the case of CUAET, escaping dangerous conditions

Skilled workers

Canada welcomes in immigrants that have over 10 years of experience in a skilled occupation, such as the trades

Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel

A specific program started in March 2022 in response to Russia's attack on Ukraine; Ukrainians are accepted to Canada as Temporary Residents, with the assumption that they will return to Ukraine after the war



Did you know? Without immigration, Canada would be facing a 12,000 worker deficit per year in construction alone (Immigration.ca, 2023)

Barriers Newcomers Face When Accessing Housing

Cultural Differences

Some newcomers struggle to know the “unwritten rules” of tenancy due to cultural differences.

However, many have access to workshops and support from local community organizations to educate them on this topic. Newcomers can also access supports online to educate them on their rights and responsibilities as tenants.

- **TIP: Be clear about your expectations for renters to avoid misunderstandings and if needed, direct them to the above resources**

References

Newcomers may not be able to provide a Canadian Criminal Record Check or previous landlord references due to lack of housing history in Canada.

- Consider accepting landlord references from other countries – contacting through email allows you to connect with the landlord, using an online translator such as Google Translate to easily navigate any language barriers.
- Consider accepting a reference from a community organization worker.

- **TIP: Take the time for a meaningful interview with potential tenants to get to know them. Learning about their cultural background will create more understanding.**

Language

Language continues to be one of the biggest barriers newcomers face when settling in Canada. Many English classes are available, however learning a language takes time.

- Online translators such as Google Translate are a great option to communicate effectively
- Communicate clear expectations for tenancy in an email or text - this allows them to translate it online and ensure they understand

- **TIP: Some newcomers will have a support worker through a local organization - they may be able to help translate, particularly when organizing the details of tenancy**

Dispelling Common Myths

Many people have preconceived notions of who refugees and other displaced people may be and what renting to them will be like. Sometimes these myths create a barrier to housing for newcomers.

MYTH: The Government gives newcomers significant amounts of money

FACT: While some newcomers (but not all) receive some money from the government, it is often well below a living wage, and is only for a limited time.

MYTH: If they have just moved to Canada, they won't be able to pay their rent.

FACT: Newcomers do receive some support, and while it may be less than a living wage, rent for stable housing is their first priority.

MYTH: I won't be able to communicate with them if their first language isn't English

FACT: Newcomers often prioritize language classes when they first arrive. Using text and/or Google Translate are useful tools to ensure good communication if you are concerned that a conversation hasn't been fully understood.

MYTH: Newcomers are creating the housing crisis

FACT: Newcomers have not created the housing crisis, but they are disproportionately affected by it. Lowering immigration does not necessarily lead to more available housing.

MYTH: Immigration leads to less available housing and increased costs

FACT: Immigration is one of the main avenues to *increase* housing, through skilled workers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of rent increased despite a drop in occupancy rates, indicating that immigration is not responsible for higher costs.

MYTH: Newcomers aren't reliable tenants

FACT: Newcomers have often endured difficult circumstances before arriving in Canada. They want to create a stable life for themselves and therefore are motivated to be highly reliable.

Local Organizations

There are many different organizations that offer a variety of programs and initiatives to support newcomers to Canada - including finding housing and supporting a positive relationship with landlord and tenant.



Please reach out to your local organization for more information on specific programs and supports available.

Archway Community Services

Main Office: 2420 Montrose Ave, Abbotsford
604-859-7681
hello@archway.ca

Chilliwack Community Services

Main Office: 45938 Wellington Ave, Chilliwack
604-792-4267
ccsinfo@comserv.bc.ca

The Family Education and Support Centre

Main Office: 22554 Lougheed Hwy, Maple Ridge
604-467-6055
reg@familyed.ca



Immigration Services Society of BC – Maple Ridge

110 - 22638 119th Ave, Maple Ridge
778-372-6567
info@issbc.org



Inasmuch Community Society

PO Box: 100 -32160 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford
604-768-8079
admin@inasmuch.ca



Mennonite Central Committee

201 - 33933 Gladys Ave, Abbotsford
604-850-6639
www.mcc.org



Mission Community Services

Main Office: 33179 2nd Ave, Mission
604-826-3634
info@missionmcsc.com

Fraser Valley Refugee Readiness Team

The Fraser Valley Refugee Readiness Team (FV RRT) is one of six regional teams across the province working under the BC Refugee Readiness Network, that was formed in direct response to the crisis in Afghanistan and then the crisis in Ukraine. These teams are funded by the one-time Refugee Readiness Fund by the Provincial Government's Ministry of Municipal Affairs. This project, which runs from April 2022 to March 2024, does not support the creation of new services, but rather serves to complement services already in place in order to increase the community's capacity to support refugees successfully.



For more information about the FV RRT, please go to www.FVRefugees.ca. To continue to access resources related to refugees and other newcomers after the FV RRT has ended, please go to BCRefugeeHub.ca.

Cities of the FV RRT:

- Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows
- Mission
- Abbotsford
- Chilliwack



Resources

To learn more, please see the articles and other resources below. Much of the information from this pamphlet has derived from these sources.



Landlords invited to session in Chilliwack on renting to newcomers

The Chilliwack Progress, 2023

You should be Renting to Refugees: Tips for easing the way

PayRent.com, 2021

Benefits of Immigration on Canadian Sectors

Government of Canada, 2023

Economic progress report: Immigration, housing and the outlook for inflation

Bank of Canada, 2023

To buy or to rent: The housing market continues to be reshaped by several factors as Canadians search for an affordable place to call home

Statistics Canada, 2022

More Immigration Needed To Resolve Housing Crisis, Conference Board Of Canada Says

Immigration.ca, 2023

Immigrant and refugee women cook up ideas for food businesses

New Canadian Media, 2024

Blaming immigration for the country's housing crisis disguises the real problem, analysts say

CBC, 2023

Canada's immigration advantage

Business Council of Canada, 2022

Rent to Refugees Info Session Youtube, Reception House Waterloo Region, 2023