



**MAP** Multi-Agency  
Partnership BC  
*Working Together for Refugee Claimants*

# MAP Member Agency News

MAP Bulletin # 40  
December 27, 2023

## Dear MAP members,

*How are you doing?* We will keep you up to date with any changes to refugee claimant services as they happen - and if you have information that you would like to share with MAP please email [info@mapbc.org](mailto:info@mapbc.org).

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## Dear MAP Community,

As 2023 comes to an end, we take some time to look back and reflect what has been a challenging year for refugee claimants.

From January to November 2023, **128,685** refugee claims were processed in Canada, with **6,740** of those claims processed in BC.

For comparison, a total of 91,740 claims were made in Canada in all of 2022, with 3,895 of those claims processed in BC.

With these figures in mind, the hard work and collaboration of the members of MAP's community to support refugee claimants in 2023 stands out as a source of pride, joy and celebration.

As we look forward to 2024 and the challenges and joys it may bring, we reiterate our commitment to supporting the sector, build new collaborations, foster our community, strengthen our partnerships and welcome new members to grow our network for the sake of refugee claimants.

May 2024 bring us even closer together.

*Thank you for all you are doing to support vulnerable refugee claimants*  
*Sara Lopez, Sireen El Nashar and Katya Avalos, MAP Executive*

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## **MAP NEWS! (PART 1)**

During our October 26th meeting, the MAP Advisory Council proposed new Mission and Vision Statements for MAP. The Mission Statement was approved by the attending members, however, the proposed Vision Statement was not approved. Instead, the attending members provided feedback to help the Advisory Council in crafting a new Vision Statement.

A new draft Vision Statement was presented at the MAP meeting on November 23rd, and we would now like to ask for your input so the Advisory Council can take your feedback into account to finalize this process.

**Draft MAP Vision Statement for your review and input presented on November 23:**

**A connected community of boundless welcome achieving dignity, equity, and belonging with and for refugee claimants.**

The Advisory Council, with co-chairs will finalize a version based on your input.



*Thank you for all you are doing to support vulnerable refugee claimants*  
*Sara Lopez, Sireen El Nashar and Katya Avalos, MAP Executive*

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## **MAP NEWS! (PART 2)**

The finalized Vision Statement will be voted on by MAP members at the 25 January 2024 MAP meeting.

### **What is a Vision Statement?**

- a description of the world as it would exist if the organization succeeds in achieving its grandest aspirations
- a short (i.e., one sentence), inspiring, memorable statement able to remain unchanged for 100 years

**Here – for reference – is MAP’s Mission (approved 26 October 2023)**

**MAP brings together community members and agencies to foster collaboration and action for the well-being of refugee claimants.**

Please provide your feedback and input into the draft Vision Statement above by **15 January 2024** by emailing Katya at [info@mapbc.org](mailto:info@mapbc.org).

We thank you in advance for your valuable consideration and input!

*Thank you for all you are doing to support vulnerable refugee claimants*  
*Sara Lopez, Sireen El Nashar and Katya Avalos, MAP Executive*

# Food Safe Training for

Refugee Claimants, International Students,  
Temporary Foreign Workers and Canada-Ukraine  
Authorization for Emergency Travel Clients

Saturday, January 20, 2024

8:30 am—4:30 pm

Be Prepared Training Facility: 212-2825 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford

- FOODSAFE Level 1
- FREE Training: Receive a Certificate
- Highly valued by Canadian employers in many industries
- Training in English

Limited spaces available.  
Registration required!

To register visit [www.inasmuch.ca](http://www.inasmuch.ca)  
under classes



WelcomeBC

*We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs*



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# First Aid Training for

Refugee Claimants, International Students,  
Temporary Foreign Workers and Canada-Ukraine  
Authorization for Emergency Travel Clients

Saturday, February 10, 2024

8:30 am—4:30 pm

- Be Prepared Training Facility: 212-2825 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford
- Occupational First Aid Level 1
- FREE Training: Receive a Certificate
- Highly valued by Canadian employers in many industries
- Training in English & Spanish

Limited spaces available.  
Registration required!

To register visit [www.inasmuch.ca](http://www.inasmuch.ca)  
under “classes”



WelcomeBC

*We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs*



## Settlement & Integration Program

Burnaby Neighbourhood House located on the traditional unceded territories of Coast Salish Nations

## Job Search Workshops

- **Introductory Session**  
2-3 pm, Jan 15, 2024
- **Regular Sessions**  
2:30-4:30 pm, Jan 22, Jan 29, Feb 5, Feb 12 & 26, 2024

4460 Beresford Street, Burnaby  
Burnaby Neighbourhood House - Banquet Room #1

- To get help building your resume, CV, and cover letter
- To learn about the tools and resources for employment
- To navigate social media platforms to assist with your job search or career development
- To get customized support with your interview preparations

For more information to register, please contact  
Xinrui: xinrui@burnabynh.ca

[WWW.BURNABYNH.CA](http://WWW.BURNABYNH.CA)

Burnaby Neighbourhood House is a community driven and community funded agency located on the unceded territories of the Tsleil-Waututh (salilwataʔ), Kwikwetlem (kwikwəʔləm), Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw) and Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm) nations with a unique focus on neighbours supporting neighbours.



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For parents with children 0 - 5 years

# Nobody's Perfect

## PARENTING PROGRAM

6 Mondays, Jan 22 - Mar 4, 2024 (no class on Feb 19th)

11:00 am-01:00pm

Online via ZOOM

- Program will be delivered in Arabic.
- Mar 4th session will be in-person, participants will receive certificates for completing the program.
- Arabic-speaking newcomers, permanent residents, refugee claimants and citizens are welcome!

**Meet** with other parents of young children

**Share** questions, concerns, and ideas about being a parent

**Work** together with the support of a trained facilitator

**Discuss** real-life parenting situations

**Discover** positive ways of parenting



## Registration

Sharifa: 778-706-4999, or  
Maysa: 236-688-6297, or  
[maysa@frohollow.bc.ca](mailto:maysa@frohollow.bc.ca)

Funded by / Financé par:



4460 Beresford Street  
Burnaby, BC V5H 0B8  
(In front of Metrotown Skytrain)  
(604)431-0400



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Financé par:

Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

# Relevant refugee claimant news for the month of December

## [Financial pressures forcing Etobicoke church housing refugees to close by end of December](#)

Dec 24 - A Toronto church that has been on the front lines of the refugee housing crisis says it will be forced to close its doors as of December 28 due to a lack of funds.

## [Toronto-area shelters full of homeless refugee claimants](#)

Dec 22 - Samuel Watts, CEO of Welcome Hall Mission in Montreal, said that the immigration system designed in the 1960s can no longer address the realities of 2023.

## [33-year-old migrant woman found dead near U.S.-Canada border](#)

Dec 18 - Mexican woman had recently crossed into U.S. on foot from Quebec, according to N.Y. police

## [The Afghan refugees stuck in limbo at the US-Mexico border](#)

Dec 14 - A stone's throw from the US border and around the corner from Tijuana's seedy red-light district, Afghan families say they feel safe inside a first of its kind Muslim-only shelter.

# Register for this free course for settlement workers and earn a certificate upon completion!

**English: Bridges to Safety:** Building the capacity of the settlement sector to respond to gender-based violence, together with the anti-violence sector.

**Français: Ponts vers la sécurité:** Renforcer la capacité du secteur de l'établissement à répondre à la violence fondée sur le genre, en collaboration avec le secteur de la lutte contre la violence



**Bridges to Safety | January 8th, 2024**  
Building the capacity of the settlement sector to respond to gender-based violence, together with the anti-violence sector.

## January 8th, 2024

**Bridges to Safety** is a free, self-directed, 15-hour, certified online course that will introduce participants to Gender-Based violence, **increase awareness** and **education** and **enhance the capacity** of service providers to **recognize and respond to GBV** in the settlement Sector. The course is also available in **French** and it's called: **Ponts Vers la Sécurité**.

[Register now!](#)



PIRS is proud and excited to be presenting the return of [The Shoe Project](#) to Vancouver this January!



The project brings immigrant and refugee women together with professional writing and theatre coaches, to develop unique personal stories which the women present at the Shoe Project event.

Each of their stories includes a pair of shoes – perhaps shoes they left behind, or shoes that inspire them in their new lives.

[More information](#)



This year, The Shoe Project includes women from Ukraine, Somalia, Syria, Mexico, India, Iraq, Colombia, and Albania.

Join us on January 20 & 21, 2024 at the BMO Theatre Centre in Vancouver, and prepare to be moved and inspired by this unique event!

All ticket sales proceeds will go towards PIRS trauma-informed programs for immigrant and refugee women.

[Buy Tickets Here](#)

Dear MAP members, for those of you have family or know Canadian citizen and permanent resident clients who have family in Gaza, please read this message from **The Gaza Family Reunification Project**:

**NOTE: The Gaza Family Reunification Project is an ad-hoc collective of Canadian immigration and refugee lawyers. Nothing in this message should be considered legal advice. For legal advice, please consult directly with a lawyer.**

Greetings,

I write tonight on behalf of an ad-hoc group of Canadian immigration and refugee lawyers calling themselves the Gaza Family Reunification Project (GFRP). If you are receiving this email, it is likely because you have communicated with me in some manner over the last several weeks about the grievous failure of the Canadian government to create a robust policy for evacuating Canadians' loved ones from Gaza and bringing them to safety with their families in Canada. Many of you have family in Gaza yourselves.

As you likely know, there is currently no special immigration pathway for Gazans to come to Canada -- and while we would certainly welcome it if it comes, we cannot simply wait. For that reason, **we are encouraging everyone who wants to bring their loved ones from Gaza to Canada to submit an application to IRCC on their behalf for a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV)**, which is the process that was available to visitors from Gaza (and from most of the world) before the current war. Our hope is that (1) by submitting this application now, family members will be best positioned to receive immediate processing when and if a new policy is implemented; and (2) tracking these applications will allow us to advocate more effectively, both individually and collectively, for swift action.

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Recognizing that many people with family in Gaza cannot afford to hire a lawyer or consultant under the circumstances, GFRP has put together a self-help application guide to reduce the barriers to submitting TRV applications. The guide can be found [at this link](#), along with templates for documents that you may need to submit along with the application.

**Please consider distributing these resources widely within your networks.**

We are also asking that those who use the guide to submit TRV applications, as well as those who have already submitted applications, fill out [this survey](#) so that we can keep track of how many applications of this nature are in process and potentially use the data in future advocacy initiatives. We are committed to keeping your identifying information confidential.

Please also keep an eye out for an open letter from PGWP to the officials who have authority to implement a policy. The letter will be published in the coming days, and open for signature by the general public.

### **Why Are We Suggesting You Submit TRV Applications?**

We are encouraging Canadian citizens and permanent residents with family members in Gaza to help their family members submit applications for temporary resident visas for the following reasons:

1) This is the only existing immigration application that would allow most applicants to receive authorization to

travel to Canada. We hope that these visas are issued and that people are allowed to leave Gaza and reach safety.

2) So that family members not currently eligible for evacuation can be tracked and assigned file numbers for advocacy purposes. We urge you to share your application information with our team to strengthen our advocacy efforts. We would like to be able to identify how many families are stuck in Gaza when speaking to the government and policymakers. Your application and participation in our online survey will assist in gathering information on all the family members that are affected in Gaza to continue to push the government to reunify families in Canada.

3) An existing application is a good starting point to contact your Member of Parliament (MP) for support and continued advocacy for the creation of a pathway.

4) If and when Canada expands its eligibility criteria, these family members will already have active applications in the system that can be identified and flagged to decision-makers.

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