

Welcome the Stranger: Refugee Sponsorship

Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR)



MCC is excited to partner with you and the federal government to bring the most vulnerable refugees to Canada. Through the BVOR program, a sponsoring group (that's you!) is matched with a refugee family and commits to providing 12 months of social, emotional, and settlement support, with up to one-third of the costs covered by the Canadian government.

BVOR program refugees have already been government approved and are waiting for a sponsoring group to enable them to come to Canada. This expedites the sponsorship timeline – it is often only one to four months until arrival.

Still have questions? Or are you ready to get started? Visit mcc.org/refugee-sponsorship-canada.

WHAT IS THE BVOR PROGRAM?

The Blended Visa Office-Referred program is designed to resettle refugees identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It is referred to as a “blended” program because it is a cost-sharing arrangement whereby the government and sponsorship groups both contribute financially to supporting refugees.

Refugees under this program have already met eligibility and admissibility criteria, making them travel-ready. However, they must be matched with a sponsor before they can travel to Canada.

HOW DOES THE “BLENDED” MODEL WORK?

Refugees resettled under the BVOR program will receive income support after their arrival through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP). They are also fully covered under the Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program in addition to provincial health coverage.

For the duration of the sponsorship period, sponsors are required to provide:

- reception upon arrival
- initial housing setup
- financial support
- settlement assistance (including arranging for language classes, enrollment in school, finding health care providers, job search, etc.)
- psychological and emotional support

WHO WILL BE SPONSORED UNDER THIS PROGRAM?

Refugee resettlement priority countries change. Refugees from the following countries are likely to be represented this year: Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia.

HOW IS BVOR DIFFERENT FROM THE REGULAR PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP OF REFUGEES (PSR) PROGRAM?

Blended Visa Office-Referred

- refugees are identified by the UNHCR and Canadian visa offices, then referred to MCC for matching with sponsorship groups
- refugees have already been pre-screened for eligibility and admissibility
- refugees are travel ready – once matched with a sponsorship group, they can arrive within 1-4 months
- cost sharing – the government provides up one-third of the required financial support

Regular PSR program (also referred to as “named sponsorships”)

- refugees are identified by sponsors within Canada
- sponsorship application is submitted in Canada. After approval, the file is sent overseas for processing
- this process can take upwards of a year – timelines vary from one country to another
- sponsors are responsible for full financial and settlement support for duration of sponsorship

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FAQ

HOW SOON WILL THE REFUGEES ARRIVE?

BVOR approved refugee cases are normally ready to travel to Canada within one to four months of being matched with a sponsor. However, there have been instances of unforeseen circumstances that have caused delays. These are rare, but they do happen.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE REFUGEES ARRIVE?

These refugees are considered permanent residents once they arrive in Canada. This means they are legally entitled to work, go to school, receive healthcare and access free services for newcomers to Canada such as language classes, employment counseling and other support services.

HOW DO REFUGEES ACCESS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT?

Upon arrival, the government will contact the sponsorship group point person to schedule an intake interview. This intake interview will register the sponsored refugees to receive their government income during months 2-7. (If you are not contacted within two weeks of the family's arrival, contact MCC for advice.)

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IS FOR SIX MONTHS – WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER SIX MONTHS?

Government support is for six months. Sponsors assume the costs for the remainder of the sponsorship period (months 1, 8-12.) All other services including Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program coverage remain the same.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF REFUGEES UNDER THIS PROGRAM?

The newly arrived refugees are expected to make every effort to become self-sufficient as soon as possible after arriving in Canada. This includes taking advantage of language classes as well as other settlement services and actively seeking employment. They are responsible to repay their travel and medical loans. Upon arrival in Canada, they will receive a letter from the government with information about the total cost of the loan as well as a repayment plan.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF SPONSORING REFUGEES UNDER THE BVOR PROGRAM?

MCC selects profiles from available BVOR cases and matches case to sponsoring group preferences

Sponsoring group accepts sponsorship

MCC completes necessary paperwork

MCC submits application to government

Sponsoring group can expect to welcome the refugee family within 1-4 months of submitting application

QUESTIONS?

READY TO GET STARTED?

CONTACT:

[MCC.ORG/REFUGEE-SPONSORSHIP-CANADA](https://mcc.org/refugee-sponsorship-canada)



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Central
Committee**