



MAP Multi-Agency
Partnership BC
Working Together for Refugee Claimants

MAP Member Agency News

MAP Bulletin # 109

Holiday edition - December 22, 2021

Dear MAP members,

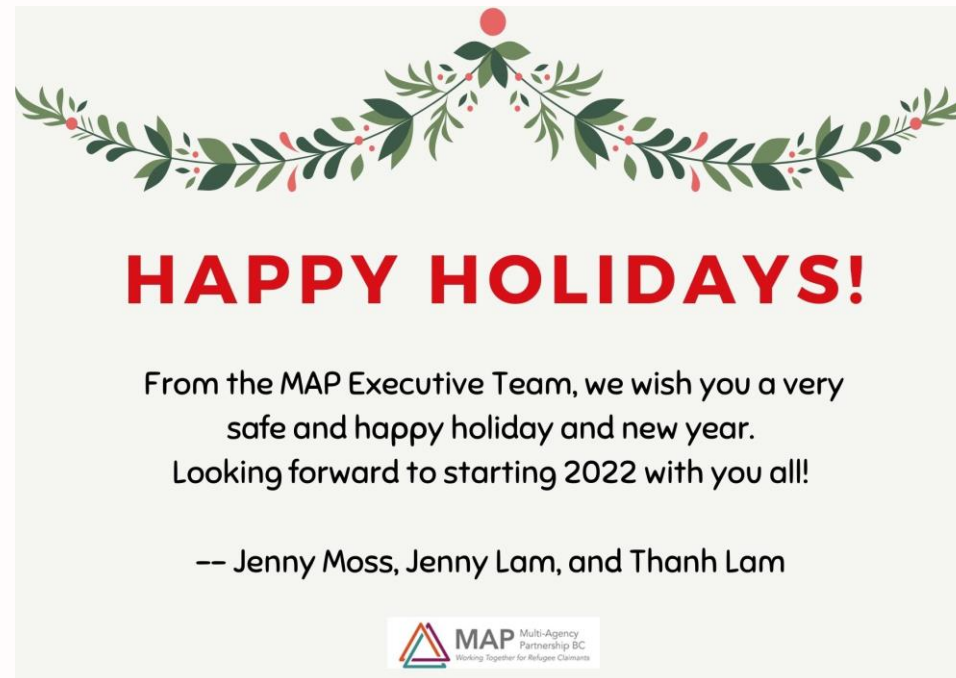
How are you doing? That's a common question nowadays and one that MAP wants to focus on during the pandemic and the unrest caused by overt and covert racism – providing support through online MAP meetings. We will keep you up to date with any changes to refugee claimant services as they happen - and ask if you have information that you would like to share with MAP that you let us know at info@mapbc.org.

The Holidays are here!

MAP Administration will be away from Dec 23 – Jan 3 inclusive

The MAP Bulletin will restart on January 12

Please send your postings for the bulletin to info@mapbc.org with these dates in mind.



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.

Jenny Lam, Thanh Lam - and the other Jenny!

Previously emailed – 2 pages



Immigration and
Refugee Board of Canada

Commission de l'immigration
et du statut de réfugié du Canada

IRB Announcement Annonce de la CISR

Dear stakeholders,

I am pleased to inform you that the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) has published a revised [*Chairperson's Guideline 9 - Proceedings Before the IRB Involving Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics \(SOGIESC\)*](#).

Initially published in May 2017, the Guideline provides guidance to decision-makers on the adjudication of refugee and immigration cases involving SOGIESC. In the spring of 2019, two years after its coming into effect, I requested that the IRB review the implementation of the Guideline to assess how it was being applied and to develop recommendations to further strengthen its implementation. Following extensive internal and external consultation, the [*Review of the Implementation of Guideline 9: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Expression*](#) was completed, resulting in 11 recommendations which are currently being implemented in accordance with the [implementation plan](#).

Recommendations touch on a variety of issues: strengthening elements of the Guideline itself; enhancing training offered to IRB Registry personnel, interpreters and designated representatives; ensuring more effective internal data capture; and implementing additional safeguards to ensure adherence to principles of natural justice in the hearings process.

[Summary of Changes to the Guideline](#)

Regarding the Guideline itself, our initial review recommended that Sections 2 (*Terminology*), 6 (*Avoiding stereotyping when making findings of fact*) and 7 (*Establishing principles for assessing credibility and evidence pertaining to SOGIE*) be strengthened. Subsequent consultations with external stakeholders and subject matter experts held in early 2021 identified suggestions and proposals for inclusion in the revised Guideline.

Thank you to those of you who participated in this process; all comments received were considered for inclusion in the revision. The consultations affirmed that the Guideline remains relevant today, and that the adjustments further strengthen what was already recognized as leading-edge policy. This revised Guideline contributes to the suite of tools and processes necessary to support members in carrying out their duties while safeguarding their adjudicative independence.



Most significantly, changes to Sections 6 (*Avoiding stereotyping when making findings of fact*) and 7 (*Establishing principles for assessing credibility and evidence pertaining to SOGIE*) were made to bring forth greater nuance and to strengthen certain concepts:

- Subsection 6.2 has been added to the Guideline to clarify that IRB findings are to be made based on the lived experiences of individuals rather than on assumptions.
- Additional examples of stereotypes, incorrect assumptions and relevant case law have been added at sections 6 and 7 to assist IRB members.

You will also notice the following additions:

- The addition of "sex characteristics" as a focus of the Guideline particularly to demonstrate inclusivity towards Intersex individuals. The Guideline now makes clear that it is applicable to proceedings involving "Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics" or "SOGIESC" (pronounced *SO-GEE-ESQ*).
- Wording surrounding "inappropriate assumptions" has been changed to "incorrect assumptions".
- "Individuals with diverse SOGIE" has been replaced by "SOGIESC individuals".

During the consultation on the Guideline, comments on sections of the Guideline other than sections 2, 6 or 7, and suggestions on training that went beyond the recommendations from the review and that were outside the scope of the first phase of consultation were also received. Input received that is relevant to future training on the Guideline will inform the forthcoming consultation to be conducted with stakeholders and subject matter experts who have particular expertise on sensitive questioning and credibility assessment. Other contributions will be retained for potential further action, as part of the IRB'S commitment to review the Guideline's terminology annually and to conduct more fulsome reviews every three years.

Next Steps

In accordance with our implementation plan, we will soon begin a second phase of consultations to identify current and up-to-date best practices on questioning and assessing credibility when SOGIESC individuals appear before the Board. This will assist in developing and delivering experiential, interactive and practical training for members on the application of the Guideline. We are also working to finalize the implementation of the remaining recommendations from the review.

Thank you once again for your ongoing engagement.

Richard Wex
Chairperson
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

News highlights:

Refugee claimant-related articles from Canada and around the world

December 22, 2021

Final edition of the year!

Please see a list of interesting articles gathered by MAP from across Canada and globally ([PDF attached](#))

*Thanks to Journey Home's **Barry Growe** for his research and compilation*

- [Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland's fall economic statement re refugee backlog](#)
Eminetracanada
- [The Betrayal of Afghanistan](#)
St. Catherines Standard
- [Trudeau unveils Canada's new immigration system's priorities](#)
CIC News
- [Saskatoon-based magazine offers needed resources to immigrants](#)
Saskatoon Star
- [Apart/Together assesses impact of Covid-19 pandemic on refugees and migrants](#)
European Website on Integration

PIRS Employment Opportunity

Project Coordinator - Building a Childcare System that Works for Immigrant and Refugee Women

Hours: 35 hrs/week

Location: Virtual and in-person at our Vancouver office

Start date: February 2022 End date: March 31, 2024

Deadline to apply: January 5, 2022

See Job Description and Application process attached in PDF





BC's **VIRTUAL**
AFFORDABLE HOUSING
CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 15-17, 2021 | #HOUSINGCENTRAL

The BCNPHA Conference recorded sessions are now available on the conference platform by logging into the conference site and navigating to the "Sessions" tab. Recorded plenaries can be found in the "Main Stage" tab.

NOTE: MAP Members: The **MAP BC CHARMS** session is available here:
https://housingcentral2021.junolive.co/library/search/T11_library

If you have any questions, please contact BCNPHA at events@bcnpha.ca.

[ACCESS THE PLATFORM](#)



**Supreme Court decision to hear Safe Third Country Agreement appeal is a promising step for refugee rights
Amnesty International, The Canadian Council of Churches, and The Canadian Council for Refugees are welcoming the Supreme Court of
Canada's decision to review the constitutionality of the Safe Third Country Agreement (STCA).**

This decision follows a long history of legal challenges to the Agreement, including two recent court rulings. In July 2020, the Federal Court found that the STCA violates the fundamental human rights of refugee claimants and is therefore unconstitutional. The Federal Court of Appeal overturned that decision in April 2021 – not on substantive grounds, but on the basis of how the arguments were framed.

The organizations presented extensive evidence showing that the STCA has particularly negative impacts on women fleeing gender-based persecution, in violation of section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The organizations hope that these arguments will now be thoroughly considered by the Supreme Court of Canada through this appeal.

This is the second time that the three organizations have challenged the constitutionality of the STCA. Twice the Federal Court has found that STCA violated refugee claimants' Charter rights and twice the Federal Court of Appeal has overturned the decision on technical grounds. After refusing a previous request to hear the constitutionality of the STCA, the highest court will now finally review this rights-violating Agreement.

The evidence is overwhelming that the US is unsafe for many refugees, and that many people sent back to the US under the STCA suffer serious rights violations in detention. Because of this evidence, the organizations call on the government to suspend the Agreement. None of the previous court rulings – or the upcoming Supreme Court decision – prevent the government from taking action immediately to end this harmful Agreement.

Under the STCA, most refugee claimants who arrive at an official port of entry seeking protection in Canada are denied entry and turned back to the US. Because the agreement only applies at official border crossings, many refugees have been forced to cross the border in between ports of entry, sometimes in perilous conditions. Withdrawing from the Agreement would not only ensure that Canada meets its Charter and legal obligations but would also allow people to present themselves in an orderly way at ports of entry, ending the need for irregular crossings.



Media contact: [Andréa Viens, Communications Coordinator, media@ccrweb.ca](mailto:media@ccrweb.ca)

[Justin Mohammed, Programs Manager, Amnesty International Canada \(English branch\), 613-744-7667 x 249, jmohammed@amnesty.ca](mailto:jmohammed@amnesty.ca)

[Dr. Nicole Roccas, Communications Coordinator, The Canadian Council of Churches, 416-972-9494, communications@councilofchurches.com](mailto:communications@councilofchurches.com)



Feel like sharing the news?

- [Facebook post](#)
- [Twitter profile](#)
- [YouTube backgrounder video](#)

A promising step for refugee rights!



CERC Connections

December Newsletter

The CERC in Migration and Integration program at Ryerson University connects Canada and the world to address the challenges of global migration. Read about the University's plans for its [next chapter under a new name](#).

Featuring [Access to Justice for Refugees](#)

New report shows Canada's asylum system is underperforming in providing access to justice for vulnerable refugee claimants. The report was produced by **Craig Damian Smith**, CERC Migration senior researcher, **Sean Rehaag**, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University, and **Trevor Farrow**, Canadian Forum on Civil Justice, Osgoode Hall Law School.



MAP's YEAR IN REVIEW 2021

Just look what we achieved together!



- **9 online MAP meetings**
- **Presentations included:**
 - Government mental health resources as relates to refugees
 - Mental self-care with a professional counselor
 - Planning for an Emergency Response – 2 sessions including UNHCR presentation
 - SWIS Programs in 3 school districts related to refugee claimants
 - Umbrella Health Co-op outreach to migrant workers for Covid19 vaccinations
 - IRIS project and access to healthcare
 - Kinbrace's Welcoming Refugee Claimants Research Project
 - Journey Home Community's Plans for a Refugee Claimant Reception Centre
 - Rainbow Refugee Society Services to Claimants
 - Research on access to and availability of housing for LGBTQ+ refugees.
 - BC CHARMS Referral System
- **Active Working Groups:**
 - Housing Working Group – met 8 times and addressed urgent housing issues
 - Information Working Group – met all year and produced many celebratory and educational events
 - BC CHARMS Advisory Committee – monitors progress of the BC CHARMS project and provides advice
 - MAP Emergency Task Force – develops a plan to assist with any unexpected increase in arrivals



- **Ongoing projects included:**
 - BC CHARMS Housing referral & Database Project with lead agency MOSAIC
 - Program to establish NGO services at the Surrey Immigration Holding Centre
 - Emergency Task Force – Creating a Plan for an unexpected increase in claimant arrivals
 - In Focus – a 4-part public education series *
 - World Refugee Day events *
 - Liaison and support to Fraser Valley MAP
 - Channeling questions to IRCC and CBSA
- **MAP Bulletins and Advisories**
 - 45 MAP Bulletins distributed and many additional urgent resources about Covid-19 vaccinations & Afghanistan crisis
- **WORLD REFUGEE DAY EVENTS: Stories Told and the Memories they Leave Behind** (all accessible online at mapbc.org)
 - BCNPHA Conversation: Looking for Home
 - Vancouver Public Library sponsored event: The Power of Stories – A Conversation on Refugees and Literature
 - Stories told and Objects not Forgotten – an afternoon of storytelling
 - World Refugee Day Writing workshop with the Shoe Project (not accessible)
 - Premiere of the documentary film: After Arrival (not accessible)
 - UNITED: an afternoon of Music and Poetry for World Refugee Day
- **Information Working Group arranged for four IN FOCUS events** (accessible on mapbc.org)
 - A Bitter Pill – Utilizing the Talents of refugee Doctors
 - Canadian Refugee Law – who is it protecting? (not available)



- Afghans in Search of a Home – 4 perspectives
- See the Humans Behind the Trauma – indigenous and asylum seeker experience

- **External collaborations**

- Canadian Council for Refugees – active member and workshop presenter at Fall Consultation
- Legal Aid BC – together created a Legal Clinic at the IHC with interpreters recruited by Fran Gallo.
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) – provided two educational webinars
- Vancouver Public Library – World Refugee Day sponsor
- Shoe Project – jointly hosted a Writer’s Workshop
- Surrey LIP
- Pacific Canada Heritage Centre – Museum of Migration

- **We said goodbye to:**

- Saleem Spindari (formerly of MOSAIC, and former MAP Co-chair)
- James Grunau (formerly of Journey Home Community)
- Laura Mannix (formerly of DIVERSEcity)
- Richard Belcham (formerly of Inasmuch and MAP Co-chair)

And temporarily to: Sophia Underhill, Tammy Johnson and Ryan Reid while welcoming many new faces at the same time!

Thank you to all MAP Agencies for your participation, willingness to step up and present or volunteer. During this second pandemic year when communication and collaboration are more important – and more challenged – than ever, you have responded 100% and more.

Jenny Lam & Thanh Lam – Co-chairs

Jenny Moss – Coordinator

REPEATS

Are you interested in this exciting 12-month (maternity leave cover), 28 hours/week job opportunity:

[Ready Tours Organizer.](#)

The Ready Tours Organizer, operating within Kinbrace's **Accessing Refugee Protection Program**, coordinates and facilitates Ready Tours with the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada - Refugee Protection Division (IRB-RPD) and the Refugee Appeal Division (RAD) Information Sessions with the IRB-RAD.

The goal is to increase refugee claimants' readiness for their refugee hearings and to increase their capacity to navigate Canada's refugee determination system.

[Learn more and find out how to apply for the Ready Tours Organizer role.](#)

Please share widely.

All of Kinbrace's current job postings can be found [here](#).



REFUGEE HOUSING & SUPPORT



VAST will be closed for holidays from Dec 24 to January 2. In case of an emergency please send an email at community@vast-vancouver.ca.

See you all in January 2022. Happy holidays

Thanks

Best Regards

Sara Lopez B.Sc(Psych)

Outreach & Intake Supervisor



Save the Date: **Overcoming Stigmatic Barriers Action Workshop**

Date: January 19

Time: 6:00pm to 8:30pm

As a next step emerging from the Overcoming Stigmatic Barriers in the Surrey North Delta Primary Care Networks session held on September 29, 2021, **this session will focus on practical on-the-ground tools and strategies** that can be implemented by PCN partners from the outset of the PCN initiative rollout.

Building from the Equip Health Care toolkits, the working session will develop action plans for specific PCN initiatives as well as for the PCN overall.

Who should attend: All attendees for the previous session are invited, and all partners involved in the PCN are welcome.

This session will be of particular interest to those working with vulnerable and/or marginalized people in the community, and many of the tools and strategies discussed will have applications beyond the PCN itself.

A formal invitation with RSVP will be sent out soon. Please share with those in your organization and network who you feel would get and/or bring value.

Shanga Karim – featured at MAP’s ‘Starting Over’ in 2019, World Refugee Day 2020, and organizer of this year’s MAP World Refugee Day Writer’s Workshop through the Shoe Project invites you:

‘I would like to share the **Shoe Project’s** upcoming performance on January 15 and 16 2022!

Choose the date and purchase your ticket in this link: <https://secure.artsclub.com/events/detail/the-shoe-project>

At this performance you will hear incredible stories from 12 women from all over the world telling their journey's stories in their own voice!

See more details in this link please: <https://artsclub.com/education/in-the-community>’



Shanga Karim
Vancouver Local Coordinator

www.theshoeproject.online



Help your clients or students succeed with Windmill's exclusive Trending Jobs Report

The job landscape in every part of Canada is constantly changing. For newcomers, this presents an additional challenge.

While no one can predict what the future holds, Windmill MicroLending decided to go a step further in its support to newcomers. Windmill's Trending Jobs Report is a province-by-province resource to help immigrants on their journey to achieve career success and find a career path full of growth and opportunities.

[Learn More](#)



Refugee Research Network

- RRN Research Digest - December 9, 2021

[Read Research on RRN Website](#)

As part of a collaboration between CCR, CARFMS and CRS, and then IASFM, several reference documents related to **ethical considerations for research with people in forced migration have been developed over the past few years.**

"Your Rights in Research" is an information sheet for people who are asked to participate in research. It is intended to explain in lay person's terms, some of the vocabulary found in standard consent forms. It also outlines key considerations and resources, with particular attention to lived experiences of newcomers. The "Your Rights in Research" document is now available in 20 languages! The translations were funded by SSHRC and uOttawa and completed by Access Alliance Language services, Ayar Ata and Ulrike Krause and collaborators. The translations were reviewed by many, many dedicated colleagues. I am grateful to everyone who contributed their time and talents to this project.

All 20 translations are available on the CARFMS website (with thanks to Michele Millard):

<https://carfms.org/new-resource-your-rights-in-research/>

Ethical guidelines are available here:

The IASFM website has the international code of ethics in English, French and Spanish:

<http://iasfm.org/blog/2021/11/12/iasfm-research-code-of-ethics-now-available-in-english-french-spanish/>