



MAP Multi-Agency
Partnership BC
Working Together for Refugee Claimants

MAP Member Agency News

MAP Bulletin # 6

February 14, 2024

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.

MAP NEWS!

You are invited to attend the **MAP Meeting on Thursday February 22nd** at 9:30 am hosted by **ISSofBC**

Address: 2610 Victoria Drive, Vancouver

The highlights are:

- Our regular IRB Report
- BC CHARMS update
- **A Presentation by Eduardo Aragon from Legal Aid BC on the Legal Navigators Program**
- Report back from the MAP Advisory Council
- Chances for everyone to share updates/questions/issues and friendship in the service of refugee claimants.

There is 2-hour parking along the side roads surrounding ISSofBC

Light refreshments will be provided - please come early to meet your colleagues and enjoy a warm coffee!

Thank you for all you are doing to support vulnerable refugee claimants

Sara Lopez, Sireen El Nashar and Katya Avalos, MAP Executive

Do you have difficulty speaking English with your doctor?

We offer free translation & interpretation services!



ABOUT US

Volentia Healthcare Translation provides free translation services, **where a translator can accompany you to your healthcare appointments.**

Languages offered:
Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Uyghur, Punjabi, Hindi, Tamil, Dari, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, and French.

Questions?
ubcvolentia@gmail.com

BOOK NOW

We serve all areas in **Greater Vancouver.** Scan the code to book an interpreter:



linktr.ee/volentia



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Free Healthcare Translation & Interpretation Services Available!

WHO ARE WE?

Volentia Healthcare Translation is a UBC organization providing free healthcare translation services, **where a translator can accompany you to your healthcare appointments.**

Our volunteer interpreters are undergraduate and graduate students who are **native speakers of Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Uyghur, Punjabi, Hindi, Tamil, Dari, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, and French.**

Questions?
ubcvolentia@gmail.com



HOW DO I BOOK A TRANSLATOR?

We serve all areas in **Greater Vancouver**, including **Burnaby, Surrey, Richmond, and Coquitlam.** Scan the code below and click **"Patient Booking Form"** to book an interpreter:



<https://linktr.ee/volentia>



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Settlement & Integration Program



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



Empowerment and Social Gathering Program for Newcomer Youth

4460 Beresford Street, Burnaby
(BNH South House - Jubilee Room)

Saturdays 10:30am - 12pm
February 17th - March 9th, 2024

Do you want to explore & reach your full potential?
Drop in or register to join :

- Field Trips: Explore the community and its attractions.
- Cooking Session: Learn new recipes and culinary skills.
- Movie Day: Enjoy films and cultural movies together.
- Financial Literacy: Gain knowledge and skills for managing finances.
- Networking: Connect with newcomers and make friends.
- Work Opportunities: Explore potentials of working in different sectors; Receive skills training and job search support.
- Education Support: Assistance with school admission and scholarship applications.

For more information or registration, please email: masiullah@burnabynh.ca

www.burnabynh.ca

Burnaby Neighbourhood House is a community driven and community funded agency located on the unceded territories of the Tsikwaka (Kwakwaka'wakw), Kwikwetlem (Kwikwaka'wakw), Squamish (Squamish) and Musqueam (Musqueam) Nations with a unique focus on neighbours supporting neighbours.



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



Funded by:
Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada



Financed par:
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et Citoyenneté Canada



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Welcome to BC Orientations for Newcomers In their first language

Learn about

- Canada
- BC community resources
- Rights and responsibilities
- Transportation
- Social norms
- Schools
- Renting

Session 1 - Benefits

- Social, medical, disability benefits
- CRA, income tax benefits
- CTB, income assistance
- Employment and labour market

Session 2 - Banking and Finances

- Banking
- Canadian currency
- Budgeting

Session 3 - Housing

- Types of housing
- Subsidies
- Emergency
- Tenancy rights and resources

To register, please contact our case managers :

Arabic:

Siham Alkhashief
sihamaa@burnabynh.ca
236.877.2517

Dari:

Arman Zamani
armanz@burnabynh.ca
604.657.2163

Farsi:

Maryam Torabizadeh
maryamt@burnabynh.ca
236.877.2531

Filipino:

Avelina Dioces
avelinad@burnabynh.ca
236.889.4065

Chinese:

Dali Qu
daliq@burnabynh.ca
236.877.2616

Spanish:

Monica Tinajero Macarty
monicam@burnabynh.ca
236.878.9405

www.burnabynh.ca

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VAST SYMPOSIUM

Torture. Refuge. Healing.

Date: February 27th 2024

Hours: 9am-5pm

Location:

2610 Victoria Drive, 2nd floor, and online via link to be shared with registered participants.

vastbc.ca

symposium@vastbc.ca



Invitation to join our VAST Annual Symposium 2024

Dear Colleagues, VAST is honoured to be participating in an important and old tradition, since the advent of the movement against torture, of the Annual Symposium on Torture. We would love if you could join us even if just for a small portion of the day, or if not, then to share your ideas and inputs as we bring this event back into our annual calendar.

Our colleagues in the US with the National Consortium of Torture Treatment Programs ([NCTTP](#)) are hosting their 16th Annual Symposium in March, while the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture ([IRCT](#)) hold their Scientific Symposium on Torture every few years, as do the [Australian Network](#), among others. It has been since the 1990's that we have held these events in Canada, but now that we have representation from all provinces in the revived Canadian Network for Survivors of Torture & Trauma, and a growing push for Canada to honour our responsibilities under the UN Convention Against Torture, it seems as good a time as any to get rolling again.

We do understand it is rather short notice, and for the next event it will be much better funded and promoted, but we are still looking forward to a great day with speakers from across the country and around the world, and strong voices of lived experience joining us in person.

Please do help to spread the word to any colleagues or students who may be interested to join, we are reviving the old tradition of the VAST annual symposium on torture.

[click here to register](#)



Migration Working Group

Migration Working Group: Labour migration and mobilities

Feb. 27, 2024, 12:30 - 2:30 PM EST
Hybrid

CERC Migration research area lead [Richa Shivakoti](#) hosts the February Migration Working Group examining the theme of labour migration and mobilities.

The Migration Working Group meets monthly to discuss the migration research of emerging and established scholars. Our meetings give researchers an opportunity to present their ongoing projects, learn about each other's work and share feedback.

Presenters include:

- **Olga Gheorghiev**, Czech Academy of Sciences
- **Ajeet Kumar Pankaj**, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University
- **Riccardo Sacco**, University of Urbino Carlo Bo
- **Shalini Sen**, Tata Institute of Social Sciences
- **Gerasimos Tsourapas**, University of Glasgow

Visit the [event webpage](#) for abstracts and program details.

[Register](#)

Filing Income Tax in Canada What You Need to Know

Your Personal Income Tax Return is due April 30 every year

This class is for:



Refugee Claimants and other newcomers

Class Information

Spanish Class: Tuesday, March 5 6:30pm to 8pm on Zoom
Facilitator: Nathalie from Family Services Vancouver

English Class: Monday, March 11 6:30pm to 8pm on Zoom
Facilitator: Thao from Family Services of Vancouver

Register online: www.inasmuch.ca under Classes

The zoom link will be emailed to you after you register

Topics will include:

- Deductions on your paycheque, what they are, and what they mean
- Who needs to file taxes in Canada?
- When to file your taxes
- How to file your taxes
- Documents needed to file your taxes
- What happens if you don't file your taxes?



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Voces de Amor Propio

"Voces de amor propio" es una serie de cuatro talleres de escritura creativa y arte.

Se trata de un programa inclusivo diseñado para explorar el tema del amor propio a través de la escritura creativa, el arte abstracto y la fotografía.

Únete a nosotros para celebrar y empoderar a las mujeres de Vancouver.

***Se dará prioridad a recién llegadas y personas en refugio.**

***Tendremos becas por participación disponibles.**



Fechas de talleres
5, 7, 12 y 13 de Marzo 2024

Horario
de 6:00 PM a 8:00 PM

Locaciones
1 Athletes Way, Creekside Community Centre
Vancouver, BC
800 E Broadway, Mount Pleasant Neighborhood
House
Vancouver, BC

Pre-regístrate en el siguiente link
<https://forms.gle/WQouF4hE5QDWQkyY9>



Mount Pleasant
Neighbourhood House





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February 6, 2024

Re: temporary immigration measures in response to humanitarian crisis in Gaza

The Honourable Marc Miller, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa ON K1A 0C8

Dear Minister,

The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) welcomes significant announcements from the federal government to address the ongoing crisis in Gaza. CCR's focus is on Canada's obligations to uphold the rights of civilians, displaced persons and refugees as protected under international law. We commend Canada's call on December 12 for a sustainable ceasefire, and for increased and unimpeded access for humanitarian efforts in Gaza. This diplomacy must continue to help prevent further loss of life in a war that has killed over 25,000 Palestinians in four months including over 10,000 children.

CCR also welcomes that Canada has launched temporary immigration measures to provide a humanitarian pathway for Palestinians with family members in Canada seeking refuge, and to expedite permanent residence applications of Palestinians in Canada so they too can secure safety for relatives in Gaza as soon as possible.

In Canada and around the world, people expect and support leadership and compassion from our country towards those fleeing war and persecution. We led by example in our crisis responses to the conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine—hallmark initiatives that deepened Canadians' pride and confidence in who we are.

We write with concern however, because the details and roll out of the Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) for Gaza are deeply problematic and display an unacceptable inequity in Canada's responses to humanitarian emergencies. The discrepancies, (as with the measures announced recently for Sudan), reflect systemic racism in our immigration system and underscore the need for an effective, equitable and transparent policy framework to guide emergency immigration responses.

The following are key inequities and problems in the Gaza initiative that must be addressed.



1- Unprecedented and dangerous requirements for personal information

The Gaza visa application contains unique new requirements for Palestinians that are onerous and unreasonable, and which will cause delays that undermine the program's goal to bring family members to safety quickly. These additional requirements, entirely at the Canadian government's discretion, are in addition to traditional biometrics requests.

IRCC has provided no adequate justification for highly invasive questions seeking information on decades of employment history, social media accounts, and past email addresses— information that is exceedingly difficult to compile at the best of times let alone in conditions of unimaginable trauma. The requirement for disclosing and explaining scars and injuries is particularly egregious in a context where people in Gaza are subjected to continuous displacement, indiscriminate bombing, and the near total collapse of the healthcare system.

Canada is also providing no guarantees or offers of protection for how foreign governments may use the information, creating additional risks for Palestinians, in particular those who wish to exercise their right to return when conditions allow. These new patently racist information requirements should be eliminated and must not set a precedent for new layers of security processing.

2- Fees and Caps - A confusing process and more stark inequities

Canada must maintain consistency and equity in humanitarian responses. Applicants under the new Gaza program are required to pay a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) processing fee of \$100 per person or \$500 per family, and a biometrics fee of \$85 per person or \$170 per family. This places an added burden on people who are trying to flee in the chaos of war. It is important to note that Canada provided visas under the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel initiative (CUAET) free of charge until July 15, 2023, and waived biometrics fees entirely. This is entirely consistent with an emergency crisis response for a temporary visa and should be replicated here.

There is also confusion over whether the Gaza program will be restricted to 1000 visas (as listed on the website), or flexible to accommodate more if the demand is there. With over 40,000 Palestinian Canadians desperate to see their families safe, the 1000 cap is grossly inadequate. Minister, if "there is no hard cap" as you have been quoted saying in the media, this should be reflected on the website for clarity, and to ease the stress on those filling out applications.

This would be consistent with Canada's decision not to impose caps on humanitarian arrivals from Ukraine, which resulted in Canada welcoming over 200,000 people under the CUAET from almost 1 million applications that were approved.

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3- Greater support to families and more pathways needed

The goal to create a temporary pathway to safety for Palestinians from Gaza through accelerated family reunification is laudable. However, the financial requirement on families in Canada is high and other temporary pathways should be made accessible for Palestinians who do not have a qualifying family sponsor.

Under the current TRV, Palestinians only qualify if an anchor family member in Canada is willing to provide a sworn statement of financial and settlement support for one year. It is positive that those brought under this initiative will have access to three months of coverage under the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP), as well as settlement services and a fee-exempt work or study permit. But the program still puts the main financial and settlement burden on Canadian family members, in a context where one Canadian may be sponsoring several family members simultaneously. CCR has advocated that family and private sponsors should not bear the primary responsibility for emergency responses to global crises, as this is the obligation of governments.

We note again the inequity here, as the requirement for a family and financial sponsor were not present in the CUAET measures for those fleeing Ukraine, nor was family sponsorship the sole option for those Canada resettled from Afghanistan. Further, with exemplary leadership, the government of Canada provided a one-time non-taxable financial payment for adults and children arriving under CUAET, as well as set up an infrastructure with community partners to provide settlement supports for housing, education, employment and donations of goods and services. Palestinians deserve no less.

Financial assistance and coordination of settlement supports with other levels of government should be extended to Palestinians under this TRV as they settle and get work permits.

This should include IRCC working with provincial and municipal counterparts to ensure continuity in access to critical services, including health care and social assistance. For example, the federal government should stand ready to extend IFHP where needed to ensure those recovering from war and trauma do not fall through gaps in health care coverage, including for mental health and psychological supports.

4- Ensuring Gazans fleeing war are welcomed not feared

It is vital for the government to broadcast a warm Canadian welcome and rally public support for receiving Palestinians from Gaza at this difficult time. These efforts were hallmarks of past initiatives such as for those fleeing war in Syria or Ukraine and laid the foundations for settlement success including the new arrivals feeling that they were in fact welcome here.

In contrast, so much of the government's messaging has portrayed Palestinians as potential security risks and even terrorist threats to Canada, employing language that is harmful to Palestinian Canadians, promotes anti-Palestinian racism, and undermines public confidence in Canada's immigration system. Words matter. This is a humanitarian pathway for civilians fleeing war and should be promoted as such.

Minister, the toll of this war is high. The death count mounts daily, with thousands more children and families at risk of famine and disease. As Canada continues to work on getting humanitarian support for displaced civilian populations and towards a lasting ceasefire, let us show greater leadership in ensuring more dignified, accessible, and equitable pathways to safety for Palestinians facing catastrophic humanitarian conditions by addressing the key concerns noted above.

CCR also continues to urge consideration of means to accelerate processing for refugees in the region destined for resettlement in Canada who are affected by the widening shadow of violence, notably refugees in Lebanon and Israel. We recommend an expansion of the individuals processed under the Urgent Protection Program, with special consideration for vulnerable groups including unaccompanied minors and LGBTQIA+ populations.

Finally, we note that the shortcomings of Canada's temporary resident pathway for Palestinians highlight once again the need for the Canadian Government to adopt a comprehensive, anti-racist and transparent policy framework that can help ensure immigration measures in response to humanitarian emergencies are effective and equitable, no matter where in the world they occur. Building this framework requires substantive consultation with stakeholders.

The CCR is ready to help, and we would welcome a meeting to discuss these issues.

Sincerely,

Diana Gallego
President

Cc. Dr. Harpreet S. Kochhar, Deputy Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship



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Settlement workers play a vital role in providing comprehensive employment supports and current labor market information to newcomer clients. In this session, settlement staff will hear from Ministry of Labour speakers, who will share key updates on programs and policies that are relevant to newcomers.

Updates from the Ministry of Labour may include information on policies aimed at protecting Temporary Foreign Workers, the updated return-to-work requirements for injured workers, the recent increases to the minimum wage for farm workers, and the new rules to keep workers safe from the danger of asbestos. Updates may also include information on the new legislation designed to deliver improved working conditions and basic employment standards to “online platform workers”, identified as app-based ride-hail and food-delivery workers.

Following the presentation from the Ministry of Labour, there will be an opportunity for attendees to participate in a Q&A with the speakers.

WHEN & WHERE

Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Time: 10:00 am – 11:15 am PT

Location: Zoom Event - Details will be provided upon registration.

REPEATS



Wednesday, February 28, 2024 | 10:00 am – 11:15 am PT

In this Virtual Information Session, speakers from the Ministry of Labour will provide a comprehensive overview of key policy and program updates that are relevant to BCSIS settlement service providers.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER



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BC SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION SERVICES

PRE-EMPLOYMENT SERIES

For Refugee Claimants



<p>THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1, 2024 10AM - 12PM</p> <p>Introduction to services Overview of processes Roadmap to Employment</p>	<p>FRIDAY FEBRUARY 2, 2024 10AM - 12PM</p> <p>Emotional Wellness Online Digital Safety Job Search strategies & Workplace Culture</p>	<p>THURSDAY FEBRUARY 8, 2024 10AM - 12PM</p> <p>Resume Building Do's and don'ts Building a resume to Canadian standard Interview skills</p>
<p>FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9, 2024 10AM - 12PM</p> <p>Individual Mock Interviews Practice your interviewing skills!</p>	<p>FRIDAY FEBRUARY 23, 2024 9AM - 5:30PM</p> <p>Food Safe Training</p> 	
<p> 10362 King George Blvd, Surrey, BC V3T 2W5</p>		<p>Registration & enquiries Lesly Cruz lesly.cruz@options.bc.ca 604-809-7618 Pooja Grover pooja.grover@options.bc.ca 604.992.6161</p>

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





Is the Canadian dream broken?

New research investigates trends in equality of opportunity for racialized second generation

Feb. 21, 2024, 10 AM - 12 PM EST
Hybrid

REGISTER HERE

Join CERC Migration for a thought-provoking public event that delves into the socio-economic experiences of second-generation immigrants to understand social mobility in Canada. New research will be released on the education and employment experiences of successive birth cohorts from the 1960s to the 1990s, revealing how well the next generation of immigrant Canadians fare.

Following the presentation, a distinguished panel will consider policy implications, addressing questions such as: Do the divergent trends among minority groups require government attention beyond existing policies, and if so, what types of interventions may be effective?

Visit the [event webpage](#) for details.



Refugee Research Network

- RRRN Research Digest -

Jan. 25, 2024

[Read Digest on RRRN website](#)

The RRRN digest is issued bi-weekly to highlight the latest academic and non-academic resources on Refugees and forced migrants. We encourage readers to [email us](#) any articles, reports, or research related to refugee/forced migration studies to be considered in the forthcoming editions. Open-access versions are always a preference.