

Jan 30th Private Sponsorship Group Meeting - Refugee Sponsorship Training Program Presentation (brief notes)

Attendance: Joan, Gail, Carolyn, Clinton, Gratta, Grace, Donna, Linda, Ernie, Sheila, Ralph, Donna, Sharon, Carol, Laura, Helen

RSTP Presentation:

- Canada is the only country with the Private Sponsorship program.
- Started in 1979.

International Perspective

- 65.6 million displaced by conflict and persecution.
- 22.5 million found to meet the definition of refugee (ie. not in their own country).

UNHCR report

- sees 2017 resettlement needs at 1.19 million.

2018 Canadian Targets:

- SAH's can collectively submit applications for 8,500 people.
- 18,000 PSR's anticipated **to arrive**. And 7,500 GSR's in 2018.
- Up until 2012 PS's were unlimited.

Categories of Resettlement:

1. PSR's – private sponsorship

****only one where sponsor can select who they wish to sponsor****

2. BVOR – blended visa-office referred

(paid ½ by sponsor, ½ government. Sponsor provides ALL non-financial settlement support)

3. JAS – joint assistance sponsorship

(paid fully by government, sponsor supports with HIGHER needs)

4. GAR – Government assisted sponsorship

(settlement agency contracted to provide all support)

To Qualify for Sponsorship:

- Individuals **must have a valid (not expired) RSD - (Refugee Status Document)**, issued by UNHCR or foreign government. (UNHCR "registration documents" are not RSD's). This was waived until Jan 2017.

- RSD's are not currently being issued in Turkey, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, and others...

- Sudan, Uganda and South Africa etc. have permission (from UNHCR) to issue these documents. Typically though, once they have this document they flee to Khartoum (capital city). And once they're there for 1 year, it expires. If it expires, they have to go back to refugee camp to get it renewed. Going back is "extremely dangerous" though.

- ***Without RSD's, asylum seekers can only be sponsored by SAH's!***

Sponsoring Options:

1. **Sponsorship Agreement Holders.** There are about 100 SAH's in Canada. A complete list can be found by searching "sponsorship agreement holders list".
2. **Group of Five.** Can be any Citizen or permanent resident. A minimum of 3 people must contribute financially, or have total \$ available already in the bank. Others can contribute in-kind. The same individual can be listed as (one of the 5) for more than one sponsorship, but have to prove they have the money and time available for each.
3. **Community Groups** (don't have to be incorporated)

BVOR's Already in Regina?

- Sometimes GARS become BVOR's as a result of requiring more support than the settlement agency can provide on its own
- RSTP (refugee sponsorship training program) may potentially be able to refer you to a list of those already in Regina, that fit this category

To find out who is "waiting" to come to Canada as a BVOR:

1. Fill out a request for Refugee Profile form (found online)
2. Submit to RSTP.ca
3. RSTP will invite you to a webinar
4. You will start receiving emails with a list of refugee profiles

Interim Federal Healthcare (IFH)

Covers refugees as soon as they arrive, up until the end of their first year and/or until their provincial healthcare kicks in

What's covered:

- doctor visits, hospital, x-rays, blood work (until provincial care starts)
- most prescriptions, **emergency** dental & eye care (for first year, even after provincial coverage starts)
- other coverage for families (equivalent to low-income, born in Canada families)

***Not all doctors, drug stores, etc. are signed up for IFH.**

*Can go on Blue Cross website and they will have a list of providers**

Travel Loan

Refugees come with "invoice" (long yellow form) from the Government, for their travel loan, etc. There is an interest-free window, but essentially this is to be paid back. Can negotiate payment schedule based on income (during and even after their first year) (*Update: The time period for payback recently changed (2018) – check IRCC website*)

Month 13

- Sk. social assistance can start on the 1st day of the 13th month, but the process has to be started in advance.
- Helen handed out information booklets around planning for transition off of Sponsorship support.
- These handouts; *Month 13 Checklist* and *Chapter 8 – Guide* can be found on the www.rstp.ca website.

Individual Meetings

- Meeting ended with individuals/groups signing up to meet with Helen tomorrow, to discuss personal cases and questions.
- RRLIP will provide meeting space for this.