



MAP Multi-Agency
Partnership BC
Working Together for Refugee Claimants

MAP Member Agency News

Weekly Bulletin # 37

April 15, 2020

Dear MAP members,

How are you doing? That's a common question nowadays and one that MAP wants to focus on in April – providing support through information and a friendly check in. We will keep you up to date with any changes to refugee claimant services as they happen - and ask if you have information that you would like to share with MAP that you let us know (info@mapbc.org).

OUR NEXT MAP 'MEETING': "Getting Through It" April 23, 9:30 am via ZOOM

The Agenda and a request to register has been emailed – please contact Jenny at info@mapbc.org by end of day Monday April 20 to register – and don't forget to choose your preferred breakout room as described yesterday.

Changes to the weekly MAP Bulletin during the COVID-19 pandemic

You will have noticed that very urgent messages that apply to refugee claimants and agencies have been sent out in the daily COVID-19 Special Updates (unless material arrives on Tuesday or Wednesday morning). We are trying to reserve this urgent bulletin solely for the most important pandemic-related material. At the same time the regular Bulletin carries information about pandemic-related workshops and support as well as general information.

Today you will see we are adding **a new addition!** There will be a **PDF attached of news clippings throughout Canada** on the lives of refugee claimants, the services pertaining to them and other valuable information gleaned from the media. Hopefully this will be of use and interest to MAP members – and thank you so much Barry for making this happen.

Thank you for all you are doing to support vulnerable refugee claimants - especially during these unprecedented times. Stay safe and well - and let's not let social distancing be a barrier to the folks we serve.

MAP Co-Chairs

Mariana, Richard (& Jenny: Co-Chair Designate)

and the other Jenny!

MOSAIC and Inasmuch will be hosting 3 online Career Workshops for refugee claimants:

- April 24th - Finding a Job: Where to Look and How to Apply?
- May 1st - Getting the Job: The Best Answers to Top Interview Questions
- May 8th - Workplace Culture and Integration: Stating Your New Job

All scheduled at 10:30 am to 12:00 pm, on Zoom (phone or computer).

Please register for any of them by email at refugeeclaimant@mosaicbc.org,

Please circulate the information too!

2 pages - see over for May 1st and May 8th workshops



ONLINE WORKSHOP
for Refugee Claimants

Finding a Job: Where to Look and How to Apply

Friday April 24 10:30 am—12:00 pm
Workshop on ZOOM (phone or computer)

- Searching for jobs online and in person
- How to apply and follow up with employers
- Next steps

To Register: Email refugeeclaimant@mosaicbc.org

ONLINE WORKSHOP
for Refugee Claimants



Getting the Job: The Best Answers to Top Interview Questions

Friday May 1st 10:30 am—12:00 pm

Workshop on ZOOM (phone or computer)

- How to prepare for common interview questions and answer confidently: advice from a former Head of Human Resources
- Following up after an interview

To Register: Email refugeeclaimant@mosaicbc.org



WelcomeBC



We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness.

ONLINE WORKSHOP
For Refugee Claimants



Workplace Culture and Integration: Starting Your New Job

Friday May 8th 10:30 am—12:00 pm

Workshop on ZOOM (phone or computer)

- What to consider before starting with a new company: advice from a former Head of Human Resources
- Feel comfortable and confident in a new Canadian workplace

To Register: Email refugeeclaimant@mosaicbc.org



WelcomeBC



We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Competitiveness.



Legal Aid BC Information

(also attached as PDF)

Immigrants & refugees
Project: 2020 COVID-19 Resources - Legal Services Society
Version: 2 - Updated on Apr 06 2020 at 16:56 by Patricia Lim

Description

- Resources
- News/media
- Current LSS resources on the topic

Resources			
Organization	Description	Date updated	URL
Steps to Justice: Your guide to law in Ontario	COVID-19 Updates on the law and legal services (Immigration and Refugee) Q&A <ul style="list-style-type: none">Some information is Ontario specific and a lot of information deals with federal agencies like IRCC and CBSA and federal policies	unknown	https://stepsjustice.ca/pages/updates-covid-19-immigration-and-refugee
Canadian Council for Refugees	COVID-19 Q&A	unknown	https://canadacsr.ca/covid-19-q-a/

News articles			
Organization	Description	Date	URL
CTV News	Canada could face legal trouble over refugee deportation estimates	March 26, 2020	https://news.ctvnews.ca/news/canada-could-face-legal-trouble-over-refugee-deportation-estimates-1.4877058

Government information sites/news alerts			
Organization	Description	Date	URL
Government of Canada	How the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is affecting immigration, refugees, citizenship and passport services	March 30, 2020	https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/03/how-the-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-is-affecting-immigration-refugees-citizenship-and-passport-services.html
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada	Practice notice - Special measures due to covid 19	April 7, 2020	https://irb.gc.ca/eng/immigration-and-refugee-board/practice-notice-special-measures-covid-19.aspx

LSS meeting/communication notes		
Description	Date	URL

LSS resources to date		
Description	Date	URL

For more information contact:

Patricia Lim
Publications Development Coordinator
Community and Publishing Services
Legal Services Society (Legal Aid BC)
P: 604 601-6000
legalaid.bc.ca

As you know, our healthcare system is facing significant challenges due to the pandemic; the division has launched **COVID-19 Health Promotion Phone Lines**, to complement the efforts of our health care workers. The phone lines will provide **COVID-19 related non-medical advice** to residents of Surrey-North Delta, and if needed, we will support other communities as well. Our Health Navigators are International Medical Graduates trained to help the callers in seven different languages within two working hours. The phone lines are open Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm. Health Navigators will also be able to walk the patients through the BC Health Assessment Tool in their preferred language.

Surrey-North Delta division is always striving to support our community, and that can't be accomplished without meaningful community partners' engagement. Community organizations are the frontrunners and crucial for the success of any community initiative. Please help us spread the word and share this information with your clients/ members.

Don't hesitate to provide feedback as we sincerely value your opinion.

Saira Abrar, MBBS, MAHSR, Manager, Physician Engagement & Support

Surrey-North Delta Division of Family Practice

c: 604-365-0764 e: sabrar@divisionsbc.ca

Here is a link to our brochure; PDF version attached:

<https://www.divisionsbc.ca/sites/default/files/Divisions/Surrey-North%20Delta/COVID-19%20Phone%20Lines%20Pamphlet%203.pdf>

Hello BCSIS Service Providers,



I'd like to update you on several resources recently added to the AMSSA website in support of BCSIS service delivery. During these challenging times there is considerable interest in professional development. These resources are, for the most part, forward-thinking to when we can return to regular work and client services.

E-Learning Modules

We encourage front-line staff to register for the two newest BCSIS E-learning modules **Employment-Related Supports and Inter-Agency Referrals for Immigrant Clients Part 1 and 2.**

Newcomer clients seeking employment have unique needs and often require services from multiple organizations. However, they can face challenges navigating the complex network of services. Referrals between agencies can support settlement objectives and accelerate labour market attachment. This training offers guidance on service delivery approach and best practices in inter-agency referrals and collaboration.

Content from the Immigrant Employment Collaboration Project training materials provided the foundation. The original materials were developed several years ago to improve employment outcomes for immigrants through increased collaboration among agencies. In 2019, an Advisory group recommended changes and updates. AMSSA re-created the materials into two new, interactive online e-learning modules which provide knowledge about immigrant experiences, techniques for working across cultures, services available and how to help newcomers access them through referrals and interagency collaboration.

The modules are free of charge. The training is asynchronous, self-paced and can be taken at the learner's convenience, by individuals or in a group. It's beneficial for experienced staff and for onboarding new staff. Learners receive a Certificate of Completion once they have completed all sections, quizzes and the evaluation.



We recommend that learners take both modules in the correct order. We are confident they will contribute to improved outcomes for newcomer clients seeking work. When client services return to normal, effective referrals and inter-agency collaboration will be more important than ever, as they can be vital to expedient employment outcomes.

The new modules can be found on the AMSSA website as follows:

<https://www.amssa.org/resources/e-learning-modules/>

WorkBC Self-Serve Supports Video

WorkBC offers a wide range of services to help individuals find and maintain work and improve employment readiness. BCSIS clients with temporary immigration status have limited access to case-managed services, so WorkBC self-serve supports are particularly important. This 5-minute video illustrates the self-serve supports available in the WorkBC resource area, and how they benefit all clients, including those with temporary immigration status. The video is beneficial for front-line staff and their clients.

<https://www.amssa.org/resources/videos/online-videos/workbc-self-serve-supports/>

Be sure to let me know if you require any additional information about these BCSIS resources. As a reminder, please visit [AMSSA's website](#) for helpful resources on COVID-19. You can find migrant worker specific COVID-19 resources on the [Migrant Worker Hub](#).

Lori Cameron, Provincial Integration Program Manager

Direct Phone: 604 718-2776 E-mail: lcameron@amssa.org

4445 Norfolk Street, Burnaby, BC V5G 0A7

Toll Free 1 888 355-5560 • T 604 718-2780



Agency: Burnaby Neighbourhood House - Services Currently Provided during COVID19 :

Seniors Outreach Support - We are taking self-referrals as well as referrals from BC211 and community agencies for Burnaby seniors. Our services include: •Phone check ins •Grocery shopping and other essentials for seniors who can pay (• Senior Shopping Service is available in Farsi and Chinese) •Food security for low income seniors – delivery of donated food bags • Support with addressing any other needs that are identified.

Outreach Services for Families with Children 0-12 - •Phone check ins •Grocery shopping and other essentials for families who are isolated and can't get out but can afford to pay •Food security for low income families – delivery of donated food bags to families who are isolated. Grocery food cards (dependant on donations) for families who can still get out to shop. •Support with connecting to any other needs that are identified. •Virtual programming, will include – groups; children's activities; parenting resources – connections to partners who are doing programming.

Digital Literacy Support - one to one support to help individuals apply for benefits and virtual digital training.

Adult Literacy - One to One tutoring is continuing.

Youth Employment Program: FREE for unemployed youth ages 15 to 30 - 100% Online – Participate from the safety and comfort of your home - 20 week paid program (8 weeks online training and 12 weeks work placement) – start date May 11, 2020 – For more information email: employment@burnabynh.ca or call: 236-889-4065.

Volunteering – Volunteers are Needed. For more information contact janiceh@burnabynh.ca or visit our website www.burnabynh.ca/get-involved-volunteer

Responsive Neighbourhood Small Grants – New program available to community residents wanting to organize a Virtual Community Gathering Project. Applications can be submitted starting April 15th The end date will be determined based on public health orders. Apply on-line at <https://neighbourhoodsmallgrants.ca/blog/new-responsive-nsg-grant/> or email brankav@burnabynh.ca for more information.

Hours: Monday to Friday - 9:30 am to 4:30 pm **Contact:** **South House** 604-431-0400 - **North House** 604-294-5444

Simone Gouveia (604) 431-0400 or email: simoneg@burnabynh.ca

MAP (Multi-Agency Partnership) Bulletin April 15, 2020

Website: <https://burnabynh.ca>





QMUNITY Update

During this time (Spring 2020), this email will be monitored intermittently throughout each week, and we will do our best to respond in a timely manner, or forward your email to the appropriate staff person.

For the most up to date information on QMUNITY's services and programs, including alternative arrangements, online/video meet-ups, and support offered through email and phone, please visit:

www.qmunity.ca
www.facebook.com/QMUNITY

Thank you,
QMUNITY Team

I would like to tell you about the initiative **TrainedToSaveLives**. This is a group of people with different backgrounds, mostly international medical graduates who decided to start this initiative because of the COVID 19 pandemic crisis and the shortage of health professionals. International Medical Graduates are struggling with all the barriers to allow us to work as physicians. Now, because of the COVID 19 pandemic, the government of BC and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC are proposing some amendments to the law so internationally trained doctors can work as assistants.

I would like to ask for support from the different organizations that are working with refugees.

Many international medical graduates (IMGs) came to Canada as refugees:

First, we have to work to survive; many IMGs come with their wife/husband, children, and sometimes more relatives that are a lot of responsibility, then we have to put aside the dream of being a physician in Canada.

Second, following the process to get the license to be a physician in Canada is very expensive - more than 10,000 dollars, and some of the exams are scheduled only once a year.

Third, the English test score is so high that many IMGs, even though they have done all the medical exams, can't practice. But it doesn't mean IMGs cannot communicate with their patients.

One of our petitions that we are asking for is a lower fees for medical exams for IMGs who came as refugees.

Currently, the government is calling for retired physicians and nurses to re-register to deal with COVID-19 pandemic, and their services are so appreciated; however, we are neglecting the fact that we also have a sizeable number of Internationally-trained health professionals who have come to Canada from various avenues, from skilled migrants to refugees, who have the skills to help in this crisis, but currently cannot practice because it is exceedingly difficult to have their credentials recognized.

It makes little sense in this time of crisis that there are members of our community who may need medical assistance at the same time as having members of our communities who could help but are currently not allowed to practice.



It is worth mentioning that one of the main reasons for the occurrence of medical errors is a high workload of physicians. Therefore, recruitment of IMGs can improve the quality of care from different aspects, make medical services accessible to all Canadians, and prevent much harm to IMGs and their families.

The current bylaw amendments proposed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC is a step in the right direction, and we applaud the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and the Ministry of Health for taking action. However, we believe more needs to be done to strengthen this amendment to help British Columbians, and the IMGs during this time and for the future.

Now is the time to let a group of highly skilled New Canadians be part of the solution to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. As Dr John Blatherwick, former Medical Health Officer of Vancouver Coastal Health said: "Now is the time for us to consider foreign-trained graduates that we have in our community. We have an army of physicians, who can help bravely..."

You can find more information at <https://www.trainedtosavelives.com>

And at hashtag #TrainedToSaveLives

Facebook: TrainedToSaveLives

and the petition is here: <https://you.leadnow.ca/petitions/allow-internationally-trained-doctors-igm-to-serve-in-bc>

Please act fast! The BC government has allowed time for comments about the proposal until April 15.

Thank you so much for your help.

Patricia Mahecha and **Trained to Save Lives**



Dear member,

We wanted to update you on what is at your disposal to face the current situation:

2 pages

COVID-19 resource pages: As we hope you are aware, we have posted COVID-19 resources on our website:

- [COVID-19 Resources](#) (links to relevant announcements and resources from government and other NGOs)
- [COVID-19 Q&A](#) (questions and answers affecting different population groups).

Do you have questions that are not answered? Fill in the form online or write to me at aalpereyre@ccrweb.ca.

Virtual meetings

Following the feedback some of you gave us on our latest virtual meeting on the current issues relating to the pandemic on April 1st (recording and presentation [available here](#)), we have decided to change the format of our next COVID-19 related meetings. Here is what we propose:

- **A more specific perspective on target groups**

A bit like the working groups, we will now hold meetings on specific target groups: refugee claimants, vulnerable migrants (temporary workers, international students, victims of trafficking in persons and of family violence), youth newcomers, etc. We aim at having these specific meetings every two weeks. This will allow you to have more time to ask your questions, go into more details on relevant processes and how they apply to a specific group, and share tools and good practices you have put in place.

The next virtual meeting is: Regular quarterly meeting on refugee claimants on **Thursday 30 April 2020 (*confirmed*)**: this time we will have a COVID-19 focus. Details of this meeting can be found below.

If you have suggestions of specific virtual meetings you think would be useful, please let us know!

- We will hold a general information virtual meeting if and when new government announcements make it relevant.



Virtual meeting on refugee claimants

When: Thursday 30 April 2020

11am Pacific

The meeting will last between 60 and 90 minutes depending on the flow of questions.

Register here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2224398190984455182>

If you have any questions or suggestions please do not hesitate to contact me:

Alice Alvarez-Pereyre | Members Services Coordinator

aalpereyre@ccrweb.ca

Canadian Council for Refugees, 6839 Drolet #301, Montréal, QC, H2S 2T1 (514) 277-7223, ccrweb.ca

Please see a list of interesting articles from across Canada attached in PDF.

Titles also listed here:

- **Extend Government Benefits to All Residents** OCASI (Ontario NGOs) media release March 18, 2020
- **Denying refugees entry to Canada during COVID-19 outbreak is illegal and inhuman: advocates** **Halifax Chronicle-Herald** April 1/2, 2020
- **Calgary organizations support recent immigrants through coronavirus troubles** - Calgary Herald April 3, 2020
- **Covid-19: Qs and As for Service Provider Organizations** - IRCC via Settlement at Work Undated
- **Covid-19 challenges refugees and those helping them to settle** - Vancouver Sun April 10, 2020
- **IKEA Canada commits over \$2M to support local communities impacted by COVID-19** Canada News Wire April 8, 2020
- **Refugee centre in Toronto reports 4 cases** - Toronto Star April 12, 2020
- **Six seeking asylum turned back at border; COVID-19 restrictions enforced** - Vancouver Province April 7, 2020
- **COVID-19: Immigrants face language, financial barriers during crisis** - The News, Abbotsford April 10, 2020
- **Mosques closed during Ramadan** - Islamic Society of British Columbia

Dear Beloved Friends of Kinbrace, (2 pages)

We're hiring for a new role, courtesy of a new grant we've received! If you are interested in becoming our Housing Support Worker, please do apply. Or if you know someone who might be interested or would be a good fit, please do pass along the job posting. Thanks!

Position Title: Housing Support Worker

Job Purpose:

The Housing Support Worker works with the Housing Coordinator to fulfill the mandate of Kinbrace's Housing Program, to help newly arrived vulnerable refugee claimants transition from homelessness into safe and secure permanent housing in BC's Lower Mainland. In addition, the Housing Support Worker works with refugee claimants to strengthen their economic resilience through employment support and referrals.

Position Overview:

The Housing Support Worker works with the Housing Coordinator to fulfill the mandate of Kinbrace's Housing Program, which invites newly arrived refugee claimants into transitional housing at Kinbrace, working alongside them to find safe, affordable, permanent housing, somewhere in BC's lower mainland, and supporting their move into permanent housing. This role will also work with refugee claimants to strengthen their economic resilience through providing employment support and referrals.

Position Terms:

- Full-time: 40 hours per week
- \$25/hr



- Three-month mutual discernment period for fit after hiring
- Comprehensive benefits package

Location: Vancouver, BC, Canada

Interested? Click [HERE](#) to read a detailed overview of the position and apply.

Job posting closes 5 pm (Pacific Time) Wednesday, April 15, 2020.

[**APPLY NOW**](#)

The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (2 pages)

The IRB continues to monitor the evolving situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has created challenges for parties and their counsel preparing for proceedings. The IRB recognizes that it is appropriate to take measures to help those who have matters before the Board and their counsel follow the proper health protocols required by the pandemic, as well as to ensure proceedings are conducted fairly and in a timely manner when they resume.

The IRB has further issued a [Practice Notice implementing Special Measures due to COVID-19](#). Division-specific Practice Notices have also been issued.

The following special measures **apply to all four of its Divisions, except where noted.**

Postponements of in-person hearings and mediations

The IRB is suspending, until further notice, all in-person hearings and mediations, except detention reviews and some admissibility hearings involving detained persons.

Hearing Resumption

The IRB will issue a Resumption Notice to provide at least 30 days' notice before proceeding with a previously scheduled in-person hearing or scheduling a new in-person hearing, except detention reviews and some admissibility hearings involving detained persons, subject to specific exceptions.

When hearings resume, the IRB will be flexible with respect to the application of its rules where the parties have difficulty complying with them due to the COVID-19 situation. However, the IRB seeks the parties' and their counsels' cooperation to comply with the requirements of the rules of the Divisions, to the extent possible, to ensure the proceedings will proceed in a fair and timely manner. (Continued over →)

Time Limits

Time limits for the filing of various forms and submissions and notices of appeal across various Divisions are being temporarily extended. For the [Refugee Appeal Division](#), [Refugee Protection Division](#) and the [Immigration Appeal Division](#), time limits for certain documents are being extended until 30 days after the Resumption Notice.

Communication

The Immigration Division is now accepting communication by email, as set out in its [Practice Notice: Communicating by email at the Immigration Division \(ID\)](#) joining the Immigration Appeal Division which released its [Practice Notice: Communicating by email at the Immigration Appeal Division](#) January 31, 2020. The RPD continues to accept documents by Canada e-Post. Divisions continue to explore various options to facilitate communication and will provide updates as and when available.

Finally, the IRB recognizes the critical importance of the open court principle, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the media wishing to access proceedings should contact IRB Media Relations.

I commit to sharing with you any future developments. Please share this email with your membership and continue to refer to [IRB website](#) for regular updates.

Richard Wex, Chairperson

IRB Refugee Protection Division (RPD)

Practice notice – Special measures due to covid-19 <https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/legal-policy/procedures/Pages/special-measures-covid-19.aspx>

The Refugee Protection Division (RPD) has extended the time limit for filing the Basis of Claim Form, as set out in its [*Practice Notice on the Temporary Extension of Time Limits for Filing the Basis of Claim Form*](#).

The Refugee Appeal Division (RAD) has extended the time limit for filing and perfecting an appeal, as set out in its [*Practice Notice on the Temporary Extension of Time Limits for Filing a Notice of Appeal and Perfecting an Appeal*](#).

The Immigration Appeal Division (IAD) has extended the time limit for filing a Notice of Appeal, as set out in its [*Practice Notice on the Temporary Extension of Time Limits for Filing a Notice of Appeal*](#).

Thank-you for sharing this.

Bridget Bell

BC Settlement & Integration Services



BC TENANTS RIGHTS DURING COVID-19

- Temporary Rent Supplement
- Temporary Freeze on Rent Increase And on Evictions
- Measures to Protect Renters and Landlords Health and much more!

Zoom Meeting

Download the Zoom App on your Phone or Computer

To register, contact Patricia
604-954-0611
patricia.castillo@options.bc.ca

DATE:

THURSDAY
APR 16, 2020

TIME:

1:30 PM- 2:30 PM

LOCATION:

ZOOM MEETING

- ♦ Download Zoom on your Phone or Computer
- ♦ Don't need to make an account
- ♦ Registrants will receive a Code to join the Webinar



WelcomeBC



BC SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION SERVICES

ERES SOLICITANTE DE REFUGIO TIENES PREGUNTAS?

- SEGURO DE EMPLEO
 - BENEFICIO DE EMERGENCIA - CERB
 - BUSCANDO EMPLEO DURANTE COVID19
 - CURSOS GRATIS EN LINEA
 - AYUDA CON EL RESUME
 - INDUSTRIAS QUE ESTAN CONTRATANDO
 - PERMISO DE TRABAJO Y NUMERO SOCIAL
-

604-809-7618

SAVLEEN

REFUGEE CLAIMANT SPECIALIST



WelcomeBC



British Columbia is creating a new information hotline solely dedicated to answering non-medical questions about COVID-19.

Service providers at the new phone line will help answer questions about travel recommendations, social distancing, and what kinds of support, resources and assistance are available from the provincial and federal governments.

The new hotline, which can be reached by calling **1-888-COVID19 or 1-888-268-4319**, will be staffed from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day with information available in more than 110 languages.

City of Vancouver letter: TEMPORARY EMERGENCY CHILDCARE UPDATE (2 pages) [Please see translated versions attached](#)

Thank you for your patience, as we work to support the health and safety of all residents during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

As you know, the City has been focused on maintaining essential services, and many of you have been required to continue working, without access to childcare.

In response, the City's emergency taskforce, comprised of individuals from the City of Vancouver, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre, the Vancouver School Board, the Vancouver Parks Board, and Vancouver Coastal Health, have developed a system to refer essential workers **who are living or working in Vancouver**, and have no other alternatives for appropriate childcare, to licensed childcare providers with spaces temporarily available for the duration of the public health emergency. This referral system will connect parents or guardians of children aged 0 to 12, including those with special needs, with licensed childcare providers operating in or near their preferred Vancouver neighbourhood. Access to temporary emergency childcare services are reserved exclusively for children of essential workers who are required to respond to this health emergency and have no other childcare alternatives. At this time, the Provincial Health Officer has advised that all parents or guardians who can, should care for their children at home, while recognizing that child care services must be provided in a safe manner for those families whose parents work in critical roles.

Our goal with this initiative is to help connect temporary emergency childcare to those who need it most during this public health emergency. Unfortunately, as available spaces are limited, receiving a referral does not guarantee a spot.

Eligibility

Parents or guardians who are living or working in Vancouver, who have no other alternatives for childcare, and who are working in essential services as [defined by the Province](#) are eligible for the program.

Note: As requested by the Province, priority will be given to health and health services workers, law enforcement, public safety, first responders, emergency response personnel, and vulnerable population service providers.

How to Access the Temporary Emergency Childcare Referral System for Essential Workers

Parents or guardians of children ages 0-12 who are eligible for this program, should [submit the online request form](#) to the **Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre**. Please note that this will be the only accepted method for submitting a request. Once submitted, a representative from the Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre will be in contact by email to provide a referral to one or more operators temporarily accepting children in your area.

When you have received your referral, please contact the operator(s) to inquire about available programs and fees. If you have questions or require additional information on this process please contact: <https://www.wstcoast.org/contact>.

Emergency Childcare Task Force

Additional Information

- [Provincial Affordable Childcare](#): Families that earn up to \$111,000 (or more with deductions) may qualify for a childcare benefit
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#), [HealthLink BC](#), and the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#): For general information about the COVID-19 pandemic and how to keep your family safe
- [Province of BC](#): Find supports being offered by the Province
- [Ministry of Children and Family Development](#): Get COVID-19 Information Updates
- [Province of BC's Action Plan](#): get government resources and updates
- [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#) MAP (Multi-Agency Partnership) Bulletin April 15, 2020
- [Ministry of mental health and addictions](#): For resources to help manage COVID-19 related stress, anxiety and depression

COVID-19 Related Consultations

April 5, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for all members of Canadian society, but that refugee claimants, permanent residents, and other non-citizens may face particular challenges as a result of the pandemic and the resulting shutdown, including social isolation policies.

In particular, the closure of many international borders, including the Canada/U.S. border, to most travel may mean a longer period of separation of families who are already coping with the challenges of maintaining relationships across borders. We are also aware that noncitizens who are eager to advance to the next step of their immigration application, whether it be a refugee hearing, a Federal Court judicial review hearing, or any other matter, might be anxiously wondering what's coming next.

Our team of lawyers and support staff are committed to assisting you in your time of need. That is why **we are offering free half hour phone consultations to those who have immigration and refugee law questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and who are unable to afford the cost of legal services at this time.**

We understand that many individuals are in a difficult financial situation as a result of the pandemic and that some persons may be disproportionately impacted, including persons with lower incomes, refugee claimants, persons who recently lost their status or their employment, migrant workers, racialized individuals, persons with disabilities, and others. Preference will therefore be given to these persons in accordance with our availability.

If you would like to schedule a free consultation with one of the experienced lawyers at Edelman & Co, please click [here](#).